



Pontesbury & Stiperstones Family of Churches

Newsletter

17th October 2025

Dear friends

We live in an age of the direct cremation. This is when there is no funeral service of any kind and has resulted from a heavy marketing campaign, which has persuaded increasing numbers of people that this is the best way to handle final matters. However, all my instincts and pastoral experience suggest that it causes more problems than it solves. Funerals, of course, are for the living not the dead. Direct cremation removes the opportunity for families to grieve. The gap that is left in people's lives after a loved one dies is huge, but even greater for there being no occasion to properly mark the passing. I have recently come across several people who have been powerfully distressed by this lack of opportunity to grieve. I know that many believe they are being kind to their loved ones by saving them money and trouble over funeral arrangements, but this is nothing compared to being deprived of an occasion to mourn. We do grief badly in this country (the English stiff upper lip is not our friend), and this in my view makes it worse.

It is perhaps as well that Lazarus wasn't cremated, or we wouldn't hear of Jesus weeping at his graveside (John 11).35. If it was good enough for Him, it is vital for us.

Rev Greg Smith
Rector of Pontesbury and Stiperstones

Harvest Suppers

Thanks to all those who supported the Hope Harvest Supper last Friday. Over 60 attended and enjoyed fabulous food and fellowship. Over £1000 was raised through the auction and ticket sales. Thanks to everyone who provided food and served us so kindly

Monday Night Bible Study

Is back, starting Monday 3rd November at 7 p.m. We will be looking at the first half of the book of Daniel. Allen Marsden has kindly agreed to host us this term at 3 Earls Court. All welcome from across the benefice to attend. Please speak to Greg or Allen if you would like to know more.

Transport Scheme

The Rea Valley Transport Scheme which takes people to medical appointments and wellbeing groups now has a telephone number **07468 115939** as well as an email address reavalleytransportscheme.info@gmail.com. Please give as much notice as possible.

The Gathering

The monthly gathering of worshippers from around the Deanery meets at Marton Village Hall this coming Tuesday 21st at 7 p.m. for refreshments and 7.30 start. All welcome.

HTM autumn tidy up

The annual tidy up at HTM will take place on Saturday 1st November from 10am. We'll be tidying inside and outside the church so please come along, bring your tools of choice and in return we'll provide coffee and refreshments!

Stuart Carter Concert

Stuart Carter will be performing at Habberley Village Hall on Friday 7th November at 7 p.m. Tickets are £8 and all monies raised will go to St Mary's Habberley, and its roof repairs. Last year saw a very well received concert, a mix of folk, pop, rock including some of Stuart's own songs. You may need to arrive early for a good seat.

St George's Big Clean

The Big Clean at St George's will take place on Saturday 8th November from 10am. All are welcome, lots of cleaning materials are available and it is a lot of fun!

DBS checks

You will be aware of a very serious data breach that has called into question the wisdom of continuing with the company who undertake DBS checks on behalf of Hereford Diocese. Consequently, the Diocese has decided to switch to 31:8. They have an extremely good reputation and are widely used by the Christian sector. However, DBS checking has not yet resumed, and we would be grateful for your patience.

Little Dragons

Little Dragons is wanting to recruit at least one new leader. The need is now critical. Please speak to Greg or Mandy Thomas at littledragonspontesbury@gmail.com if you would like to know more.

Friday Prayer Group

A new Friday morning prayer group is being commenced at Holy Trinity Minsterley on Fridays, at 9.30 a.m. just for 20 minutes each week. Please speak to Ruth Wadsworth for further details.

Minsterley Outreach and Fundraising Committee

We are looking for new members to join the small outreach and fundraising committee for Holy Trinity Minsterley. The group meets approximately quarterly to plan events (but not necessarily to run them). For further information, please contact Sarah Edwards.

Bible Yarns

Arrives at St George's on Tuesday. This is a wonderful knitted display of many of your favourite bible stories. The exhibition will be in situ for 2 weeks, and there is no charge for just coming into church at any time and exploring this fun display.

Coventry Cathedral

We are wanting to explore the possibility of a parish trip to Coventry Cathedral next Spring, on Tuesday 28th April. At this stage, it would be helpful to know how many people might be interested in joining us. Please speak to Greg or Sadie Preece if you think you might like to come along.

Diocesan Finance Roadshow

St George's will be hosting the Diocesan Finance Roadshow next Monday, October 20th at 7 p.m. with refreshments. The invitation has been extended to all members of all PCCs, and is meant to be an opportunity to ask Archdeacons and finance officers questions about the Diocesan budget and spending priorities.

Readings for this Sunday

Psalm 121

2 Timothy 3. 14- 4.5

Luke 18. 1-8

Calendar for the Week

Fri 17th Coffee Stop 10-12 at St George's

Friday Prayer at HTM at 9.30 a.m.

Sun 19th Worship Together at Shelve at 9 a.m.

Minsterley Praise at HTM at 10.30 a.m.

Harvest Communion at Pontesbury at 10.30

Harvest Lunch at St George's at 12.30

Mon 20th Youth Café at HTM at 3.30 p.m.

Diocesan Finance Roadshow at St George's at 7 p.m.

Tues 21st Foodbank at HTM 10-12

Little Dragons at St George's 10-11.30 a.m.

The Gathering at Marton Village Hall at 7 p.m.

Weds 22nd Funeral of Barbara Lock at St George's at 11 a.m.

Coffee Hub at HTM 10-12 noon

Youth Café at Pontesbury Baptist Church at 3.30 p.m.

Tea Break at St George's 2-4 p.m.

Benefice Council at HTM at 3.30 p.m.

Thurs 23rd Harvest Assembly at St George's at 9.30 a.m.

Foodbank at St George's 10-12

Trinity Tots at HTM at 10-11.30 a.m.

Pontesbury Climate Emergency Action Group meets at St George's at 7 p.m.

Sun 26th Family Service at Hope at 9 a.m.

Family Service at Pontesbury at 10.30 a.m.

Holy Communion at Minsterley at 10.30 a.m.

Holy Communion at Habberley at 5 p.m.