

Benefice E-Newsletter
Dawlish with Holcombe & Cofton
4th June 2023

As some of you will know Roz and I were able to spend some time in the Holy Land in May. We were able to spend time visiting the places where biblical events took place. At most of these places we found a church had been built over or adjacent to what is believed to be 'the site'. Some of them were beautiful and tranquil places of prayer. Others were ornate and cluttered and seemed to distract me from what I had come to see, to experience and to try to understand.



Inevitably at most places we found ourselves as pilgrims alongside Christians from across the world and we had really interesting conversations with a Romanian Orthodox group and some Baptists from the USA.

At the same time the reality of the 21st Century was everywhere and often difficult to understand. The land is split between Israel and

Palestine. The state of Israel appears in some turmoil with protests against its government. The state of Palestine is weak and fractured and subject to whatever Israel allows it to do. Tensions between the two are significant. Only about 2% of the population are Christian, with Judaism and Islam being predominate. There are strict restrictions on who can travel where, so when we visited Jericho we were in a place forbidden to most Israeli citizens and yet when arriving at Tel Aviv airport,



we were in a place that few Palestinians can use. (Most Palestinians have to travel to Jordan and fly from Amman).



Despite the small Christian presence, Christian traditions from all over the world have a presence. On one Sunday we attended the Anglican cathedral in Jerusalem and on another the Lutheran church in Bethlehem. Yet in the church of the Holy Sepulchre (site of Jesus's crucifixion) there are over 20 chapels, including Coptic, Armenian, Orthodox, Catholic and Ethiopian, but none of them are protestant, as the site was established and shared long before the reformation.

I realised that we worship in, and belong to, a worldwide Church that is incredibly varied in the ways in which it

worships and organises itself and that we are but a small part of God's church in the world. I was bewildered and sometimes irritated by the worship and behaviour of some Christians; and yet I was intrigued to want to learn more of others. It made me reflect on how we all have our preferences about how the church worships and our expectations of our fellow Christians. Like me, you will have your preferred styles of hymns and songs, perhaps a preferred bible translation, and a preferred style of behaviour of those who lead and participate in our services.

My strong sense is that in most cases my preferences are no more or less pleasing to God than most of those I have experienced in the Holy Land.



As the process moves forward to find a new Rector for our benefice, I hope that we will not allow our preferences (or even prejudices??) to obstruct or prevent God's desires for our benefice and His choice of the person to lead us on the next part of our churches' lives.

With my prayers
Alan Smith



Services

4th June

8am St Gregory's – Holy Communion
9.30am St George's – Holy Communion
10am St Gregory's – Greg's @ 10 and Baptism
11am St Mary's – Morning Worship

6th June

10am St Gregory's mid-week Holy Communion

11th June

9.30am St George's – Morning Worship and Baptism
10am St Gregory's – Informal Holy Communion
11am St Mary's – Holy Communion



Mothers Union

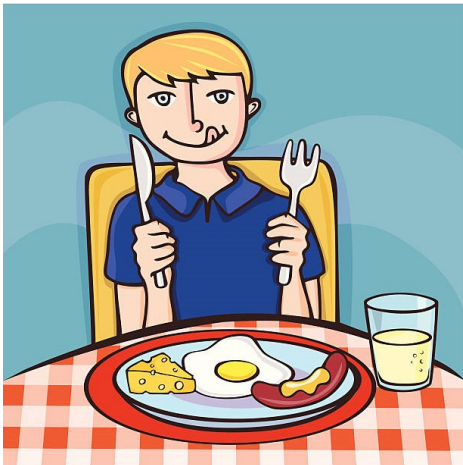
Mothers Union will be meeting at St Gregory's on Tuesday 6th June in the upper narthex at 2-3pm.

Marjorie's Home Group at St Gregory's

Marjorie Thorne has some space in her Home Group, They meet each Friday morning at 10.15am at Wedlake Mews on Brook St. – if you might like to come along and see what it's all about, get in touch with Marjorie directly. Contact details are: 866416 or 07704876291.



Men's Breakfast at St Gregory's



Advanced notice for the Men's breakfast which will be happening on the 5th June at 9am at Mount Pleasant. If you'd like to go along, please get in touch with Ray Williams: bevray@outlook.com

Swap Shop & Little Greg's at St Gregory's

Both Swap Shop and Little Greg's will be back after half term on Tuesday 6th June.

Eat and Enlightenment (St George's)

Eat and Enlightenment will be taking place on Tuesday 13th June at the Castle pub in Holcombe at 7pm. All welcome. Please contact Mike and Pam Burden for more information: bevray@outlook.com



St Mary's BBQ – advanced notice

**BARBEQUE AT ST MARY'S HALL
DAWLISH WARREN**

Sat 17th June 2023 at 5pm

Entertainment from



U Kan Strum

plus

Vanessa & Friends



Tickets

Adult £8

Children U12 £5

Free First Burger

or Hot Dog



Tickets can be obtained from
Ruth on 01626 864537 email
ruthcann737@btinternet.com or
Rachel on 07713 929148 or email
bookstmaryshall1@gmail.com

Bring your own drinks
Tea & Coffee available

If you would like any support, or someone to talk to, or you are aware of someone else who would appreciate contact please ring one of the following:

Margaret Noel: 01626 863148

Will Halse: 01626 866054

Ceri Lee: 07739 936286
