

# Wye Brooks Group UPDATE for 5 FEBRUARY 3 BEFORE LENT WHITE

## FROM THE VICAR THE GENERAL SYNOD

The General Synod meets next week in London. But what actually is the General Synod? The answer, I suppose, is that it is like a Church Parliament and it has been in existence in its present form since 1970s.

The synod initiates, scrutinises, debates and passes legislation to do with almost any aspect of the Church of England - from changing key doctrines to creating new guidance for Sunday worship to tweaking the rules on when clergy retire, and everything in between. It scrutinises and approves the Church's annual budget. It also debates national and world issues – such as climate change or knife crime. The resulting resolutions have no legal force but express the thinking and will of the Church as a whole.

Membership of synod is in three *houses* - Bishops, (42 diocesan + 9 suffragan); Clergy (around 200) and Laity (around 200). All diocesan bishops are members automatically. Clerical and lay members are elected to serve. Here in the Diocese of Hereford our members are

### House of Bishops

- Rt Revd Richard Jackson

### House of Clergy

- The Ven Fiona Gibson
- Revd Chris Moore
- Revd Neil Patterson

### House of Laity

- Wendy Coombey
- Charles Houston
- Emily Hill

For legislation to be passed it must pass in *all three* houses by a *two thirds* majority. This means that Synod is inescapably conservative and change is hard won.

This year the thing to watch for is the debate on human sexuality and marriage on Monday afternoon. The bishops have indicated that they will not vote to allow homosexual marriage, but there is bound to be a lively debate about it.

Pray for the Synod—that they will know and enact God's will for us, and not simply follow society's whims.

## READINGS 3 BEFORE LENT

Isaiah 58:1-9a  
Psalm 112:1-9  
1 Corinthians 2:1-12  
Matthew 5:13-20

## (ALTERNATIVE) COLLECT FOR 3 BEFORE LENT

Eternal God,  
whose Son went among the crowds  
and brought healing with his touch:  
help us to show his love,  
in your Church as we gather together,  
and by our lives as they are transformed  
into the image of Christ our Lord.

## Advance Notice

Wye Brooks Benefice  
**Joint APCM**  
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April  
Llangrove Academy  
Refreshments from 6.30pm  
Meetings from 7.00pm

## BISHOP'S WEEKLY MESSAGE TRUE WORSHIP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEtyLKimMWg>

## OUR OWN LIGHT BITE KINGDOM WISDOM

<https://youtu.be/cRVKCT-mt5Y>

## HOUSE GROUP/PRAYER GROUP

The next **Zoom House Group** will be on Tuesday 7th February at 10.00am

The next **Zoom Prayer Group** will be on Tuesday 7th February at 7.30pm

## CHURCH COFFEE MORNINGS

2nd Saturday of the Month      Llangarron. 10.30  
2nd Wednesday of the month      Llangrove 10.30  
4th Saturday of the month      Welsh Newton 10.20

# CHRISTIANITY IN THE NEWS

## CALL TO 'WAKE UP'



For the first time in census history, the average age of people who identify as a Christian in England and Wales is over 50.

New data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reveals the median age of people who describe themselves as "Christian" in 2021 was 51, an increase from 45 in the 2011 census.

Those who identified as "Christian" had the oldest average age out of the main religions in the country, with Muslims having the youngest average age of 27.

Meanwhile, the ONS figures showed that most young people in England and Wales (22.2 million) say they have "no religion".

One Christian leader commented that the Church needs seriously to prioritise getting the gospel to youth. "The Church needs to wake up and make mission and outreach to young people a priority," he said.

"The Church just needs to shift its resources and make them our focus. It's what Jesus did. When he decided he was going to change the world, he found a youth group, who were a bunch of young lads, his disciples."

*Ben writes:*

*I suppose what worries me is the dishonesty we often use in talking about the issue. We'll put a positive gloss on it by saying that young people are 'spiritual' or still 'searching for meaning' or show Christian love by supporting charities. Or we'll make excuses by saying that there are too many distractions on a Sunday morning.*

*How long will it take to get the message "The average young person would not be seen dead in Church, even if there were nothing else to do." But a few churches are full of youngsters. We need to be learning from them.*

## GYM BAD LANGUAGE BAN

A man who's bought a disused church and renovated it into a gym has banned customers from swearing.



Joe Newbold bought Culmstock Methodist Church in Devon for £93,000 and transformed it into his gym, called Mypremcoach.

He said those that come to exercise are asked to keep cursing "to a minimum" because he still views the building as a holy site.

He acknowledged that people were likely to do a bit of cursing or swearing when their trainers required them to do some extra reps, but said that his aim was to keep that to a minimum.

## ERITREA IMPRISONMENTS

Christians in Eritrea are being imprisoned in unprecedented numbers. The most recent account points to 44 arrests, taking the total to 415.



It has been difficult for Christians for more than 20 years, with most churches forced to close in 2002.

partner Dr Asmelash Berhane, of Release International, said: "Eritrea is like a giant prison. The country is filled with jails. It is like North Korea."

In May 2002, the country's government closed down all religious groups except Sunni Muslim, Eritrean Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Lutheran Church. Christians who continue to worship in banned congregations are treated as "enemies of the state".

## WHITCHURCH WEEKLY



10.30 every Thursday at St Dubricius Church, Whitchurch

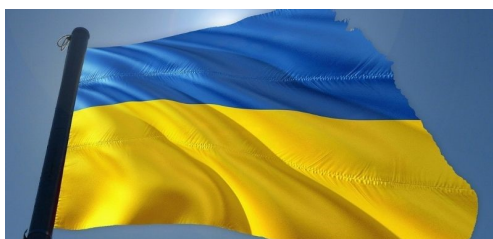
A simple informal half hour communion without a sermon or a collection.

Followed by a cuppa and biscuits.

It has always been open to anyone from both the Wye Reaches and Wye Brooks benefices.

Please do come. Relax and enjoy God's presence with us.

## RESPONDING TO THE UKRAINE CRISIS



The Diocese has a web page encouraging us to respond in prayer and action to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. Go to <https://www.hereford.anglican.org/our-faith/prayers-for-ukraine/>

## UKRAINE FOOD COLLECTION

Tinned food is being collected at KTS Craft Warehouse, Trenchard Street, at the bottom of Edde Cross Street in Ross. They have already made deliveries of clothing and medical equipment, and now it is tinned food which is needed, (no glass). Tins - soup, spaghetti, pies, meat, fruit, plus cereal bars.

## POETRY CORNER

*Given the references to the Holy Spirit in our epistle reading today, I thought I would give you this:*



When the Spirit's around (that's the third of the Three)  
He regularly raises fresh questions for me:

You see , He's both the sought and the seeker, the truth and the teacher  
the help and the helper, the gift and the giver.

He's the breath and the voice, the chooser, the choice  
the anointer, the oil, the peace and turmoil.

He's the joy and the cries, always there to baptise  
the bearer of fruit with fresh gifts to boot.

He's as wild as the wind, He'll breeze where He will  
I've tried to contain Him, but He won't remain still.

I can't ever define Him, can't assign Him a label,  
just accept He's my God and that my God is able

to be true to His Word while resisting defining  
He'll still leave me questions, but that's not surprising.

He kicked off creation, gave the church her fresh start  
and we're just the latest to play our small part.

## HOLY SPIRIT QUOTE

“To put it simply: the Holy Spirit bothers us. Because he moves us, he makes us walk, he pushes the Church to go forward. And we are like Peter at the Transfiguration: 'Ah, how wonderful it is to be here like this, all together!' ... But don't bother us. We want the Holy Spirit to doze off ... we want to domesticate the Holy Spirit. And that's no good. because he is God, he is that wind which comes and goes and you don't know where. He is the power of God, he is the one who gives us consolation and strength to move forward. But: to move forward! And this bothers us. It's so much nicer to be comfortable.”

*Pope Francis*

## SERVICES CALENDAR FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS

Date	Time	Place	Service	Leader
Sunday 5 February	8.30	Welsh Newton	Meditation and Bible Study	Lay led
Sunday 5 February	10.00	Llangrove	Holy Communion	Simon
Sunday 5 February	11.00	Goodrich	Morning Prayer	Wendy
Sunday 5 February	11.00	Llangarron	Holy Communion	Ben
Sunday 12 February	8.30	Welsh Newton	Holy Communion	Ben
Sunday 12 February	10.00	Llangrove	Community Praise	Wendy
Sunday 12 February	10.00	Marstow	Holy Communion	Ben
Sunday 12 February	11.00	Goodrich	Holy Communion	Simon
Sunday 19 February	8.30	Welsh Newton	Meditation and Bible Study	Lay led
Sunday 19 February	10.00	Llangrove	Holy Communion	Ben
Sunday 19 February	11.00	Goodrich	Morning Service	Jill
Sunday 19 February	6.00	Llangarron	Evening Service	Penny
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 22nd February	<b>7.00</b>	<b>Llangrove</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> <b>+ Ashing</b>	<b>Ben</b>
Sunday 26 February	8.30	Welsh Newton	Holy Communion	Penny
Sunday 26 February	10.00	Marstow	Morning Worship	Hillary
Sunday 26 February	10.00	Llangrove	Community Praise	Lay led
Sunday 26 February	11.00	Goodrich	Holy Communion	Ben
Sunday 26 February	6.00	Welsh Newton	Worship and Prayer	Lay led

\*Note - the rotas are in transition at the moment so please do double check.

## LENT COURSE THE KING'S SPEECH

The last Lent course I attempted to run, on the film *The King's Speech*, was cut off by Covid after only one session. In my opinion the King's Speech is one of the most outstanding films ever to be made, and I have decided that I want to have another go, repeating the first session.

The commitment is to six sessions at the Vicarage. Each session will happen both on a Wednesday evening and a Friday afternoon, to give people the best chance of getting there. You can come to either one. A booklet will be provided.

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be served. Each session will be over in about an hour. It will consist of the showing of two clips of between four and about six minutes, and discussion.

They will run as follows

Thurs	22 Feb	7.00	Film viewing
Fri	24 Feb	2.00	Film viewing
Wed	1 Mar	7.00	Session 1
Fri	3 Mar	2.00	Session 1
Wed	8 Mar	7.00	Session 2
Fri	10 Mar	2.00	Session 2
Wed	15 Mar	7.00	Session 3
Fri	17 Mar	2.00	Session 3
Wed	22 Mar	7.00	Session 4
Fri	24 Mar	2.00	Session 4
Wed	29 Mar	7.00	Session 5
Fri	31 Mar	2.00	Session 5

See you there!

## LENT LUNCHESES

Lent lunches raise money for a charity chosen by the host.

Please can we have a volunteer from each parish to host, for one week during Lent, a lunch, comprising soup, cheese and biscuits, fruit and a cuppa. Of course, you can claim expenses back. From each attendee a donation is invited.

The time for each lunch is 12.30 pm. The day of the week isn't too important, but please try to avoid the Friday Lent course.

## PRAYER FOR OTHERS

### The UK

- HM the King and the Royal Family.
- Our Prime Minister and Government
- The hardship caused by rising prices.
- The increasingly important work of food banks.
- Those badly affected by strikes, and those who feel that they have no other option but to strike

### World

- Please continue to pray for the Ukraine, and for Russia, and about the countries involved on the sidelines of the conflict.
- Pray for the US and its political chaos and internal anger.
- Pray too about the famine in East Africa, the migrant problem, threats from nations like North Korea and of course Iran, which recently declared itself to have nuclear weapons, and is said to be the biggest sponsor of Russia.
- Pray for efforts to reduce global warming.
- Pray about the issue of migration

### Health

- The NHS, the pressure on front line staff, recruitment and so on.
- The ability of the NHS to cope in a time of both shortages of staff and strikes.
- The ongoing presence and effects of Covid/Strepa A and other infectious diseases
- Those suffering from mental health issues
- NHS chaplains

### Our churches and clergy

- The General Synod this week, and especially debates in the area of human sexuality and gay marriage
- For our encouragement of true discipleship
- For right actions leading to sustainability and growth.
- For the prayer life of our churches, and especially as we continue with our diocesan Year of Prayer for mission.
- For the hard decisions which will need to be made about clergy numbers.
- For mission mindedness generally

### Our villages

Our pubs, parish councils, local businesses and schools. Pray for all our communities in these difficult times.

### Pray for people

Please pray for all those you know who are sick or in particular need, and those facing big changes in life.

- Nigel - the continued fight against cancer. His chemo is over. Further tests are ongoing.
- Bernie Water's elderly and frail parents, while Bernie and Gill are visiting relatives in Australia.
- The family of Gill Green, whose funeral was at Welsh Newton recently..
- The family of Pat Parkinson, of Welsh Newton Common, whose funeral is impending
- Tina—for a good recovery following her operation
- Patricia, who started a new job last week.
- A baby born recently with physical and possible development problems

# REGULARS

## PARISH GIVING SCHEME

We are pushing the Parish Giving Scheme because it is the best way of giving to your Church, not just because of *how little hassle* it is to you, but also because of *how safe and tax efficient* it is, *how easy it is for treasurers to administer* and how it usually does actually *drive the income of churches up*. And GOOD NEWS—you don't even have to fill in a form. You can set it up by phone. By all means ring your church treasurer for details and fill in a form, or call the number below.

## PARISH GIVING SCHEME

Tel 0333 002 1271

Church	<u>Parish Ref</u>	Church	<u>Parish Ref</u>
Goodrich	180618231	Marstow	180618241
Llangarron	180618239	Llangrove	180618240
Welsh Newton	180618256		

## CONTACTS

Vicar: Revd Philip 'Ben' Bentham  
Tel 01989 770454 Email  
benbentham@yahoo.co.uk

Associate Minister: Revd Simon Tarlton  
Tel 07462 893457

Associate Minister: Revd Penny  
Powdrill Tel 01600 714096

If you have suggestions for improving this Update, please do let me know. To UNSUBSCRIBE, simply drop me a line.

## CLERGY HOLIDAYS

TBA

## CLERGY DAY OFF

My usual day off is MONDAY

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE—WILLS



Want to make a difference to your local church? Why not leave it something in your will? It's easy to do, and helps what you care about.



The Llangrove Milk Shed at the Village Hall,  
For farm fresh milk and a few other things like butter, cheese and cake.

Support local businesses!



Our local eateries are important, and without our patronage they risk not being able to survive, especially in this climate.

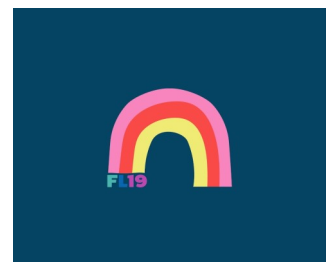
Llangrove - The Royal Arms  
Phone **01989 770267**

Goodrich - The Hostelrie  
Phone **01600 890241**

Goodrich - The Cross Keys  
Phone **01600 890692**

## BLESS THE NHS

Thanks to Helen Shipton, who belongs to our Tuesday prayer group, for giving us details of this initiative to provide a bit of support for NHS workers. Do have a look.



<https://www.frontline19.com/hopeline19/>



## Food Bank

St Mary's Welsh Newton want have an informal, voucher-free food bank at the church.

The church is open 24/7

Anyone who feels under pressure financially can just slip in and take what they need without having to register anywhere.

Please also feel free to donate food to it yourself.

Do gossip this information to anyone whom you think might find it helpful.

Thanks



## Another Food Bank

Christ Church Llangrove have set up the Benefice's Second Food Bank

The church is open during the day.

Anyone who feels under pressure financially can just slip in and take what they need without having to register anywhere.

Please also feel free to donate food to it yourself.

Do gossip this information to anyone whom you think might find it helpful.

Thanks.



FOR YOUR  
DIARY

HOLY  
WEEK

HOLY WEEK

Holy Week this year is Sun Apr 2 - Sat Apr 8.  
There is a long established pattern of activities with one important addition.

**Sun** Usual services for Palm Sunday

**Mon—Wed** Morning Prayer  
Compline (Night Prayer)

**Thurs** Morning Prayer  
24 hour prayer

**Friday** Hour round the Cross  
Tenebrae (Service of Shadows)

Details will firm up very soon.



## 24 HOUR PRAYER

In the Diocese we are committing ourselves to a year of prayer.

As part of this the congregation at St Mary's Welsh Newton are hosting 24 hours of prayer for the whole benefice, probably starting on Maundy Thursday.

Currently, if I understand it correctly people will be invited to commit themselves to a specific hour of prayer in church.

Want to be part of it? Let Patricia know on [patriciacarswell@gmail.com](mailto:patriciacarswell@gmail.com)

More details out soon.

The logo for 'Growing Good' features the word 'Growing' in a white, sans-serif font above the word 'good' in a larger, white, lowercase sans-serif font. The letters of 'good' are filled with different colors: 'g' is orange, 'o' is yellow, 'o' is blue, and 'd' is orange. The background consists of several overlapping circles in various colors (orange, red, purple, teal, yellow) on a light green background.

# Growing good

## **A notice from St Mary's, Welsh Newton**

We would like to host Growing Good workshops in the New Year for anyone in the benefice who might be interested in attending.

It's a series of six workshops about using social action to benefit the community and grow the church, using the Growing Good Toolkit provided by the Church Urban Fund.

Each session will last about 75 minutes and include a Bible text and reflection, a short film, a group activity and time for prayer.

We have heard from other churches (including a small rural church) that it's an incredibly valuable resource. Anyone interested in joining it or finding out more should email me at [patriciacarswell@gmail.com](mailto:patriciacarswell@gmail.com).

**The first session is on Saturday 18th February  
10.00am—11.30am**



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### How do I find out more?

If you have any questions please contact:

Marion Forrester [marion.r.forrester@googlemail.com](mailto:marion.r.forrester@googlemail.com) / 01568 780188

Sue Foster [s.foster779@outlook.com](mailto:s.foster779@outlook.com)

Catherine Benbow [benbowcatherine@gmail.com](mailto:benbowcatherine@gmail.com) / 01746 785440

Pat Helm [pat@thehelm.me.uk](mailto:pat@thehelm.me.uk)

Pat Macrae [patfmacrae@gmail.com](mailto:patfmacrae@gmail.com) / 01981 580438

**Bishop Richard writes:** *"I warmly commend the week of accompanied prayer. In my 11 years as an incumbent, the week of accompanied prayer was the most significant time of spiritual growth for those who participated. Some said it was the most significant week in their entire spiritual journey to date. The opportunity to speak in complete confidence about our spiritual lives with a confidential and experienced guide proved revolutionary and enriching. I heartily recommend this programme for anyone whatever your spirituality or stage of the faith journey."*

**Closing date for booking: Sunday 12th February.**

### Book a place:

<https://bit.ly/onlineWAP>



The Diocesan Office • The Palace • Hereford • HR4 9BL  
t: 01432 373300 e: [info@hereford.anglican.org](mailto:info@hereford.anglican.org)  
[www.hereford.anglican.org](http://www.hereford.anglican.org)



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## An online Week of Accompanied Prayer

26th February – 4th March 2023



[www.hereford.anglican.org](http://www.hereford.anglican.org)