



Five Crosses

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2021

Tintinhull, Chilthorne Domer, Yeovil Marsh,
Thorne Coffin, Lufton

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Dear Friends,

A very happy New Year to you all.

As always the start of a new year is filled with hopes. Hopes for prosperity; hopes for fulfilment; hopes for happiness; hopes for peace; hopes for good fortune for our families and friends. In that regard 2021 is no different from any other year. However, this year is not quite like any other because it starts with many anxieties for us too. The coronavirus has been with us for nine months as we enter the new year. During most of 2020 it has consumed all of our energy. For many people this past year has brought worry and concern for themselves and for their families. The virus, and the restrictions it has imposed upon us has brought an increase in mental problems for people of all ages. This past year has been especially hard on our young people and children. School, college and university was severely affected last year, and will surely be again this year. But most seriously affected, of course, are those who have been, and some who still are, ill with the virus or the so-called *long covid*. And there are more than 70,000 families who are grieving the loss of loved ones and the circumstances of funerals and space to grieve properly means that they will still be needing space and understanding, and healing could be a long time coming.

But, it is not all bad news as we enter 2021. We have already seen the first vaccine starting to be rolled out, and at least one more looks to be close. We know that the vaccine will be a key part of getting us back to something like normal. As the vaccine is administered more and more widely we know that we will be able to mix with friends and family more freely and that will be one of the most welcome results of a return to normal. There's still a way to go, but we can start to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

As we reflect on all of this we might be reminded that God is to be found in new beginnings and new opportunities. It can be hard to see but I have no doubt that God is at work in our current situation. Not in causing it, but in redeeming it. Bringing hope where there is despair, life where there is death, joy where there is

sorrow. That is what we see happening in the life of Jesus. It is what we, with the eyes of faith, can see happening through the events through which we are living in these times. If we work with God we can come through all this stronger and more compassionate, more united.

Prayer is always important for Christians and at this time there is plenty for us to pray about – the sick, the carers and medical staff, the roll out of the vaccine, the bereaved, the government, the scientists. The wish of a Happy New Year is not simply an empty gesture but a sincere wish – especially this year. There are reasons to be hopeful, so I say again that I wish all ‘a very Happy New Year.’

With blessings in Christ, Fr Peter

“One more step” By Bishop Peter

January takes its name from the Roman god, Janus, who is usually depicted as having two faces, looking both to the future and the past. At the start of a New Year it is good to do the same.

2020 will sadly be remembered as the year disrupted by COVID-19. Cracks in our care for each other have been revealed and it has had a disproportionate effect on those already vulnerable or deprived. It showed us that those who are most essential to our needs, those who clean and serve and care, are often those valued least in our economy. However, we also saw extraordinary acts of kindness and compassion, as churches and communities worked together to provide comfort, support, and practical care.

So, what of 2021? The temptation may be to forget what we have learnt, to paper over the cracks, ignore what has been uncomfortable and to seek comfort in the familiar. I hope we don't. 2020 opened our eyes to the harm caused when people are excluded on the basis of race, ability, gender, sexual orientation or wealth. Jesus calls us to a better way. Jesus broke the bounds of exclusion, refusing to accept the social norms and speaking to Samaritans, women, Gentiles, tax collectors and sinners. He teaches that the first shall be last and the last first. He reconciles humanity to God through his death and resurrection.

As we look forward to 2021, we need to think again what it means to follow Christ and to build our lives and communities based on mutual love, respect and service. ‘For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.’ May we all know the Lord's leading and guiding as we step out into a New Year.

With my warmest greetings, Bishop Peter

News from the Parishes

Hilary Cozens writes: “Due to Lockdown delay, in early December, the Children's Society home boxes were collected a month late. Jill Coe was the Chilthorne area box gatherer and my husband Ray assisted once again with opening, documenting and double checking the contents and furthermore carried the heavy load to the bank! So warm thanks to Jill and Ray. At present there are 23 box holders in our benefice and one donator by cheque but despite falling numbers the collection this year topped last years by just over £100 to make a wonderful donation of £646. 73p. So on behalf of the Church of England's Children's Society grateful thanks.” **Interested in having a box?** ‘phone me on 01935 824220.

TINTINHULL

John Gower writes: “I hope you have all had a Happy Christmas and keep well. Unfortunately the Corona virus appears to be more virulent, so please be as sensible as you can. This virus has put a bigger dampener on Christmas with no Crib Service at

St. Margaret's and seeing family very reduced. On the positive side, this Christmas has been less commercial and venerable neighbours helped. An example of this came from crocus planting Yeovale Rotary and St Margaret's School who delivered a parcel consisting of mince pies, a piece of Christmas cake and some chocolates to some elderly villagers who lived on their own. The Church looked lovely for Christmas and our thanks to the cleaners and decorators. The Camelot class of our school had done a lovely display depicting hope for 2021. I am sure we all join them in that wish. Thank you Fr. Peter for the services you have taken during this period and providing the on line services for those isolating, which have been of great quality. I hope that those in need of a Covid vaccination will have one soon and that we can get back to a more normal life. I wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year. "

From Ray Cozens, Church Treasurer: "Thank you to everyone, parishioners and organisations for supporting St Margaret's financially during 2020. Running costs do not diminish and it has been comforting to say that St Margaret's continues to pay its way. Of course it was hugely disappointing that our HLF application was returned unexamined due to Covid-19 in order that existing recipients could be supported.

Special thanks from Hilary Cozens to a small band of St Margaret's seasonal helpers - Sue Moore and Derek Williams (tree and arch lights) and to flower ladies Rebecca Harris + her girl (Advent wreath) and Wendy Dowding (porch decorating) Ray and I enjoyed your company in a properly distanced way! Happy New Year.

LUFTON

From Francis Burroughes: "We have had a quieter Christmas than usual at Lufton this year, and we missed our Carol Service, but our candle-lit Christmas communion was blessed and especially meaningful this year, and we are fortunate to have been able to continue our worship relatively unaffected. We are grateful to all who have helped to support our services, and especially of course to Father Peter Down for leading us in worship each week. We wish everyone in the Benefice a peaceful, healthy and safe New Year. Some members of our congregation here at Lufton have already had the first instalment of the Covid vaccine, so at least some of us are half safe, and we hope it will not be long before the benefits are available to all."

From Susan Collins: Reflections for the January Newsletter

Having just read my copy for last January's Newsletter, I realise that we were totally unprepared for the year which lay ahead. The two constants have been God and Hope – hope for an end to the virus, suffering, hunger and loneliness, to name but a few.

We are grateful to Francis Burroughes for maintaining the Church building and Services when permitted. In fact Francis is Churchwarden of both Brympton Church and Lufton, so has, no doubt, kept very occupied during the last 9 months. We speak from what has seemed, at times, to be the other side of a screen, or veil. Needing to 'shield' on medical advice, has meant feeling isolated from family, friends and the Church. Nevertheless, we have felt closer to God in the natural world, than we often do in Church buildings. We have enjoyed Church services on line and on television, both via the benefice web site and via the Wells Cathedral web site, singing along at virtual Carol Services. This is no substitute for human contact and interaction, which emphasises the fact that 'Church' must be so much more than just communal worship in a building. What we have missed more than anything has been feeling a sense of community and Pastoral Care.

We, like many others, enjoyed a Zoom Family gift opening and chatting to

relatives and friends living alone. With the introduction of the new vaccines now and in the coming months, we live in the hope that the year ahead will slowly return the World to some kind of normality. Will life ever be quite the same? Let us trust with God's help we may become better people. We hope you are all continuing to enjoy a happy and safe Twelve Days of Christmas. We would like to wish all in the Benefice and beyond, a Peaceful, Happy and Healthy New Year."

YEOVIL MARSH

From Christine Salmon: "Happy New Year - I am sure we are all glad to see the turn of the new year after the trials and tribulations we all battled through last year with the risks of Covid 19. We are not quite there yet but with vaccine programmes already started the light is at the end of the tunnel while we continue to do our bit to keep the spread to a minimum. We have been blessed with the continued dedication of our hospital workers and all those key workers who ensured we could still keep food and essentials available. This time of year is a great time to reflect too so thank you to all of our own key workers in our parishes and those who continue to help each other locally through these more difficult and restricting times - so much good to celebrate out of this wretched situation. Well done everyone and God Bless. "

From the editor: cut off date is 16th January for inclusion in the February issue.

SERVICE DURING JANUARY 2021

Sunday	Morning Worship (with Holy Communion)	Evening Worship
Sunday 3 rd January Epiphany	10.30 am – St Mary's, Chilthorne Domer	6 pm – St Peter's & St Paul's Lufton
Sunday 10 th January Baptism of Christ	10.30 am – All Saints, Yeovil Marsh	6 pm – St Peter's & St Paul's Lufton
Sunday 17 th January Epiphany 2	10.30 am – St Margaret's, Tintinhull	6 pm – St Peter's & St Paul's Lufton
Sunday 24 th January Epiphany 3	7 pm – St Mary's, Chilthorne Domer	6 pm – St Peter's & St Paul's Lufton (Holy Communion)
Sunday 31 st January Presentation of Christ	10.30 am – All Saints, Yeovil Marsh	6 pm – St Peter's & St Paul's Lufton
Sunday 7 th February 2 before Lent	10.30 am – St Margaret's, Tintinhull	6 pm – St Peter's & St Paul's Lufton

Online Services are recorded on Saturday evenings at 7 pm and are online from 9.15 am on the Benefice website every Sunday. Check the Benefice website for details and for any changes to these services.