

Stour Vale Letter No.197

Services in the Stour Vale – Sunday 21st January

10:00am Morning Worship Todber (CW)
10:30am Parish Communion With Baptism West Stour –
please note the change of time for this service
10:30am Morning Worship East Stour (CW)



Readings for Sunday 21st January 3rd Sunday of Epiphany

Genesis 14.17–20 Psalm 128
Revelation 19.6–10 John 2.1–11

Other Benefice events coming up in January:

Every Tuesday – Said Morning Prayer West Stour Church 9:30am
Thursday 25th – Stour Vale Prayer Group 2pm East Stour Church

John 2.1–11 (NIV)

2 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, ² and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

⁴ "Woman, ^[a] why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

⁶ Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

⁸ Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, ⁹ and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside ¹⁰ and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

¹¹ What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Praying for our communities

This week in the Stour Vale we pray for the community in Todber, the congregation of St Andrew's and all who live and work in and around the village. Please find a few moments in your week to remember this community.



And we pray for:

Those in our communities who are ill or recovering at home, for those in hospital or care, and for those who are waiting for procedures and surgery. And we remember those who have lost loved ones and miss them. We pray for those who find life difficult, particularly the lonely, isolated and afraid, those who feel themselves forgotten or unloved, and those who are low in spirits or find the world a confusing place. May they all know the healing presence of God's love.

In particular we pray for:

Henrietta (KM), Barry (SR) and Margaret (WS) and all known to us, or only to God, who are ill and in need of prayer.

And for the bereaved family and friends of Graham Dyke (BW), Barry Score (ES) and June Hough (FM).

If anyone would like to be included in our prayers, please ask your Church Warden to let Jill know, or contact her direct – details at the end of the newsletter.

*Please remember if you asking on behalf of someone else,
check they are happy for their name to be included.*

Other Prayers

The Archbishops' Prayer: God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine. We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons. We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace, for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions. Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen

Prayer for the situation in Israel

O God, we pray for all the children of Abraham in Israel and Palestine and in every country of the world.

We pray for Muslims, Jews and Christians that we will draw on the best of our traditions to guide us away from words and acts of division and discrimination so that everyone may be free to live in safety.

Protect the vulnerable, strengthen the fearful and comfort the grieving.

In Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



Private Prayer

Many of our churches are open throughout the week for private prayer. Please do take advantage of this, and if you visit our beautiful churches and feel you can make a donation to their life and upkeep, please do so. It would be very much appreciated.

23rd January - John the Almsgiver

Have you noticed that people tend to be either givers or takers? John the Almsgiver was a giver – on a grand scale.

Born into a wealthy family in Cyprus about 560 AD John was married with children when disaster struck: both his wife and children all died. In his grief, John decided to go into the Church. He was appointed Patriarch of Alexandria.

Here John began to astonish the people with his generosity. He distributed thousands of pieces of gold from his own wealth to help the hospitals and monasteries. He founded new hospitals, and introduced maternity wards, poorhouses, and hostels for strangers to the city. He was even known to give away his own bedding to the poor.



John also ordered the use of just weights and measures, he forbid his officials to take any presents, and he sat in the open air beside his church on Wednesdays and Fridays, to make sure that his people had free access to him.

When the Persians sacked Jerusalem he helped the survivors with money, food, transport and clothes. He even paid to get captives back, and so give them their freedom.

Sometimes John gave for a specific Christians purpose; other times he gave for the benefit of all those in whatever need there was, whatever their creed.

John also cared for the souls of his people in Alexandria, and encouraged them in prayer and leading a holy life. He was adamant that only true believers could take Holy Communion.

John died in 620, in Amathus on Cyprus, where he had been born. He had been very much loved, and his memory was highly honoured – he was canonised even though he had not been martyred, and he was made patron of the Knights of Malta.

John the Almsgiver is one of the very few Byzantine era saints to have been truly honoured in the West. Perhaps because it is indeed “more blessed to give than to receive.”

Parish Pump

God loves the way you let Him rescue you.

*Reach down your hand from on high; deliver me and rescue me from the mighty waters.
Psalm 144:7*

You're drowning. Going down for the third count. No, it's not water that's swallowing you; it's the world. Maybe it's a too-long to-do list in a too-short day. Or the slings and arrows of gossips who delight in your struggles. Or loneliness, weariness, or emptiness. Whatever the cause, you're drowning and, you are at the mercy of threatening waves. But also like Peter, you reach up to God and cry out, “Lord, save me!” (Matthew 14:30). And he does . . . because rescuing you is just something He loves to do.

From '100 Things God Loves about You' by Tama Fortner

Please note that for most other events around the Benefice, 'For you Diary' has returned to the back page of Octavo

– but there's an extra event taking place at **Kington Magna Church** at **4:30pm** on **Saturday 20th January** – Alvira presents 'Echo' – for full details see the poster below

This Newsletter



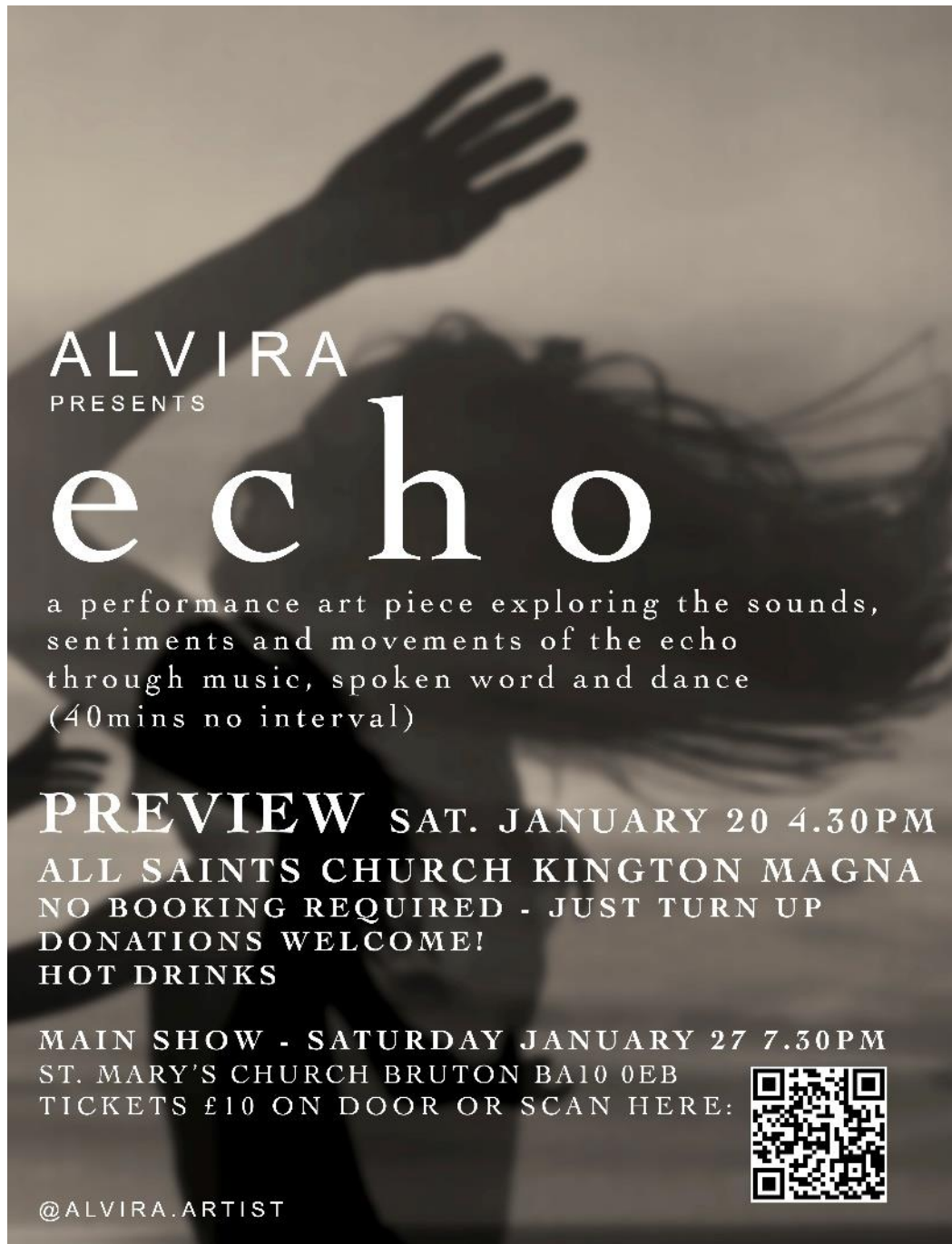
We hope you find this newsletter helpful. If you know of anyone who would like to join the mailing list, tell them to send their name, parish and email address to Jill Perry at octavoeditorsvb@googlemail.com with the subject “Newsletter Mailing List”. But, if you do not wish to continue receiving them, please email her with “Unsubscribe” in the subject field.

You can contact Revd Clare on: 01747 838171
Or by email: clare@evzone.co.uk

Clare's usual 'Day Off' is Monday



Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089949903748
or search for 'The Church of England in the Stour Vale' in Facebook,
or follow the link on the Benefice Website.




ALVIRA
PRESENTS

echo

a performance art piece exploring the sounds,
sentiments and movements of the echo
through music, spoken word and dance
(40mins no interval)

PREVIEW SAT. JANUARY 20 4.30PM
ALL SAINTS CHURCH KINGTON MAGNA
NO BOOKING REQUIRED - JUST TURN UP
DONATIONS WELCOME!
HOT DRINKS

MAIN SHOW - SATURDAY JANUARY 27 7.30PM
ST. MARY'S CHURCH BRUTON BA10 0EB
TICKETS £10 ON DOOR OR SCAN HERE:



@ALVIRA.ARTIST

Newsletter produced on behalf of the Stour Vale Benefice:
Buckhorn Weston – East Stour – Fifehead Magdalen – Kington Magna –
Stour Provost – Todber – West Stour

