

Together

Benefice Magazine

Cheddar, Draycott and Rodney Stoke



We are all God's people

July/August 2026

£1

BENEFICE INFORMATION



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Church Music: **Wayne Hahn** (01934) 713357

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(St. Peter's & St. Leonard's information on inside back cover)

Pastoral Letter – Thea Oliver



As I write, summer appears to have arrived—although by the time you read this, the British weather may have had other ideas! We are all familiar with the challenge of deciding whether to leave the house with sunglasses, an umbrella, or both.

July and August bring a different rhythm to our communities. Schools break up for the holidays, visitors arrive, gardens burst into colour, and many of us take the opportunity to slow down a little. Even if we are not heading off on holiday, there is something refreshing about longer days and lighter evenings.

The Bible reminds us that rest is part of God's gift to us. Jesus often withdrew to quiet places to pray, and he encouraged his disciples to do the same. In a world that constantly tells us to do more, achieve more, and hurry more, summer can be a gentle reminder that sometimes it is enough simply to be — to enjoy a walk, a conversation, a moment of prayer, or the beauty of creation around us.

Those of us tending gardens know that creation can occasionally have a mind of its own. The weeds seem remarkably enthusiastic about growing, often showing far more commitment than the plants we actually want! Yet even in the ordinary tasks of life, we can glimpse God's generosity and abundance.

As our villages welcome visitors during the summer months, may our churches continue to be places of warmth, peace, and hospitality. Let us also remember those for whom summer is not always easy—the lonely, the unwell, and those carrying burdens unseen by others.

I wish you all a joyful and restful summer. May God bless you, your families, and our communities of Cheddar, Draycott, Rodney Stoke, whatever the weather may bring.

With many blessings,

Thea

Bishop's Letter



Human flourishing for all

'Tell me about your school days' is a deeply illuminating question to ask. Our experience of school shapes us deeply our whole lives long. Schools mould our character and values. They develop our skills and expectations. They influence our relationships and our life chances.

Rooted in our understanding of the Bible, Christians have been involved in schooling for many centuries. In the nineteenth century, the Church of England's National Society set up thousands of schools all around our country, established principally for the benefit of the poor. It is largely out of this heritage that our Diocese of Bath and Wells continues to have a stake in so many of Somerset's schools today.

We have 180 Church Schools, the majority of which are for primary aged children, with nine middle, upper or secondary schools and one specialist provision. Big and small, and found in all kinds of communities, our schools educate around 60% of Somerset's primary school children.

Our schools are Church Schools, they are not faith schools. We are open to everyone, of all faiths and none. Our schools are guided by our Christian ethos, manifested in their engagement with the Bible and worship, in prayer and Christian ethics. More recently, this is expressed most fully in the Church of England's Vision for Education.

This understands our schools' mission to be *'deeply Christian, serving the Common Good'*. Our vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. Our vision is of human flourishing for all.

As bishop, I am privileged to spend lots of time in our Church Schools. The most fun I have is being grilled by young people who pose me questions about ethics and doctrine, our Church's life and faith. I'm certainly kept on my toes.

What I value most is seeing played out in our young people the four main elements of our Church's vision - wisdom, hope, community and dignity. These commitments are reflected in the stories told in this edition of Manna. I hope you'll enjoy reading them as they illustrate our vision for education in the schools of our diocese.

Bishop Michael

READINGS AND SERVICES

	Psalm	First Reading	Second Reading
5th July	145:	Zechariah	Matthew
Trinity 5	8-15	9: 9-12	11: 16-19, 25-end
12th July	65	Isaiah	Matthew
Trinity 6		55: 10-13	13: 1-9, 18-23
19th July	86:	Isaiah	Matthew
Trinity 7	11-end	44: 6-8	13: 24-30, 36-43
26th July	119:	1 Kings	Matthew
Trinity 8	129-136	3: 5-12	13: 31-33, 44-52

	Psalm	First Reading	Second Reading
2nd August	145:	Isaiah	Matthew
Trinity 9	15-end	55: 1-5	14: 13-21
9th August	85:	1 Kings	Matthew
Trinity 10	8-13	19: 9-18	14: 22-33
16th August	45:	Isaiah	Luke
Blessed Virgin Mary	10-end	61: 10-end	1: 46-55
23rd August	138	Isaiah	Matthew
Trinity 12		51: 1-6	16: 13-20
30th August	26:	Jeremiah	Matthew
St Leonard	1-8	15: 15-21	16: 21-end

	Cheddar	Draycott	Rodney Stoke	PEW Parish
5th July	10am Morning Prayer	9.30am	11.15am	
Trinity 5	3.15pm First Sunday	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	
12th July	10am	9.30am	11.15am	
Trinity 6	Holy Communion	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	
19th July	8am BCP Communion	9.30am	11.15am	11am St Lawrence
Trinity 7	9am Breakfast service	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Westbury-s-Mendip
26th July	10am	9.30am	11.15am	
Trinity 8	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Matins	

	Cheddar	Draycott	Rodney Stoke	PEW Parish
2nd August	10am Morning Prayer	9.30am	11.15am	TBC
Trinity 9	3.15pm First Sunday	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	
9th August	10am	9.30am	11.15am	
Trinity 10	Holy Communion	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	
16th August	8am BCP Communion	9.30am	11.15am	
Blessed Virgin Mary	10am Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	
23rd August	10am	9.30am	11.15am	
Trinity 12	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Matins	
30th August	10am			
St Leonard	Benefice service Holy Communion St Leonards			

FROM THE REGISTERS:

Baptism:

We welcome into the Church family:

Myla Spencer (St Andrew's Church, 24th May)

Daisy Scott (St Andrew's Church, 24th May)

Marriage:

We ask God to bless the marriage of:

Alanna Sutton and Nick Colley (St Andrew's, 8th June)

Funerals:

Our prayers are with those who mourn the death of: Vashti Ferris, Rachel Woolley, Anthony Pople, Rebecca Corrick. RIP





DO (a deer, a female deer)

This article is about a man whom I reckon to be the most influential music teacher of all time. Sorry it's a bit complicated – take it slowly!

In the year 1026, the Bishop of Arezzo, a town SE of Florence in Tuscany, appointed a monk called Guido to be Precentor (chief singer) of his cathedral. At that time, the only way you could learn a new piece of music was to have it sung to you, over and over again, by someone who already knew it. To be a Precentor you had to know the whole of church music by heart – all the masses, hymns, psalms and anthems to be sung in the whole year - and the training for all this lasted ten years.

Guido had other ideas. He developed a system of hand gestures to show the shape of a melody, and encouraged his choir to sign with him as they sang. The sense of sight could reinforce their hearing in learning the music.

He went on to use his fingers, pointing to each knuckle to indicate the exact notes being used, and again the choir members imitated his movements as they sang. The sense of touch was brought into use to aid their music education.



Guido's next idea was to rule four parallel lines across a paper to represent his four fingers, and place blobs of ink on the lines, and in the spaces between the lines, to show how the tunes moved up and down. He could "write down" a tune, and the choir could learn the tune for themselves from his writing, even when he wasn't there himself to sing it to them. Nowadays we use five parallel lines to write music, but the basic idea is the same as that invented by Guido, the first person ever to write down music.

Let's say that the next bit of the story happened on St John the Baptist's Day in the year 1026. Guido was teaching the choir the special hymn for the day and noticed an interesting thing. I'll write out the words of the first verse of the hymn (in Latin) to make it clear:-

Ut queant laxis / Resonare fibris / Mira gestorum / Famuli tuorum / Solve polluti / Labii reatum /Sancte Iohannes.

What Guido noticed was that each line of the tune started on a note one step higher than the previous line. He used those initial syllables of the hymn, which everybody knew, to be the names of the notes of the hexachord (six-note scale). UT-RE-MI-FA-SOL- LA.

Some centuries later, as music became more complex, they needed an extra name for the seventh note of the scale, and called it TI (a drink with jam and bread). In English-speaking countries, they changed the name UT to DO. This made a more open sound for singing but in other parts of the world, in France for instance, the name UT is still used.

John the Baptist's Day is the 24th of June. Taking account of the ten days that were lost when the Julian Calendar was replaced by the Gregorian Calendar, that brings the exact 1000-year commemoration of written music to the 4th of July 2026. Happy Millennium, Guido of Arezzo!

David Cheetham.



The 17th of June was a very special day as I had the honour of presenting a cheque to the South Western Ambulance Charity following my London Marathon fundraising challenge.

I want to say a huge thank you to every single person who donated, shared my fundraiser, sent messages of support, and helped make this possible. Together, we raised an incredible **£22,714.03** in memory of my dad.

What started as a personal challenge became something far bigger than I ever imagined, and I'm truly overwhelmed by the generosity shown by so many people. Knowing that this money will help support the amazing work carried out by the ambulance service means so much to me and my family.

Dad would have been incredibly proud, and it means the world to have been able to honour him in this way. From the bottom of my heart, thank you all for helping turn his memory into something that will make a real difference to others. *Carys Walsh*

CHEDDAR (St. Andrew's)	July 5	July 12	July 19	July 26	
	August 2	August 9	August 16	August 23	August 30
	MP		HC		n/a
Sidesperson (8.00)	na /na	na /na	Marie	na /na	na /na
Sidesperson Team Leader	Fiona /Fiona	Rich. S. /Rich. S.	Ken	Ade /Ade	Benefice Service at St. Leonard's Rodney Stoke
Sidesperson 1	Rose'y /Rose'y	Gill /Gill	Marg'te	Iris /Iris	
Sidesperson 2	Anne L. /Anne L.	Dawn	Adrian	Frankie	
Sidesperson 3	na	Peter B. /Peter B.	Jo C.	Ann H.	
Sidesperson 4	na	Ellen /Ellen	na	na	
Cleaning 1	Mo	Davies family	Ade	Rosemary	Mo
Cleaning 2	David	Davies family	Frankie	Karen	David
St. Nectan Chapel Flowers	tba /tba	tba /tba	tba /tba	tba /tba	na /tba
Brass cleaning	na	Ade /Eileen	na	Dawn /Jean	na /na
Church Flowers - Altar	Jo C. /Jean N	Julie H. /Frankie	Julie H. /Frankie	Jean N. /Ann B.	na /Ann B.
Church Flowers - Table	Ann B. /Jean N.	Julie H. /Frankie	Julie H. /Frankie	Jean N. /Ann B.	na /Ann B.
Coffee/Tea 1	Ann D. /Jane	Rosemary /tba	/tba	Ann L. /tba	tba
Coffee/Tea 2	Davis fam. /Roger B.	Fiona /tba	/tba	Pam B. /tba	tba

BLUE = both July and August

RED = July only

BLACK = August only

DRAYCOTT (St. Peter's)				
	July 5 August 2	July 12 August 9	July 19 August 16	July 26 August 23
	HC	MP	HC	HC
Organist/Music Reader 1	David	Ian	Barry	David
Reader 2	John/Roger	Tricia	Roger/Martyn	Jeff/Gill
Sidesperson(s)	Iain/Sue	Jeff	Martyn/Lynda	Gill/Iain
Coffee	John/Roger + Sue	Tricia + Jeff/Tricia	Roger/Chris	Chris/Gill
Cleaning	Chris + Gill/Roger + Sue	Tricia + Jeff	Roger + Sue/Chris + Gill	Jan + Chris/Gill + Jan C.
Flowers	Karen + Chris	Tricia	Heather	Tricia
	Lynda/Tricia	Gill/Lynda	Nataliya/Claire	Nataliya/Claire
				Benefice Service at St. Leonard's Rodney Stoke

RODNEY STOKES (St. Leonard's)				
	July 5 August 2	July 12 August 9	July 19 August 16	July 26 August 23
	HC	HC	HC	BCP
Sidesperson	Steve/Alan	Alan/Ann	Megan/Sue	Sue/Megan
Reader 1	Jo S./Joanne	Alan/Angela	Heather/Sue	Angela/Jo S.
Reader 2	Steve/Alan	Joanne/Ann	Megan/Heather	Sue/Megan
Organist	Joanne	Joanne	Joanne	Barry
Cleaning	Sue Walker/Jenny			
Flowers A	Denny/Sally	Vicky/Denny	Honor/Ann	Jenny/Pippa
Flowers P	Sally/Pippa	Megan	Ann/Vicky	Lesley/Honor
				Steve
				Joanne
				Steve
				Joanne
				Lesley
				Jenny

BLUE = both July and August
 RED = July only
 BLACK = August only

Rector Stuart's Ten Years Of Ministry In Our Benefice



On Sunday 31st May, our three congregations came together for a special joint service in St Andrew's, Cheddar, to celebrate and give thanks for the 10 years that Rev. Stuart has served our benefice with such dedication, care, and faithfulness.

Before the service, our children (aged 4 and above) shared words they felt best described Stuart, each beginning with a letter from R.E.V. S.T.U.A.R.T. Their thoughtful contributions were read aloud and enjoyed by the whole congregation, and can be seen in the picture below; one of our favourite descriptive words for Stuart being 'T.Rex'. Another was 'toothbrush'.

During the service, gifts from across the benefice were presented to Stuart as a token of our gratitude and appreciation. Among them was a particularly exciting gift – the opportunity to take to the skies in a glider sometime in the future and enjoy a bird's-eye view of the benefice he has faithfully served over the past decade. Following the service, Stuart took part in a Desert Island Discs-style interview. We then gathered at Cheddar Village Hall for a delicious, shared lunch.

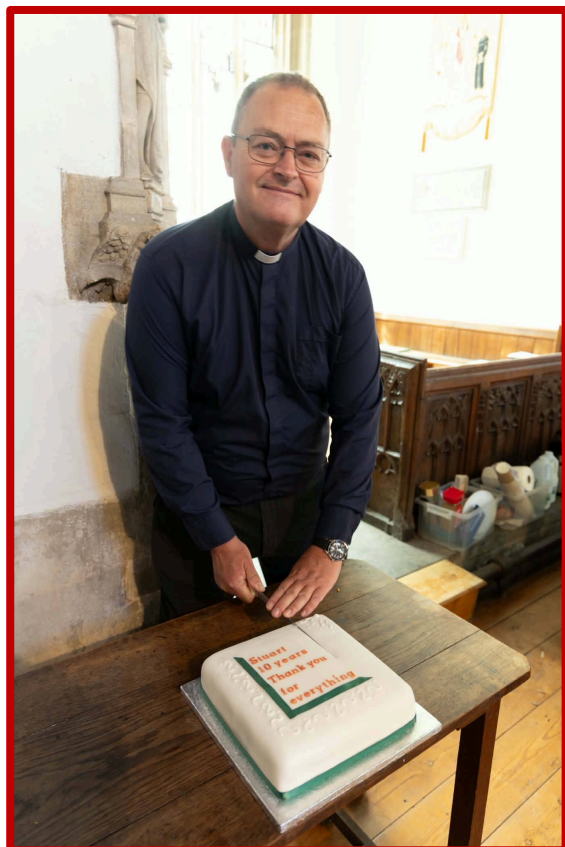
A huge thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to making the day so special and memorable. From planning and organising to providing food, gifts, and practical support, your time, effort, and generosity helped create a truly wonderful celebration.

Stuart, thank you for all you have given to our benefice over the last decade. We are grateful for your ministry, leadership, and friendship, and we look forward to sharing the rest of your ministry with you.





Photographs show Neve and Bernie, the church, hall meal, Stuart waving aloft his framed picture, rather like an FA Cup winner and with his wonderful cake.



M U Coffee Morning



Saturday 4th July

At Staddles, Station Rd

From 10.30am to noon

Proceeds to Women's Refuges

BRING AND BUY STALL

RAFFLE

Celebration Afternoon Tea



Saturday 8th August at 3.30 PM
in Cheddar Village Hall

Tickets £4.50

Come and join us as we celebrate **150 years** since Mary Sumner founded the Mothers' Union, in order to support family life. We will be thanking God with singing and by bringing gifts for the Food Bank.

Draycott and Rodney Stoke First School

Our Christian Value for Term 6: Community

This term, we are excited to be focusing on the Christian value of Community, underpinned by the Bible verse *“Serve one another in love.”* (Galatians 5:13).



This verse reminds us that being part of a community is about showing kindness, compassion, respect and care for others. To serve one another in love means looking out for those around us, offering support when it is needed and recognising that our actions can have a positive impact on the lives of others.

We will be encouraging the children to reflect on how they can contribute to a strong and caring community through their words and actions each day. As we journey through the term, in our collective worship sessions and within the classroom we will be thinking about how communities are strengthened when people work together, value one another and make everyone feel included and welcomed.

We will celebrate the many ways the children demonstrate these qualities within our school and encourage them to continue making a positive difference to those around them. We will also be looking out for children who show exceptional care, kindness, and service within our school community.

These pupils will be recognised through our Community Award, which will be presented during our Celebration Assemblies throughout the term.

We look forward to sharing our journey with you and celebrating the wonderful examples of community that we see every day across our school family.

Mrs Sarah Netto (Headteacher)

Draycott History: Rev. Chitty's Farewell Party



L-R: Bert Nicholls, Graham Brown, Mrs. Nicholls, Mrs. Rosie Sheldon, Mrs. Chitty, Mrs. Hale, Mrs. Northam, Rev. Chitty, Mrs. Dorothy Card, David Sheldon, unknown.

Grateful thanks to Jo Card for this photograph and identification.

If anybody else has memories triggered by seeing this or any past photographs or postcards, please email, scan or lend to the Editor, for future inclusion in a magazine.

The Benefice of
Cheddar, Draycott and Rodney Stoke

FREE HOLIDAY CLUB



Based on stories Jesus told

Monday 24th to Thursday 27th August

The Village Hall, Cheddar
from 9.30-12.30

for children aged from 5 to 12 years

Email: beneficecdrs@gmail.com for more details

The Holy Rollers – Summer Skittles Team News

The Holy Rollers joyfully rolled into action, kicking off their summer skittles season on Bank Holiday Monday, 28th May, with their opening match of the campaign.

This year's spirited squad features Thea, Richard, Karen, Chris (F), Tricia, Jeff, Tony, Bev, and Chris (G), each bringing their own flair, determination, and competitive charm to the alley.

Behind every great roll is a great support team, and we are delighted to be backed by our ever-enthusiastic cheer squad and reserve players: Ali, Ceri, Natalie, Jenny, and Sally—whose encouragement, laughter, and moral support are as essential as any well-aimed strike!

With skittles flying and spirits high, the season is already proving to be an exciting one. We are delighted to report that we have won some matches and achieved second place in others, giving the team plenty to celebrate as we continue our summer campaign.

Everyone is warmly invited to join us for the **End of Season Party, Barbecue, Live Music & Prizegiving at The Strawberry Special on Sunday 30th August**. It promises to be a wonderful afternoon of celebration, friendship, and community spirit.

Funds raised throughout the season are donated to local charities, including St Peter's Church, and we are extremely grateful to Mick and Lori at The Strawberry Special for their continued generosity and support of both the skittles league and our local community.

Stay tuned for further updates on our seasonal exploits—whether they turned out to be glorious triumphs or memorable disasters—and watch this space in September's *Together* for the end of season review.

Thea Postle (Bowls With A Blessing)

SOSP NEWS for July and August

Outwith the events highlighted in this issue, the Supporters Of St. Peter's are pausing to gather their collective breath and devise more events and occasions for the coming autumnal season.

Keep your eyes open. We may be resting but we're still ensuring the cogs inside our craniums remain whirring away.

ALTERNATIVE DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS

ADULT: A person who has stopped growing at both ends but is now growing in the middle.

BEAUTY PARLOUR: A place where women curl up and dye.

CHICKENS: The only animals eaten before they're born and after they're dead.

COMMITTEE: A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

DUST: Mud with the juice squeezed out.

EGOTIST: Someone always me-deep in conversation.

HANDKERCHIEF: Cold storage.

INFLATION: Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

MOSQUITO: An insect that makes you like flies better.

RAISIN: A grape with sunburn.

SECRET: Something told to one person at a time.

SKELETON: A set of bones with the person scraped off.

TOOTHACHE: A pain that drives you to extraction.

TOMORROW: One of the greatest labour-saving devices of today.

YAWN: An honest opinion openly expressed.

WRINKLES: Something others have. Similar to my character lines.

(Thanks to Peter Bassett)

BIBLE STUDY IN THE DEN

Most Tuesdays at 11 AM. Open to All.

Current study: Revelation *(and it is...)*

ARTHUR ALSOP – ST. ANDREW’S ORGANIST

Following an appeal in May for more information on the above, we were delighted to receive the following information from one of Arthur’s descendants.

Born to Robert and Mary Alsop (nee Marshall) in Union Street, Cheddar in 1839, Arthur – who had a brother Robert, my great-grandfather – and a sister Hester, was blind from birth but attended the Bristol Asylum for the Blind, situated where the Wills Building, University of Bristol now stands, at the top of Park Street. My grandfather theorised that Arthur’s blindness was a result of lacking optic nerves.



On becoming a teenager, he returned to Cheddar. His musical skills saw him being appointed as organist at St. Andrew’s. He also played harpsichord and was able to tune and repair such instruments. A benefactor in Bath also donated a piano for his and the church’s use.

Arthur augmented his meagre income by giving concerts in Cheddar and nearby villages (*see poster on next page*), comprising recitations and solos on both cornet, piano and melodeon, walking to and from venues. On returning home, his nephews were called upon to clean the horse manure from his shoes.

Tutored by a Mr. Chapman, a Cheddar neighbour, Alsop learned Braille, the then-new system of raised dots invented by Frenchman Louis Braille. As Chapman was himself a deaf mute, one can only marvel at the two men as they benefited from each other!

I still possess the walking stick with the dog’s head handle that Arthur used. The still-extant Gardener Trust provided him with a small annuity, which was conditional of him never marrying. When learning hymn tunes for the organ, somebody would tap out the notes, to which he would respond “I see, I see” and would then extemporise the harmony, as he did for the voluntaries he played.

Highly respected in the locality, Arthur moved into the house of his brother Robert, following the deaths of his father and sister. Robert’s home was just across the road from St. Andrew’s and it was there that he spent his last years, dying on 4th June, 1905, aged 66.

CHILDRAR.

Under the Patronage of
The Rev. RICHD. A COURT BEADON,
Vicar.

Mr. A. ALSOPP

Begs to inform his Friends and the Public generally, that

MUSIC READINGS

WILL BE

Given for his BENEFIT at the above place,
On *WEDNESDAY Evening, December 7th, 1870.*

The Musical Part of the Entertainment will be given by Mrs. RICKARDS, Miss CHAMBERLAIN, Mr. GWILLAM, Mr. LANGLEY, Mr. D. JEFFERIES, Mr. BROOKS, and others.

The READINGS will be given by the Rev. R. A COURT BEADON, Mr. W. P. BUDGETT, Mr. LANGLEY, Mr. J. BRYNE, and Mr. A. ALSOPP.

Doors Open at 7 o'clock, to commence at Half-past precisely.

Tickets—Reserved Seats 10s. Front Seats 6d.: Back Seats 3d.; to be had of Mr. LANGLEY, School-house, and Mr. J. BRYNE, Chemist, Chilardar.

Printed & Sold, Stationers, Market Printing Office, Axbridge.

Note misspelling of Arthur's surname – twice.



Arthur Alsop is commemorated with a brass plaque on the wall of St. Andrew's church, situated by the Nectan Chapel.

Hugh Alsop

(Thanks to Jo Card for contacting Hugh)

-oOo-

99 NOT OUT

One of our beloved SALTies, Hazel, celebrated a very significant birthday recently. Congratulations, Hazel! Here's to the next 99....

The photographs show The Birthday Gal trying to extinguish her candles and celebrating with the rest of her Birthday Crew.



LET US NOT FORGET

Dear Lord,

May we not forget to remember and honour
Both Your departed and still-living servants
Who have walked with You through the centuries
Leaving precious legacies of many kinds.

Thank You for their examples of faith
And the encouragement of their Godly lives.

Amen.



Ascension Day Service 7.00 AM at the top of St. Leonard's



Rev. Thea led the
Service.

Debbie Levy wrote on
the Friday Night
Stokers WhatsApp
group *"beautiful on so
many levels. Stunning
day, superb singing,
fantastic views of our
village. What a great
way to start the day"*.

Joanne Turner



St. Leonard's, Rodney Stoke FUTURE EVENTS

COFFEE MORNINGS



Saturday 25th July
and

Saturday 15th
August

10.30 -12.00 noon

Rodney Stoke Church
Hall

In aid of church funds

**St. Leonard's
Church
SUNDAY 30TH
SEPTEMBER
10.00 AM**

**United
Benefice
Service**

Please join us as we host the Benefice Service at St. Leonard's. Everyone is welcome. Please stay for refreshments afterwards.

For LLH Trio concert news see next



Lunchtime Concert

The LLH Trio

St. Leonard's Church, Rodney Stoke

Friday 17th July at 1.00pm

Trio 1 From The London Trios by Joseph Haydn

Rosemary by Frank Bridge arr. A Cooper

Trio Opus 2 No. 2 Allegro by Jerome Duval

Night in El Beso by Grant Horsely

Trio for Margaret, Stephan and Hans by Graham Powning

Pause for Thought solo cello piece

Dance of the Woods by Herman Beeftink

Court Jester by Grant Horsley

Sonatina by Francois Devienne

Nightingale by Grant Horsley

Oblivion by Astor Piazzolla

A wonderful way to spend an afternoon. Tea and cakes available after the concert. Donations are very welcome as you don't need to purchase a ticket. Proceeds will be split between the trio and church funds.



I'm taking on a

Mighty Hike

for Macmillan Cancer Support

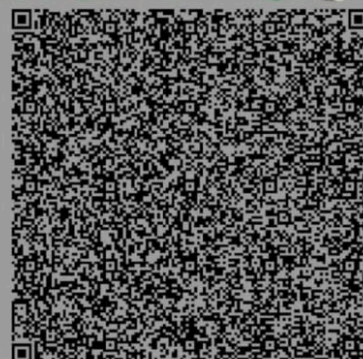
Mighty Hike location:

Distance:

Date:

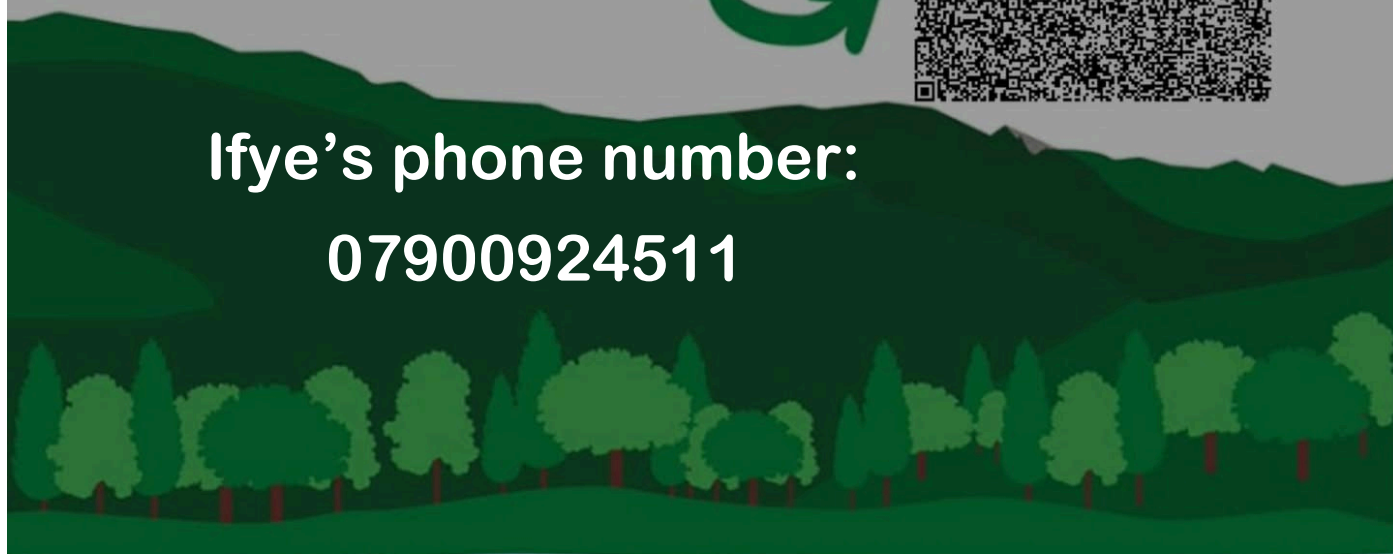
**Help me raise £250 to support people living
with cancer**

**Scan the QR code to donate
directly to my page**



Ifye's phone number:

07900924511



Church Curiosities



Situated near Malmesbury in Wiltshire is England's smallest church. **Bremilham Church** (alternatively referred to as **Cowage Bremilham Church**). It measures just 13 feet by 11 feet. There cannot be many religious edifices situated within a farmyard, either: the Cowage Farm from which it takes its fuller name.

All the surrounding buildings are industrial farm and business units, including a tanning salon. Although the other buildings are newer, it is thought that the church – part of a larger 15th century construction - was contemporaneous with older, now demolished buildings and thus an original part of the site and not erected afterwards.

There is no extensive history of Bremliham but the church was used for keeping turkeys in until the Collins family, the farm's present owners, cleaned it out and the Bishop came to bless and reconsecrate it.

The Grade II listed church only has a service on Rogation Sunday but this annual act of worship regularly attracts upwards of 50 congregants, most of whom have to make do with seats outside on the grass, whether the conditions be fair or foul.



So minuscule is the church that it can only hold ten people inside, four on the one wooden pew and there is no room for an altar. Lacking a dedication to any saint, this Anglican outpost has parish registers stretching back just over 200 years, to 1813.



The Annual MU Dinner

Cheddar Village Hall

Wednesday June 3rd 2026

The annual Mothers' Union dinner was held on Wed, 3rd June in the Village Hall. It was well supported by members and we were delighted to be joined by quite a few non-members.

The whole evening was very enjoyable, with good food and a singalong led by Mary Reeve and Hannah Biddlecombe.

We are very grateful to all who attended, to those who provided puddings, to those who helped us set up and clear away, and to all who gave so generously.

The substantial sum of £280 was raised, to support ongoing projects in our diocese.

Rosemary Tullett

AN ORGANIST EXPLAINS

D MUS Dead Musician.

DEAD PIGEON Traditional method of producing a stopped tone from organ pipes.

DEAR FRIEND Expression used by a church member when speaking to a fellow member he/she is about to insult. If they begin “dear brother/sister in Christ”, consult a libel lawyer.

DICTIONARY One should be kept in church, as it is the only way **APPRECIATION** comes after **ANTHEM**.

DOPPELSCHLAG German term for the musical ornament known as a **TURN** but which makes it sound much more exciting.

DORIAN MODE Lady who wrote some nice tunes.

DOUBLE BASSOON Very expensive instrument used to replicate the sound of a wet raspberry.

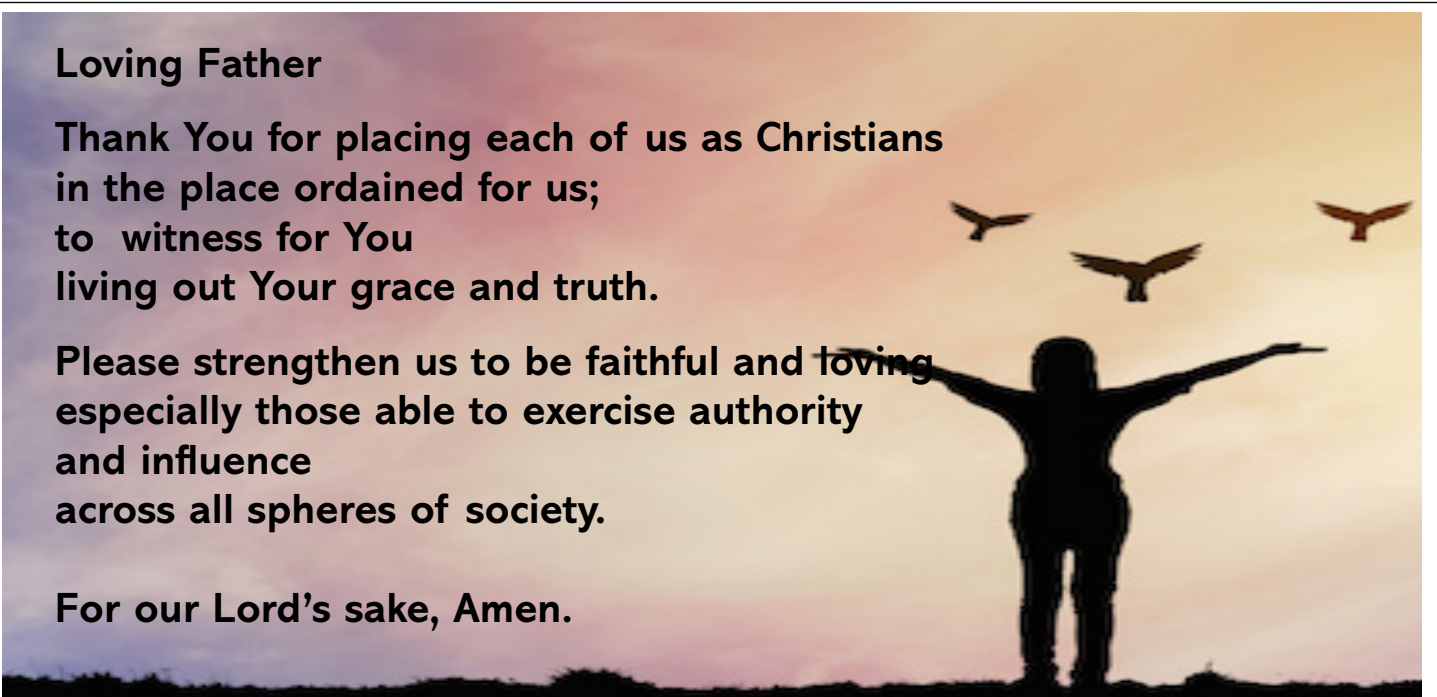
DOUBLE FLAT Where two altos live or how they sing.

Loving Father

Thank You for placing each of us as Christians
in the place ordained for us;
to witness for You
living out Your grace and truth.

Please strengthen us to be faithful and loving
especially those able to exercise authority
and influence
across all spheres of society.

For our Lord's sake, Amen.



For All The Saints...

St. Decuman (? - 706) : 27th August

Decuman, a Welsh missionary, arrived in Somerset, on a raft with his cow. The raft is said to have been made of either straw or his cloak, although it was more likely to have been made of reeds with the cloak as a sail. He was the son of noble parents, possibly of Roman origin; he'd built a Chapel at Rhoscrowther in Dyfed, where he lived, and where there is now a Church dedicated to him.

Becoming disenchanted by the worldliness around him he travelled across the Bristol Channel landing at Dunster, he then settled at Watchet, setting up a cell as a hermit, living on the produce of his cow. Decuman was attacked by a pagan, his attacker described, according to legend '*a certain man more venomous than an asp, more poisonous than an adder*'. The pagan duly beheaded Decuman.

The Saint then apparently picked up his head, and, after washing it in a nearby pagan well, replaced it. Other versions of the story say that it was 'only' his scalp.

After this the local people, turning to Christianity, helped him to build a Church at Watchet, which is dedicated to him. Decuman's Holy Well is to be found down the road from the Church; although dedicated to him, it is also still visited by pagans and is considered to be a sacred site by all.



St. Decuman's Well

Down the lane from the Church, the well is approached through a picturesque gateway; down steps there is a beautiful garden of contemplation on one side and the well-head and stone basins on the other; by the well is a modern stone inscribed '*God breathed and man became a living soul*'.

The Church itself has a wealth of memorials to the Wyndham family - Lords of the Manor.

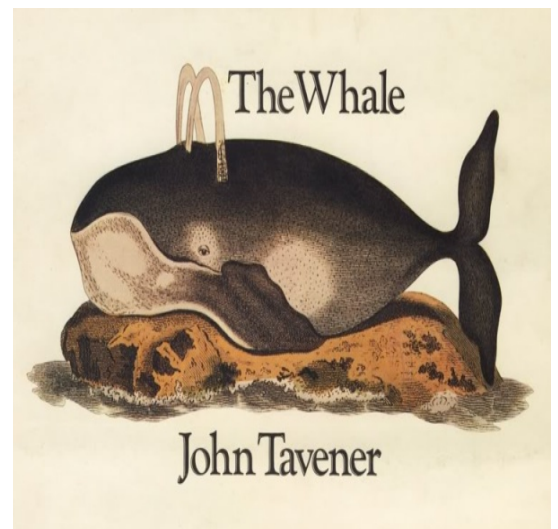
Pat Groves

John Tavener's *The Whale*



Sir John Tavener (1944-2013) began his career as a musical scholar at Highgate School, along with John Rutter. Graduating to the Royal Academy of Music in 1962, he was initially greatly influenced by Stravinsky and his first major work, *The Whale*, was released on the Beatles' Apple label, as John Lennon and Ringo Starr were great proponents of Tavener's work.

As er... 'experimental' as the avant-garde rubbish that Lennon foisted on the public for three LPs, *The Whale* was far from an easy listen. Commencing with Alvar Lidell reading the description of a whale and its' features, the newly-formed London Sinfonietta, together with chorus, a mezzo-soprano, baritone, sanctus bells and Tavener's own organ and Hammond organ gradually overwhelmed Lidell's recitation.



Although sometimes straying from the Biblical narrative of Jonah being engulfed by the whale, large sections of the work: primarily the 'Biblical Narrative' (*et factum est verbum Domini ad Jonam, Filium Amathi, dicens...*) and 'The Prayer' (*clamavi de tribulation mea ad Dominum et exaudivit me; de ventre inferi clamavi, et exaudisti vocem meam...*) made the Biblical allusions very clear.

The Whale was recorded two years after its premiere, in the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Islington, London over three days, July 22nd – 24th July 1970. Bemused worshippers attending Mass at that time had to pick their way around all the instruments, music stands and several tangled miles of wires and cabling.

The work included loudhailers and bellowed declamations further demanded much of the listener. It utilised many diverse – perhaps 'perverse' – elements, making contemporaries such as Harrison Birtwhistle seem mild by comparison.

Converting to Orthodox Christianity in 1977, Tavener composed a setting for *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*. His abiding interest in both Russian and Greek culture saw much more work but it was his unaccompanied four-part choral setting of William Blake's *The Lamb* that brought Tavener once more to the attention of the general public, along with his *Song for Athene*, performed at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997.

The Whale is one of the most complex, often atonal, dissonant and challenging of Tavener's corpus of religious works. It was also, perhaps unsurprisingly, Apple Records' lowest-selling album. (Tavener's second and last work for the label, *A Celtic Requiem*, occupies the place immediately above). For all the disappointing sales and initial opprobrium, there are some moments of real musical beauty to be discovered within.

Ade Macrow

-oOo-



*Dear Lord
Thank You for the bees
that pollinate the flowers with which
You have enriched the Earth
and provided us with such symbiotic beauty
and life-essential practices.
The harmony of Your creation
is a true and perennial source of wonder.
Amen.*

SUMMER RECIPES

I am writing this article on a very wet and rather windy day in June. It doesn't feel like summer. The winter duvet is back on the bed, the wool jumpers are back on the shelves, the garden is very well watered and thoughts turn to warming comfort food rather than al fresco summer dining. However, being an optimist I am hopeful that by the time this article is printed the temperature will have risen and we will be enjoying Somerset in the sunshine.

With this in mind I would like to share with you favourite recipes featuring our wonderful local produce, namely strawberries and Draycott blue cheese, both separately and combined.

STRAWBERRY PARFAIT

12 amaretti biscuits
2 tablespoons amaretto liqueur
2 cups of strawberries, washed, dried and sliced
2 cups of whipping or double cream
vanilla extract
2 tablespoons of icing sugar.



Crush biscuits and divide into large wine glasses. Spoon over liqueur. Cover with sliced strawberries. Whip the cream with the vanilla and icing sugar, Spoon over the strawberries. Garnish with mint leaves and any leftover fruit or alternatively sliced almonds.

RED ONION, WALNUT AND BLUE CHEESE TART

Ready-made and rolled puff pastry
6 tablespoons of red onion marmalade
75g walnut pieces, chopped
100g Draycott blue cheese, crumbled
2-3 thyme sprigs
beaten egg to glaze



Preheat oven to 200C, gas mark 6. Line an oblong baking tray with the pastry and spoon over the red onion marmalade, leaving a small border. Sprinkle over the walnut pieces and the crumbled blue cheese and add the thyme sprigs. Bring up the border to form an edge and brush with beaten egg. Bake for approximately 12- 15 minutes.

STRAWBERRY AND BLUE CHEESE SALAD

Dressing: 3 tablespoons each of raspberry vinegar, balsamic vinegar and olive oil. Combine some salad greens, walnuts, diced strawberries. Draycott blue cheese, and chopped red onion and toss with the dressing. Enjoy!

Susan Peel



St Andrew's PCC Meeting - Thursday 28th May 2026

As spring gave way to early summer and the evenings grew longer, the PCC of St. Andrew's met on Thursday 28th May to pray together and consider the life and work of the church.

Following the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, the PCC was pleased to welcome Eleanor Motion to her first meeting. Eleanor also represents St. Andrew's on the Deanery Synod, and we give thanks for all who serve the church in these wider roles.

The meeting also marked an important transition. After more than 20 years of devoted service as Treasurer, Dawn Hill has stepped down from that role. The PCC expressed heartfelt thanks for her faithful service over many years. Huw Davies has now been appointed as the new Treasurer and will be joining the PCC following a short handover period.

Members received updates on the development of the new benefice (the PEW parishes). While fully supporting the creation of the benefice, the PCC expressed concern about delays in appointing a House of Duty priest and asked that this be progressed as a priority, for the sake of pastoral care across the parishes.

There was encouraging progress on the church reordering project, with faculty approval now in place and fundraising events planned over the coming months. A strong emphasis is being placed on involving the wider village community as well as the congregation.

The PCC also heard positive reports on Messy Church, SALT, school links, and the monthly lunch, all of which continue to grow and flourish. Safeguarding and health and safety remain ongoing priorities. Risk assessment documents and related health and safety information are now available in a folder in the Den. In the interests of openness, draft PCC minutes will in future be displayed on the church notice board after each meeting.

The next PCC meeting will take place on Thursday 30th July at 7.00 PM in the Den. If you have any questions, concerns, or items you would like the PCC to consider, please speak to any PCC member, who will be happy to raise them on your behalf. Please continue to hold St Andrew's, its PCC, and the developing benefice in your prayers.

Lorraine Grover Ng (PCC Secretary)

An exciting project is being planned.

This is an advance notice of a significant event that will be happening in the Benefice in the Autumn and New Year. We will holding an **Alpha Course** in Cheddar Village Hall.

An **Alpha Course**, which you may have already heard of, is an opportunity to explore the basics of our Christian faith. It is a tried and tested course having been held in many places in this country and around the world.

This is a chance for our church members to bring friends who would like to know more about our faith and indeed anyone who is interested.

We will be meeting on Sunday evenings, with **6 sessions** starting on **1st November 2026** and then **5 further sessions** from **10th January 2027**. The sessions in January will include a Saturday away day at Bagley Baptist church.

Each session will start with a meal, followed by a film on the subject for the evening and then opportunity for discussion. There will be further details in September but in the meantime please note the dates, consider joining the course and bringing a friend. Above all we need to be praying for all aspects of this venture.

Stuart Burns (Rector)



CONGRATULATIONS, DEBORAH!

Buddy puts his stamp of approval* on Deborah, on her brilliant completion of two years' theological study and training to be a Licensed Local Minister (old title "Reader") for our Benefice.

*** This biblically literate dog knows 2 Corinthians 1:22 (and has slightly amended it) ... "Buddy has claimed you as his own and put his paw upon you as a guarantee."**

SAVE THE DATE!

Bank Holiday Monday

31st August



For full details of how to join in the day's fun, with activities including abseiling down the tower, please contact FIONA (fionamorris@gmail.com or 07591749057) or any other member of the St. Andrew's Reordering Team.

All raised funds towards the Reordering.

What's rarer than rocking horse manure?

What's more precious than platinum?

What discovery would defeat even the intrepid efforts of the likes of Stanley. Shackleton and many others?

It's **CLEANERS** for St. Andrew's Church. So elusive, that no picture could be sourced to illustrate this piece.

Interested in helping to provide evidence of this most elusive of species?

Please contact:-

Mo Steele (01934) 743426.

Don't wait for David Attenborough to discover 'cleaners'. Provide proof today!

Atheists belong to a non-prophet organisation.



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SPOT THE DEBORAH

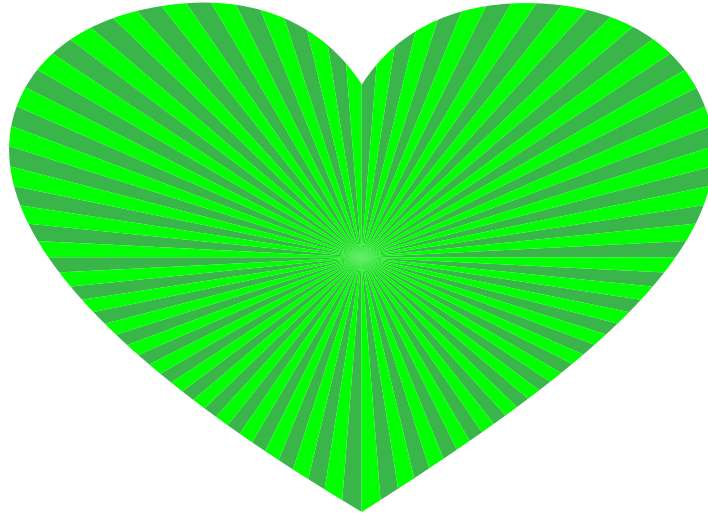
Not quite 'Spot The Ball' (remember that?) or even 'Where's Wally' but see if you can find our Deborah in the picture below. *(We'll give you a clue: she's the one that looks like Deborah).*



Lay Worship Assistants, Lay Pastoral Assistants and Spiritual Directors were welcomed this week to the third of four gatherings happening this summer to thank and acknowledge those who undertake these roles for all that they give and do.

Those who came took part in evensong in Wells Cathedral led by the Vicars Choral and Girls' Choir. They then returned to the Bishop's Palace for refreshments and a wonderful evening together.

On behalf of our whole diocese, Bishop Michael thanked everyone who came for all that they give, do and make possible.



The Lydia Biddlecombe Star Tribute Fund

Between 3rd and 10th August this year, 19 intrepid walkers and 1 cyclist will be walking Hadrian's Wall in memory of Lydia Biddlecombe and raising money for cardiac babies and children being treated at Bristol Children's Hospital. The walkers will cover about 14 miles each day so it will be a great challenge. They will be cared for, cooked for and driven by a small but committed care team.

Lydia was born with an extremely rare and complex heart defect and since her death at the age of 4 years we have raised **£70,000** to give other cardiac babies and children their best chance at life.

If you feel you would like to donate to this very worthy cause please follow our just giving link:

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/hannah-biddlecombe-6>

In memory of Lydia Rose Biddlecombe 27.04.08 – 30.5.12



SET IN STONE



Located in the side wall of Church Farm House, opposite the east end of St. Andrew's, does anybody know what this niche once was?

It could have perhaps been a small window, although there are no signs of any other such apertures.

Has it simply been blocked by another stone or, unlikely though it might seem. Is this a well-eroded statue?

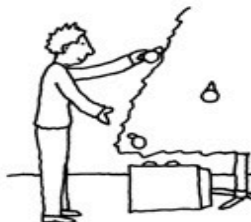
If you know, please tell....

THE VICAR'S BREAK

HOW WE ARE GOING TO COPE



BETTY WILL
SET UP THE
MICROPHONES



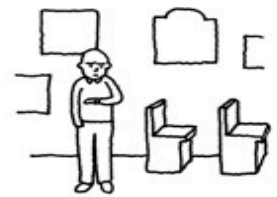
KEVIN WILL
BOX THE
BAUBLES



ARTHUR WILL
TURN ON
THE HEATING



GLADYS WILL
FOLD THE
SERVICE SHEETS



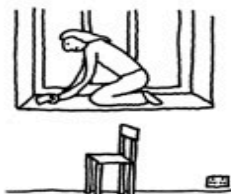
BRIAN WILL WAIT IN
CHURCH FOR THE LADY
TRACING HER ANCESTORS



ROSEMARY WILL OPEN
AND BIN THE
CHURCH-FURNISHINGS
CATALOGUES



DAVID WILL PUT
THE CHAIRS BACK
IN A SYMMETRICAL
PATTERN



TINA WILL SCRAPE
THE CANDLE WAX OFF
THE WINDOW LEDGES
USING THE (EXPIRED)
PARISH CREDIT CARD



SUSAN WILL
CATEGORISE THE
LOST UMBRELLAS



NIGEL WILL
TAKE CHARGE
OF THE GRIT

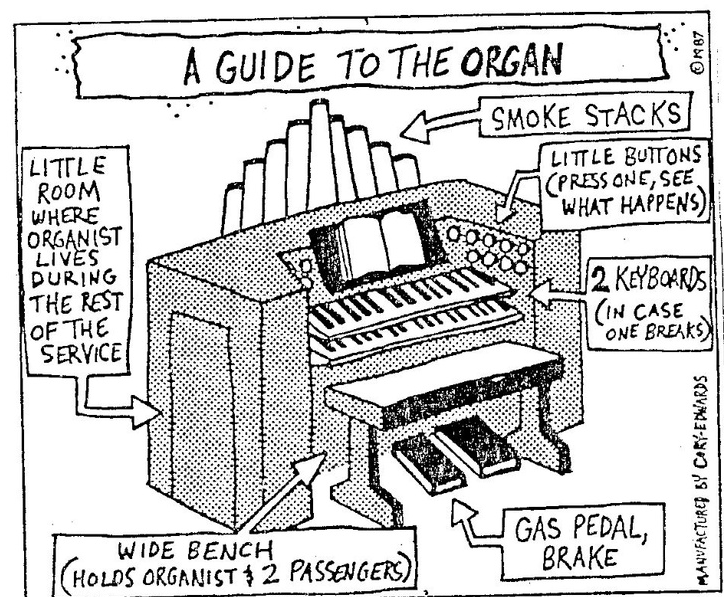
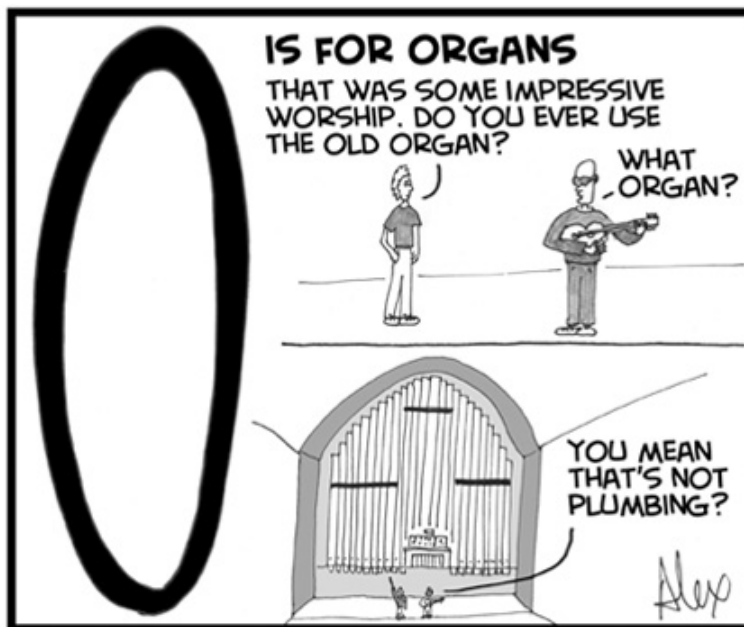
Genuine Notes Left For The Milkman

"Please leave the form, I need to receive subsidised milk. I have a two month old baby and did not know until the neighbour told me".

"Dear milkman, I have just had a baby. Please leave another one".

"...also, no milk at number 14. He is dead until further notice so does not need any today".

"From now on, please leave two pints every other day and one pint on the days in-between, except Wednesdays and Saturdays when I do not need any".





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