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'Parish News'

**The Parish magazine for
Broughton Astley and Croft with
Stoney Stanton**

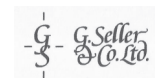


April
2026

**Hosanna!
Crucify him!
Finished!
He is risen!
Alleluia!**

40p

Supplied and printed by



The Genuine Independent Funeral Directors & Memorial Masons

Parish Contacts

Rector	Position vacant	
Assisting Clergy	Revd Vic Goodman	01455 285410
Readers	Lester Halling Peter Yates	01455 282189 07760 152577
Locally Authorised Ministers	Paula Atkinson Heather Beadle Malcolm Burland Sheila Yates	07581 574340 01455 284689 07946 575105 07491 811019
Pastoral Assistant	John Bass	07458 315152
PCC Secretary	Paula Atkinson	07581 574340
PCC Treasurer	Barbara Bedford	01455 202812
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Peter Yates	07760 152577

To arrange Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals contact

Parish Administrator	Linda Humphreys	07534 820197 bacsschurches@gmail.com
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Parish News Editor	Wendy Howe	07779 194730 wjhowe.t21@btinternet.com
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To subscribe to the Parish News please contact:

Broughton Astley	Tom Cockerill	01455 698949
Croft	Hubert Lane	07787 910466
Stoney Stanton	Wendy Howe	07779 194730

For further information, see inside back cover or visit our website:

<http://www.stmaryandstmichaelschurches.co.uk>

Or follow us on Facebook: @bacsschurches

Around the Churches

St Mary's, Broughton Astley		
Churchwardens	John Bass Colin Atkinson	07458 315152 07792 801900
DCC Secretary	Moira Cooper	07951 134920
DCC Treasurer	Steve Windram	01455 272922
Tower Contact		
Tower Captain	Andy Kedie	01455 284777
Teddy Bear Bunch (Weds 10:30 Term time)	Heather Beadle	01455 284689

St Michael and All Angels, Croft

Churchwardens	Claire Jordan Mike Wootton	01455 282495 01455 283699
DCC Secretary	Claire Wootton	07423 041399
DCC Treasurer	Lester Halling	01455 282189
Tower Captain	Lester Halling	01455 282189

St Michael's, Stoney Stanton

Churchwardens	Paul Lawrence Rachel Smith	07376 031522 01455 642335
DCC Secretary	Helen Gray	07929 643829
DCC Treasurer	Margie Brimacombe	01455 282429
Ringling Master	Margie Brimacombe	01455 282429
Tower Contact	Fiona	sstantontower@hotmail.com

Facilities

Each of our three churches has a disabled access toilet and baby changing facility. Each Church also has a hearing loop system.

Services.....April

	<i>St Mary's Broughton Astley</i>	<i>St Michael's Stoney Stanton</i>	<i>St Michael & All Angel's Croft</i>
Details of Services and events during Holy Week are on Page 27			
Sunday 5 April EASTER DAY	10:00 am United Service at St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley		
No midweek services on 8 and 9 April			
Sunday 12 April Easter 2	9:45 am Holy Communion With Baptism	No morning service 3:00 pm Service of Confirmation	11:15 am Morning Prayer
Sunday 19 April Easter 3	9:45 am Messy Church	9:30 am Holy Communion With Baptism	11:15 am Holy Communion
Sunday 26 April Easter 4	9:45 am Holy Communion	No service as village Scarecrow Festival taking place	11:15 am Morning Prayer
Sunday 3 May Easter 5	10:00 am United Service at St Michael and All Angels Church, Croft		

Weekday Services:

Broughton Astley: Wednesday 9:30 am a service of Morning Prayer with Holy Communion on the first Wednesday

Stoney Stanton: Thursday 9:30 am service of Morning Prayer with Holy Communion on the third Thursday

Details of services correct at time of going to print. However, please check weekly news sheet and Church noticeboards or visit the BACSS Facebook page regularly to check for any changes and updates.

(You don't need a Facebook login to see these pages).

<https://m.facebook.com/bacsschurches/posts/>

Dear Friends

Since Ash Wednesday we, as Christians, have been a pilgrimage people, journeying through Lent. Some will have sacrificed pleasures during this time, maybe giving up sweets, chocolate, cakes, crisps or, dare I say, alcohol. Others will have 'taken up' something, maybe buying extra goods for the food bank, praying more regularly, following a particular devotional course or a season of devotional readings.

We have experienced mixed emotions along the way as we have followed Jesus' journey to the cross. The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. We have witnessed Christ losing his temper and throwing over the money changers tables in the Temple. We were present when Jesus shared the Passover with His friends and instituted the Eucharist, as a way of both sharing and remembering Christ's love for us all. We have suffered watching as Christ was betrayed by one of his 'friends', denied by another, suffered the indignity of a mock trial and the cruelty and agony of crucifixion. We watched him die on the cross and saw His body laid in a borrowed tomb, seemingly an end to our hopes and dreams.

Then: - the stone was rolled away, the tomb was empty and we were met by the reality of the Risen Christ.

But, what difference will our Lenten journey make in our post Easter lives?

Some of our Lenten disciplines need to become our new habits. We should always be aware of the needs of others, making provision for those who need help and support even if it means giving up some of our own creature comforts. Prayer and listening to God should become second nature as should time spent in quiet with our creator.

In the Parish, our journey continues as we join in conversations with our neighbouring parishes, exploring the possibility of becoming a Minster Community. To some it may feel frightening and uncomfortable but, a more positive outlook reveals some of the

benefits to be had. There will be chances to celebrate and worship with others, to meet new friends, share resources, experience different worship patterns and liturgy and ways to enable us to be more affective in spreading Gods love to our wider community.

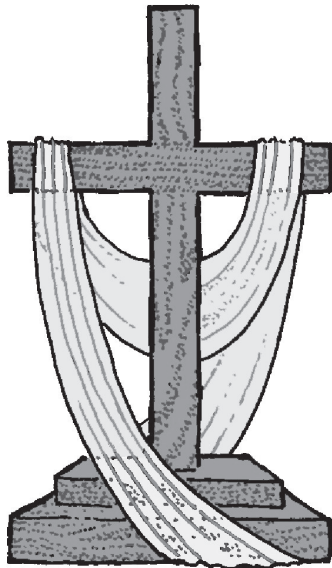
It is like going on a mystery tour, we don't know where we are going but we have faith that the driver does!

For now, we celebrate Easter and beyond, knowing whatever the future holds we are in God's hands.

Whatever our excitements, doubts or fears we proclaim with one voice,

'Alleluia Christ is risen,
He is risen indeed, Alleluia.'

Sheila Yates



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**KEEP YOUR VISION CLEAR,
SCHEDULE YOUR EYE EXAM.**

**Earl Shilton
01455 841364**

**Stoney Stanton
01455 241749**

Stoney Stanton Village Hall

Newly refurbished throughout, large rooms for events of all types.

- holds up to 150 people
- main room 12m x 6.6m room + extra 5m with bifolds open
- smaller lounge room
- fully refurbished kitchen space
- modern projector system, free wifi
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- folding tables and chairs included
- great for kids parties as we allow indoor bouncy castles and slides
- from £15 per hour from 1/9/25
- block bookings taken

Please contact:
clerk@stoneystantonpc.gov.uk
ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM
<https://venuehire.scribeaccounts.com/Stoney-Stanton-Village-Hall>



Perfect for that special occasion

Prayer Chain

Prayer Chain

Prayer Chain

Have you ever felt you would like someone to pray for you? Or maybe there is someone you know who needs prayers.

Help is at hand. The Prayer Chain is a group of people who regularly pray for people who are on the prayer chain list.

All requests are treated in confidence. It is up to you how much you want to tell the prayer chain about the request. It can simply be the first name of the person.

I would ask you to check that the person you are requesting is OK about being on the prayer chain.

Each request is prayed for, from the date of the request, for 1 month. If you want prayers to continue after that month you need to make another request.

Please contact Jackie March with your request on bacsprayerchain@gmail.com .

You don't have to be a member of the Church to use the Prayer chain.

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Baptisms

Croft	Liam Oliver Protheroe Oakley Davies
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Funerals

Broughton Astley	Chloe Hagger-Rolfe
Stoney Stanton	Allan Chapman Memorial Service Alan Roger Pickering



HOLIDAY

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phone Anthony Steel on: 01576 510200
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St Michael's Stoney Stanton 100 Club Draw

March

- First Prize - £25.00 - No 26 - John Baraclough
- Second Prize - £15.00 - No 52 - Chris Kennedy
- Third Prize - £10.00 - Number and name withheld

There are numbers available for this draw.
Please contact Julie on 07738 764245



1st Stoney Stanton Scout Group

BEAVERS

Beaver Scouts

(Age 6 to 8 years)

Meet Wednesdays 6.30pm to 7.30pm

Cub Scouts

(Age 8 to 10½ years)

Meet Mondays 6.30pm to 8.00pm

cubs

SCOUTS

Scouts

(Age 10½ to 14 years)

Meet Tuesdays 7.00pm to 8.30pm

Interested in playing a part in delivering lifetime skills for young people?
We have a whole host of options for adults, from actual team leadership
to flexible or occasional volunteering.

For more information on this or youth membership
please contact:-

Carl West (Group Lead Volunteer) on 07711 077606
gs1stoneystanton@hotmail.com

For general enquiries contact
Stuart Wilson (Group Trustee Board Secretary) on 07929 479970
Group Headquarters The Old Chapel, Broughton Road, Stoney Stanton

Regular Midweek Services and Events

9:30 am - Every Wednesday – A service of Morning Prayer with Holy Communion on the first Wednesday at Broughton Astley

9:30 am – Every Thursday – A service of Morning Prayer with Holy Communion on the third Thursday at Stoney Stanton.

Third Monday each month, Bible Study House Group, in Broughton Astley, 2.30 – 4.00 ish pm. Please contact Paula Atkinson, 07581 574340.

Second Tuesday each month, Prayer Group meets at St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton 7.30 pm for a time of quiet prayer. Please contact Carol Ford 07779 841555.

Every Wednesday during Term Time,
10:30 am – 12 noon Teddy Bear Bunch for pre-school children at St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley.

Home Communion

If anyone within the Parish wishes to receive Holy Communion at their home, please contact John Bass 07458 315152 who will be able to help you, and arrange to visit you.

Confirmations

Unfortunately Bishop Saju was called away by a family emergency and the Confirmations planned for Sunday 1 February have been postponed to Sunday 12 April at 3 pm, at St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton

Everyone is warmly invited to this service when we will be welcoming three people who will be confirming their faith in Jesus Christ.

Light refreshments will be served after the service.



Allan Chapman 15 January 1933—12 December 2025

Allan had been a faithful member of St Michael's Church and the Parish until he moved to Cornwall in 2023. He died on 12 December 2025 and a family funeral was held in Cornwall in January.

On 28 February 2026 a memorial service was held at St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton, led by Rev'd Jo Hover, where family and friends gathered to remember Allan. Friends Malcolm and Wendy remembered his time at St Michael's as Churchwarden and friend.

Before the service, the bells were rung for Allan as a former ringer, and in the afternoon a full peal was rung in his memory.

The following was written by his son Harry and read at Allan's funeral, with Allan's grandson Daniel reading it at the memorial service:



"Allan Chapman was brought into this world on the 15 January 1933 to Harry and Florence at Spring Gardens, Stoney Stanton, not far from where he lived until September 2023. He married Sheila Stratford on 4 December 1954 and they had 5 children, Harry, Graham, Anne, Michael and Maggie and 11 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

He didn't have the best of starts, christened in haste and not expected to survive infancy, he was in a fragile situation. With the care of a loving Mother, feeding him with a glass Syringe and providing for his additional needs and *at this stage no NHS*, he flourished against all odds. He did say last year that he was unable to speak coherently until he was 9 or 10 years of age and he explained that a Dr (speech therapist) had taken a like to him and spent a lot of time improving his speech. All this with the country at war and no NHS this was an immense effort on his behalf. Considering Allan's initial battle with getting his word across, he

could be very erudite and always clear, concise and above all, respectful.

At the age of 12 Allan lost his big brother Harry, he was 21yrs old and was returning from doing his bit over Germany, he didn't make it home. This must have been devastating for him, and another thing to toughen his resolve and building his character for life to come.

From his early teens Allan was set on making his mark, in everyday life he had lots of schoolmates, who with him made the best of the typical country pursuits at hand. A lot of what he did was church based, bell ringing, cutting

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scarecrow for
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proceeds going to
Manorfield PTFA



Stoney Stanton Scarecrow Festival

Saturday 25 April and Sunday 26 April
10am-4pm



To register your interest in entering a
scarecrow, scan the QR Code or email
manorfieldptfa@gmail.com



Fun for all the family with
live music, entertainment,
Inflatables and more on
the green outside St
Michael's Church
(Saturday only).

the church grass and latterly churchwarden. Along with this he was doing first aid training, via St Johns Ambulance, Farm labouring and motor biking, just to mention a few.

Allan's first proper employment was at Moore and Eady hosiery, Hinckley (now known as the Concordia theatre).

He worked as a hosiery mechanic, quickly working through the ranks due to the lack of manpower with the men swallowed up in post war effort, his expertise was appreciated. I should imagine he was run ragged by the Hosier women on the shop floor!

With his contacts in the St Johns and encouragement from his good mate Tommy Hill he was talked into joining the all New Ambulance service where he worked until retirement and then part time outpatient work. In his time he grew as the service developed, retiring as an ambulance technician. Over his years in the service he brought infants into the world, saved lives along with the everyday work of providing service. One memory Harry has as a youngster of his dad is "I was always aware that everyone knew Dad. I remember getting a ribbing from a local Biker (Grebo). Who on many occasions reminded me that Dad had cut off his brand new Levis jeans whilst extricating him from his crashed bike."

Allan was always busy with work, the Church, Scouting and keeping his allotment going. With five children and numerous foster children the house was always a bustle of activity.

Allan was fiercely independent and had a car as soon as he was old enough to drive. His parents encouraged it as they benefited from having a driver in the family. Driving was a big bonus when courting Sheila and the Stratford intellectuals always wanted a lift somewhere.

Losing his car a year or so back was a big thing to Allan.

Allan was a real survivor both from his initial health problems, and 60 years of Sheila's cooking! He was the ultimate carer, in the last few years of Sheila's life, he enriched her day to day life with good humour and love, he ensured her last couple of years were as good as they could be and we all thank him for that

After a lifetime living in Sapcote, in 2023 and at the grand old age of 90 he decided that he would like to move to Cornwall where he lived until his death in December. He joined in many community based activities in Cornwall, including, Bellringing, Petanque, Seniors group and enjoyed spending time with his model railways and discovering beach walks with his dog Basil.

Allan had 2 falls within a year which resulted in the deterioration of his health and stays in hospital.

We know that Sheila and Allan are now reunited together

Goodbye and God bless"

Allan's Grandson Christopher then spoke on behalf of his Grandchildren:

"Today we're here to honour a man who, in his quiet and steadfast way, showed his Grandchildren what a life of integrity looks like. Grandad didn't need grand gestures or loud statements to make an impact; the way he lived - honest, humble, hardworking, and devoted to family and his community - spoke louder than any speech ever could.

To us, he was, quite simply, solid. The sort of man you could set your watch by. Consistent in who he was, consistent in how he treated people, and consistent in the way he showed up for us.

And yes - he could be stubborn, wonderfully and infuriatingly stubborn at times. But even that came from the same place as all his better qualities: a deep certainty in what was right, and a heart shaped by experiences that demanded resilience. We can imagine that losing his brother at a young age marked him in ways he didn't often talk about, but you could see how it made him protective and loyal to the people he loved.

Even into his later years, he was remarkably fit - often putting the rest of us to shame. While most slow down as the years pass, Grandad seemed to just... keep going. Maybe it was all those long walks, the hours spent on his allotment, or taking care of whatever animals he was looking after at the time. His love of animals was one of the clearest windows into his character - how he treated creatures who could give him nothing back.

He was also wonderfully welcoming. Speaking personally, that welcome meant even more for those of us who have helped diversify the genetics of the family gene pool. Grandad never made anyone feel like an outsider. Everyone belonged. Everyone was accepted. And everyone was offered a chair and a cup of tea.

There are so many moments of him that make us smile - wiggling his false teeth just to make us laugh, or the sight of his prized allotment onions hanging inside Grandma's tights - something she tolerated with the sort of patience that only decades of marriage can produce.

He had a knack for doing things his own way, and somehow making it completely charming. And, of course, we always had the very strong impression of how deeply he loved and cared for Grandma. Not through grand declarations, but through devotion - steady, dependable, and consistent.

Grandad believed in service - not the performative type, but the kind that shows up quietly, faithfully, year after year. Whether it was helping neighbours, supporting friends, giving time to the community, or simply being

Holy Week and Easter in the Parish



Holy Week

Wednesday 1 April

10-11.30 Messy Church Easter Workshop in St Michaels Church, Stoney Stanton (See page 12)

2:30 pm—Stations of the Cross at St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton

Maundy Thursday - 2 April

9:30 am – Holy Communion at St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton

11 am—2 pm Easter Crafts and Cake at St Michael and All Angels Church, Croft (See page 12)

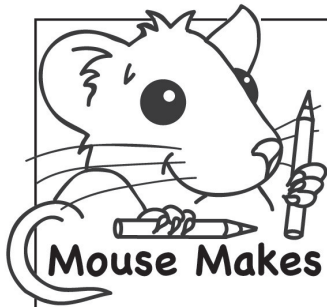
Good Friday – 3 April

10-12 Children's Easter Activities at St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley (See page 12)

3:00 pm - Good Friday Reflective Service of hymns and readings led by the choir at St Michael and All Angels Church, Croft

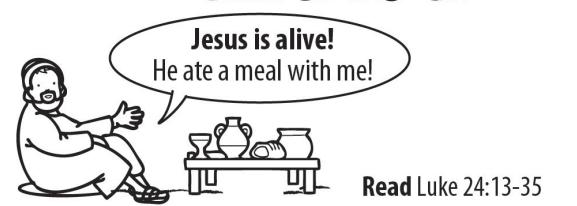
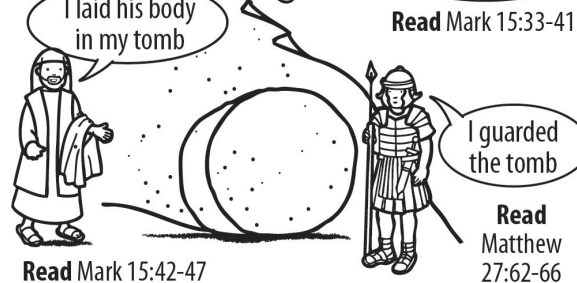
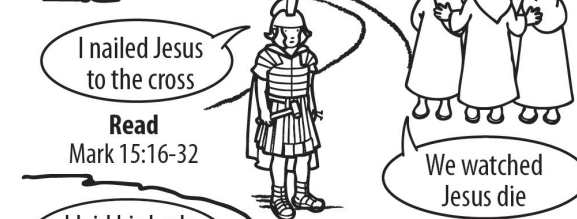
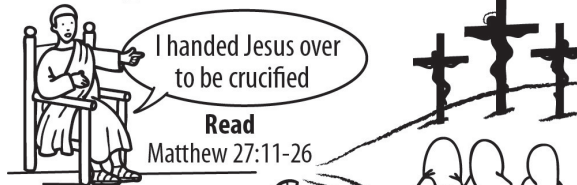
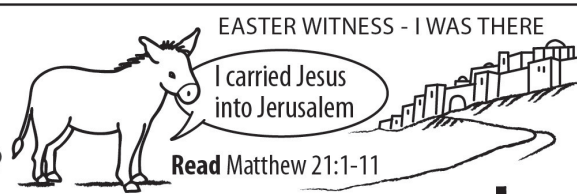
EASTER DAY Sunday 5 April

10:00 am—United Service of Holy Communion at St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley



GOOD NEWS
 OHOSANNA
 DEATHQBV
 VNCOEUI
 UAHNAARO
 MIREVSU
 ALIVETDR
 RISENEOK
 YOTHORNS
 PALMSQKA
 RPILATEN
 CRUCIFYG
 RHQUAKE
 OCJESUSL
 STOMBVDY
 SRYEMPTY

JESUS • DONKEY • PALMS
 HOSANNA • PILATE • THORNS
 CRUCIFY • NAIL • CROSS
 QUAKE • DEATH • BURY
 TOMB • STONE • EMPTY
 ANGEL • MARY • HEAVEN
 RISEN • ALIVE • GOD
 GOOD NEWS • CHRIST
 SAVIOUR • EASTER • JOY



the dependable presence people knew they could call on, he lived a life anchored in giving. If something needed doing, he would quietly roll up his sleeves and get on with it.

Grandad was not a material person. That was never what he gathered in life. Instead, he gave us something far greater - his time, his stories, experiences, his presence. He showed us that richness isn't measured in possessions but in the moments you share, the memories you create, and the people you love.

His faith was never something he needed to put on display. You saw it in the way he treated people - in his kindness, his patience, his acceptance of everyone, and his refusal to judge. He lived the Christian life not through sermons, but through quiet compassion. Through the way he made people feel safe simply by being himself. There's a quote that says, "Blessed is the one who plants trees under whose shade they will never sit." That was Grandad. He gave his time, his help, his warmth, and he never asked for anything in return. When we picture him now, we see him bent over in his garden or allotment, gently tending to the world around him - nurturing things so others could enjoy them later.

Grandad lived a life of quiet greatness. Not the loud kind, not the headline making kind - but the kind that endures. The kind that shapes families. The kind that sets an example. The kind that leaves the world better in hundreds of small, unnoticed ways. And it's those small things - the long walks, the steam engines, the allotment, the animals, the humour, the stubbornness, the steadiness, the consistency - that made him the man we were lucky enough to call Grandad.

We will miss him deeply. But we will also carry him with us - through our values, our kindness, our actions, and the way we treat the people around us. Because that's how he lived. And that's how he'll be remembered.

A Happy Man - Edwin Arlington Robinson

When these graven lines you see,
 Traveller, do not pity me;
 Though I be among the dead,
 Let no mournful word be said.

My three sons I married right
 And their sons I rocked at night
 Death nor sorrow never brought
 Cause for one unhappy thought.

Children that I leave behind,
 And their children, all were kind;
 Near to them and to my wife,
 I was happy all my life.

Now, and with no need of tears
 Here they leave me, full of years, -
 Leave me to my quiet rest
 In the region of the blest.

Thank you"

Easter Craft Activities in the Parish

All children must be accompanied by an adult

Wednesday 1 April—St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton



10:00—11:30

St Michael's Church
Stoney Stanton

Crafts, activities, songs, story and LOTS of fun!

No charge (donations welcome)

Thursday 2 April—St Michael and All Angels Church, Croft

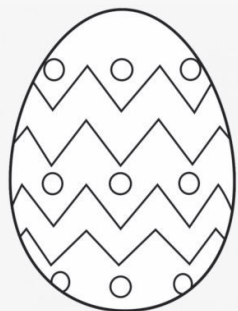
11:00 am—2:00 pm

Easter Crafts and Cake

(We politely request a £3 donation per child to cover the costs of the crafts)



Friday 3 April—St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley



10:00 am—12 Noon

Come and join in a dramatized telling of the Easter story and afterwards make cards, decorate biscuits, hunt eggs and more.

Refreshments available

No charge (Donations welcome)

- 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
7 He reps (anag.) (6)
9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)
14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
15 The human mind or soul (6)
16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
20 Bared (anag.) (5)

March Crossword Solutions

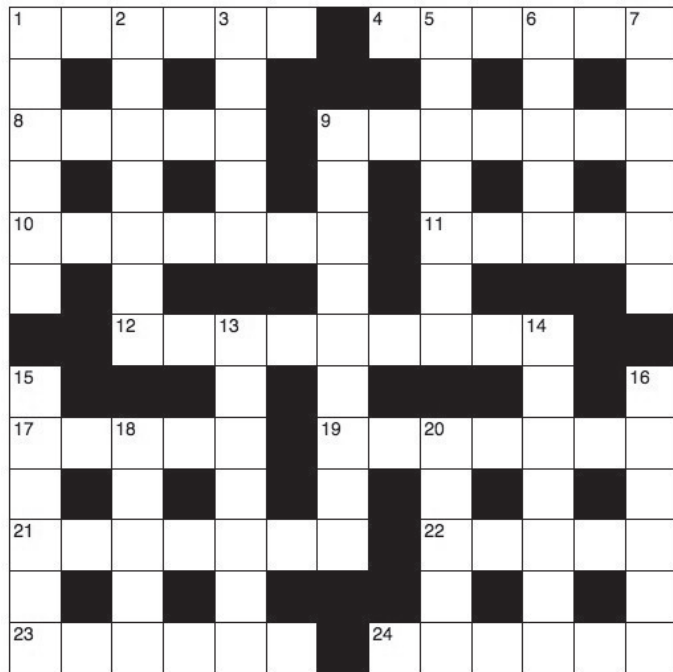
ACROSS: 1, Awaken. 4, Quench. 8, Hit me. 9, Sadness. 10, Semitic. 11, Ridge. 12, Testimony. 17, Psalm. 19, Indulge. 21, Deserve. 22, Ariel. 23, Rose as. 24, Beggar.

DOWN: 1, Aghast. 2, Attempt. 3, Eject. 5, Undergo. 6, No end. 7, Hasten. 9, Sacrifice. 13, Samaria. 14, Yelling. 15, Spider. 16, Dealer. 18, Asses. 20, Drake.

From a church notice-sheet

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Brown, our churchwarden, to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

Crossword - April



Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
 12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)
 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)
 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)

St Michael & All Angels Church Croft



QUIZ NIGHT

(and raffle)

Friday 17th April
6:45pm for 7pm start

Teams of up to 6
 £5 per person
 £2 per child under 16



Bring your own snacks
 and drinks
 (and a raffle prize if you can)



St Mary's Subscription Draw

March

First Prize	-	£40.00	-	No 106	-	Mrs H Briscoe
Second Prize	-	£20.00	-	No 24	-	Mrs I Hall
Third Prize	-	£10.00	-	No 47	-	Mrs J Bray

Some numbers still available – an excellent way to support the church and have some fun in these difficult times.
 Contact Tom Cockerill on 01455 698949.

Coffee Mornings

St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley

NO COFFEE MORNING IN APRIL

10 am— 12 noon

Community Market and Coffee Morning

St Michael and All Angels Croft

Coffee Mornings

Every Tuesday 9:30—11:30

St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton

Saturday 11 April

10 am - 12 noon

Coffee Morning

What's orange, sticky and worth preserving?



This month sees National Marmalade Week (18 – 25 April). If you really want to celebrate, go to Dalemain Mansion and Gardens in Cumbria, where they hold the World Marmalade Awards & Festival. It celebrates, preserves and promotes artisanal marmalades, with thousands of entries. (Even Paddington Bear will be in attendance!)

If you like marmalade, ever wonder where it comes from? One tradition traces it to a storm-damaged Spanish ship which took refuge in Dundee Harbour in 1700. It was full of Seville oranges that the captain was desperate to sell before they went mouldy. A local down-on-luck merchant, one James Keiller, bought the lot. He didn't know what to do with the oranges either, but fortunately he had a resourceful wife. She set about turning a shipload of Seville oranges into a preserve, and so the first marmalade factory was born.

Marmalade has been at the heart of British breakfasts for centuries. Winston Churchill fought the Second World War on it (washed down with a flute of Pol Roger each morning). DH Lawrence wrote novels on it. Paddington Bear's sandwiches were all marmalade. If you also want to get your fingers sticky, visit: www.marmaladeawards.com.

It's National Pet Month



April is National Pet Month (NPM), an annual initiative dedicated to promoting responsible pet ownership, and supporting UK pet charities.

National Pet Month celebrates the companionship of our pets, educates owners on responsible care, and raises funds for pet charities.

Pet owners are encouraged to share their pet stories/photos, host fundraisers, and to visit the National Pet Month website for resources.



Our last soup lunch for the season was held on Thursday 5 March. Grateful thanks to Maureen and Malcolm for organising these lunchtimes. Also to those who help with serving and to those of you who come and share this together.

We hope to be back in October. Watch this space!!

Clubs, activities & events April

W.I. Meetings etc.....

Where at.....	Date and Time	Speaker	Competition
Broughton Astley Village Hall	Tuesday 14 April 7:30 pm	"Juggling and other Circus Skills" John Parnell	
Stoney Stanton St Michael's Church	Wednesday 8 April 7:30 pm	"Maintaining healthy hair as we Age". Sally Archer	
Ladies Fellowship Group St Mary's Church Broughton Astley	Wednesday 8 April 2pm Contact Denise 285410 or Wendy 07779 194730 for more information	"Visit to Canada" Margie Brimacombe	

EFFFI (Elmesthorpe Friends Food and Flower Initiative)
Raising money for St Mary's Church and other local charities

Coffee Morning

Elmesthorpe Village Hall

10:00—11:30

Saturday 25 April

Celebrating Shakespeare's Birthday!

Bring your favourite poem

All Welcome

BIBS HARDWARE



**FOR
ALL YOUR DIY NEEDS**

**CALOR GAS
CARPET CLEANER HIRE
WALLPAPER STRIPPER HIRE
WATCH BATTERIES FITTED**

**2 St Michael's Court, Stoney Stanton
PHONE 01455 273526**

Stoney Stanton Methodist Chapel

Coffee Morning

Thursday 30 April

10:00 am—11:30 am

Come and Join Us



Parish of Broughton Astley & Croft with Stoney Stanton

Minster Communities - What, Why, Where, When, How...

There has been much talk about minster communities but very little information about what they are, why we are moving towards forming a minster community and what does it mean for our parish. This is partly because the Diocese has been moving ahead on an area by area basis with us being one of the last areas and also because there is no set template for how a minster will operate - how minsters work will be determined by the minster itself.

What is a minster community?

It is simply a grouping of parishes agreeing to work together in a way which makes best use of the limited resources we have in terms of people, ministers, materials and finance. so that we can focus on our primary mission of spreading the good news and less on the nuts and bolts of running our parishes.

It is not a plot to do away with the parish structure that has served us for centuries. Indeed the parishes will be the solid foundation for how we move forward and will continue to underpin our future development.

Do we need one?

Like most people I would prefer to continue with how the church has been for years. There is great comfort in the familiarity of our parishes, of our churches, of our liturgy and our congregation. However, we need to take off the rose-coloured spectacles. The halcyon days of full churches with all generations present and thriving groups of adults and children are long gone. Take a look around our congregations - the average age is 70 plus - two younger generations are largely missing. The number on the electoral roll is falling and our finances are dwindling.

Our current electoral roll stands at only 121 in a parish of around 16,000 people. This is only 0.75% of the parish population! Society has changed dramatically in the past 50 years and we have not reacted to those changes.

Isn't this all the fault of the Diocese?

We could spend a lot of time arguing about how the Diocese and Church of England are managing financial affairs but the position is that there is not the funding there to provide a minister in every

Paul's letters are peppered with prayer. It can be quite a worthwhile exploration to find them, and there are many. They shine out like jewels from the letters in the New Testament, far too many to quote here, but some of them are quite familiar. The 'Grace' which is often used as a shared blessing at the close of services or meetings is probably the best known, but my personal favourite is from Ephesians 3:14-21.

Ephesians may possibly have been a 'round robin' to churches in that area, and may not totally be from the pen of Paul, but the words are so marvellous, that that becomes no matter. They exist and have been given to us to use.

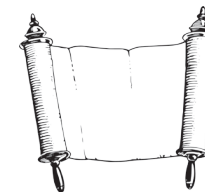
And perhaps that is not bad thing. It is a good prayer for us all amid the troubles of today.

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.



Thinking about Prayer

An invitation..... to explore!

Probably the earliest writings in the New Testament come from the pen of a man who was a bit of a firebrand and a Pharisee, hardly a likely Christian leader?

But of course Paul the Apostle was the sort of unlikely person often chosen by God to do his work. Paul belonged to the Jewish sect known as the Pharisees, a very strict group, extremely orthodox, their lives governed by rules which would, they thought bring them closer to God. They were clever, intellectuals, and provided the sort of environment in which people like Paul (or Saul as he was then known) would be quite comfortable. Indeed, he admitted to being among the persecutors of a breakaway group, who followed the way of life inspired by a contemporary obscure Galilean teacher, who had been crucified by the Roman authorities.

These were troublesome times, forcibly held together by *Pax Romana*, a brutal form of rule inflicted on their subjects by the occupying power.

Following a startling conversion, Paul completely turned in his tracks and spent the rest of his life promoting and spreading the teachings of this small group, his passion and understanding of the teachings and life of Jesus, who he never met in physical life, his profound knowledge of theology, bringing an interpretation which has underpinned the Church for nearly 2000 years. He could be controversial at times, but his passion for what he understood to be God's will, knew no bounds. Eventually, after a period of house arrest, at the end of his travels throughout the Mediterranean region, it is believed that he met martyrdom somewhere outside the walls of Rome, at a place traditionally believed to be the site of the present church of 'St.Paul without the walls'.

parish. Whereas in the past parishes were able to provide funding to pay for their minister (salary, pension, accommodation etc.), this is generally no longer the case for most parishes including our own.

But if we had a minister everything would be alright?

Well no - not really. Clearly we do need a minister but up until 5 years ago we have had ministers resident in the parish. Despite all their hard work and leadership the church has declined. We expect too much of our ministers. Parishes have grown, the demands on the minister in this modern age are varied and extremely burdensome. We cannot expect a minister to take on every role in the parish. They need our support to free them to focus on mission and not on repairing the roof!

This is all rather doom and gloom - can we as a parish survive?

In the words of Captain Mainwaring, 'Let's have none of this defeatist talk'. Yes we can. There are lots of positives to build on. As a parish we have lots of activities which are reaching out to connect with young people, families, and the parish generally - Teddy Bear Bunch, Messy Church, Open the Book, Bible Study Group, Prayer Group, Cafe Church, Community Market, Social Events etc.

However, our resources in terms of people are very limited. Being part of a minister will allow us to work together more efficiently, to remove duplication of effort, to support each other and our ministers, to re-examine our current practices, to undertake new developments and mission. How the minister will work will be decided by us, we will be in control and can manage our own development.

Yes, but will we get a new minister?

The Diocese has said that if ministers can provide the funding they can have additional ministers. There is also scope for additional self-funding ministers where they reside within the minister.

Which parishes will be in our minister?

We have felt it very important that we should be in a minister with parishes of a similar outlook and a willingness to work together. We had conversations with surrounding parishes and a grouping of like-minded parishes developed which we put forward to the Diocese as our preferred minister. We are the only minister that has followed this bottom-up approach rather than top-down grouping from the Diocese. This grouping has been accepted by the Diocese and consists of the following parishes:

BACSS
Burbage with Aston Flamville
Sapcote
Sharnford with Wigston Parva
Frolesworth
Dunton Bassett
Leire
Ashby Parva
Claybrooke cum Wibtoft

Where are we now with formation of the minster?

Working groups with representatives from all the parishes have met to discuss how we might work together, what are the common threads, what are the gaps, what are the opportunities, and what are the likely stresses and tensions.

The groups have covered the following areas:

Engagement, Worship, Liturgy and Music
Growing Faith and Schools
Discipleship and Mission
New Communities, Geography, Context and Resources
People and Ministry
Church Buildings, Finance and Generosity

This work is now being drawn together by a co-ordinating group to form a proposal for how the minster will operate.

What are the next steps?

The proposed timetable is that during March to May a first draft of the Minster Proposal will be prepared for review by the PCCs of each parish. A final version will then be prepared during June to August. The proposal will then be subject to review and approval by all the PCCs and the Joint Archdeacons Mission Committee (JAMC) with the final proposal to be agreed with the Bishop's Council. Once fully agreed the Minster will then be formally launched.

I am still not sure about this and would prefer it if things didn't change.

Change is always very frightening but if we are to survive as a parish and move forward we must. At the outset I was very sceptical about whether this would work but at the initial meeting we had with the other parishes there was a very positive and supportive feeling that together we as a minster could make it work.

The positivity of those who have been involved in the process from all of the parishes continues to grow. It has developed from initial cynicism, through to acceptance and recognition that we as a minster group all have serious problems, and now it is moving towards optimism that there are real opportunities and that this can work! There is now an eagerness to get on and build a minster that will allow us to focus on our main work and mission.

We are now moving towards the final stages of the minster formation. It is very much a golden opportunity but we need the support and input from everyone in our parish and in the minster as a whole. Whilst we may have initially felt that the minster process was being Shaped by the Diocese or Shaped by Finance it is clearly now becoming our responsibility and we must allow it to be Shaped by God.

Colin Atkinson

Churchwarden
St Mary's Church

Parish of Broughton Astley & Croft with Stoney Stanton
22 March 2026

PARISH ELECTORAL ROLL

A revision of the Church Electoral Roll will be carried out between 16 March and 17 April.

Anyone who is not already on the Roll is invited to complete an application form (available in all churches) and return it by 17 April. If you are already on the Roll you do not need to do anything.

TF Cockerill, Electoral Roll Officer, 9 Osprey Close, Broughton Astley LE9 6RS. email: tomcockerill9@talktalk.net