

The Beneficial

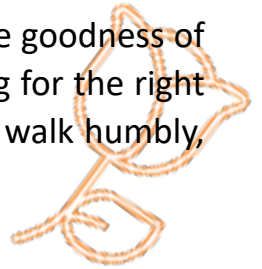
February 2024

News from the Benefice of St Mary's + St Stephen's

I love you, O Lord, my strength.

*The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer,
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. Psalm 18*

As I write it looks like Spring has sprung ... but this is Britain, and I'm sure the weather has a few more surprises up its sleeve. I'm not in any great hurry, anyway. I love winter trees, their shapes. I learned recently that although we think their branches are bare they actually aren't. The buds for Spring are already there, ready to burst into new life when the conditions are right. Our buds are within, and are ready to blossom with all the goodness of God's promised full life - compassion, kindness, joy, peace, patience ... waiting for the right conditions, for us to give attentive space enough to allow them to emerge; to walk humbly, love mercy and do justly.



SPECIALLY for FEBRUARY

The new year is now in full swing and the Benefice is no different! New ideas, new activities and new members to our congregations all make for an exciting start.

THANK YOU'S from the two food banks, Action Pantry and the Trussell Trust, were profound as they were hugely appreciative for the fantastic Benefice collections. Thank you too to all who donated so generously.

Friday 2nd February & 1st March – Lansdown Friendship Club

A welcoming gathering for people with memory difficulties, their accompanying family and friends. Enjoy refreshments and a monthly theme at St Stephen's Church Centre, 2 – 3.30 pm.

Thursday 8th February & 14th March – Lansdown Neighbourhood Group

Meet friends old and new at this monthly coffee gathering at St Stephen's Church Centre, 10.30 am – 12.30 pm.

Sunday 25th February – St Stephen's Worship in the Round 10.45 am

This is the first of a series of more relaxed services on the 4th Sunday of every other month. Join us for coffee and pastries before the service from 10 am. There won't be coffee afterwards, to enable anyone with lunch or afternoon engagements to make a swift exit! The non-communion service will be based on familiar liturgy but will include an intriguing interview with different congregation members when "Between Sundays" explores what they've been doing during their busy week.

CONGRATULATIONS to Michelle and Stephen Brindley married at St Stephen's on 31 December 2023.

WELCOME TO NEW NEIGHBOURS

If you have new neighbours moving in this spring, why not offer them our Welcome to Lansdown booklet? This little Benefice publication is packed with local information from dog walkers to DIY shops, and cafes to children's playgrounds. Contact [Penny Cracknell](#) for a free copy.

MARIGOLD DATES St Stephen's – Saturday 24 February, 10 am – noon. A mini spring clean!



HEADS UP ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2024

- **EASTER 2024** is exceptionally early (31st March) so watch out for news of our special services.
- **ST STEPHEN'S TOWER ABSEIL FUNDRAISER** – Saturday 11 May (18 May poor weather reserve date), a combined fundraiser for St Stephen's and Genesis Trust.
- Stand by for dates for an origami workshop; jazz evening, and a Benefice mid summer meal, a family Great Big Green Week event – and that's just half the year's planned activities!

LOCAL TRAFFIC PETITION – As many people already know there are a number of BaNES Lansdown traffic consultations underway. St Stephen's has responded to the Lansdown Rd/ Richmond Road proposed junction change; Sion Hill Place Residents' Association have organised an online petition against another proposal, the closure of St Winifred's Lane. If interested in the latter, you can either sign [online](#), or there will be a hard copy of the petition in the Church Office.

DON'T FORGET . . .

Parent & Toddlers St Stephen's Church Centre, Monday (during termtime) 9.30 – 11.30 am

Marigold Moments St Stephen's 4th Saturday, **Marigold Moments** 10 - noon for cleaning + gardening + coffee + cake

Service Rotas and Hangout helpers Volunteers are always needed at both Benefice churches. It's fun and a lovely way of joining our church families. Do get in touch with the [Office](#) to find out how you can get involved.

St Stephen's Centre A great place to hire for parties, meetings, community gatherings. Book via the [Office](#)

Giving Our need for everyone's financial support is greater than ever. We cannot say how hugely appreciative we are for any kind and generous giving of whatever nature. To find out more, please contact our Treasurers: St Stephen's — [Mike King](#) | St Mary — [Judith Pepler](#)

SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE – FEBRUARY

Hangout, a themed activity time for children, operates every Sunday at St Stephen's.

February

Sunday 4th

2nd Sunday before Lent

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Choral Communion + Hangout

Sunday 11th

Next before Lent

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Holy Communion + Hangout

Sunday 18th

1st Sunday in Lent

SM 9 am Eucharist (BYO Coffee)

SS 10.45 am Choral Communion + Hangout

Sunday 25th

2nd Sunday in Lent

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Celtic Morning Worship + Hangout

SM 4.00 pm BCP Evensong and Reflection

March

Sunday 3rd

3rd Sunday in Lent

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Holy Communion + Hangout

Sunday 10th

Mothering Sunday/4th Sunday in Lent

SM 9 am Eucharist

SS 10.45 am Family Service (+ 12.15 Communion)

PRAYER IN THE BENEFICE

Monday We gather on Zoom for prayer at 9 – 9.30 am. Please email to receive the code.

Thursday Meditation in the Christian Tradition - 6.30pm-7ish St Mary's, Charlcombe. A guiding thought, then 20 minutes of silence. Blankets and cushions provided.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rector: Revd Philip Hawthorn
Associate Priest: Revd Debbie Pow
Curate: Revd Andrew Avramenko

To email each by name: Philip/Debbie/andrew@ststephensbath.org.uk

For general information, or giving to our churches, please contact our Administrator:

Gabriela Longhurst - Church Office, Lansdown Road, Bath BA1 5SX

T: 01225 420946

E: office@ststephensbath.org.uk

Churchwardens, all contactable via the office:

St Stephen's: Carolyn Cowley, Penny Cracknell, Jude Dent and Hester Davies

St Mary's: Liz Thorne and Neil Latham

Treasurers: Mike King (St Stephen's) and Judith Pepler (St Mary's)

www.ststephensbath.org.uk www.stmaryscharlcombe.org.uk