

# Stour Vale Letter No.204

## Services in the Stour Vale – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March

9:15am Parish Communion Buckhorn Weston  
10:30am Morning Prayer Stour Provost (BCP)  
11:00am Benefice Mothering Sunday Service Kington Magna  
*NB no service at Fifehead Magdalen this week*



*(BCP = Book of Common Prayer CW = Common Worship)*

### PLEASE NOTE:

The correct time for the **Mothering Sunday Service at Kington Magna** is **11am** not 10:30am as in the poster – apologies for the confusion.



### Readings for Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

Exodus 2 1-10

Colossians 3 12-17

John 19.25b –27

### **Other Benefice services/events coming up in March:**

**Every Tuesday** – Said Morning Prayer 9:30am West Stour Church

**Every Tuesday during Lent** – Compline via Zoom 7:15pm (details below)

**Every Wednesday during Lent** – Mid-week Communion 10:30am East Stour Church

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March** – Stour Vale Prayer Group 2pm East Stour

### **Sheila Kirby**

Sheila's Funeral will be held at Kington Magna on the 14<sup>th</sup> March at 11:30am (followed by a private cremation).

### **John 2.13–22 (NIV)**

<sup>25</sup> Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman,<sup>[a]</sup> here is your son," <sup>27</sup> and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

### **Lent 2024**

#### **Salisbury Diocese Lent Course – Making Jesus Known**

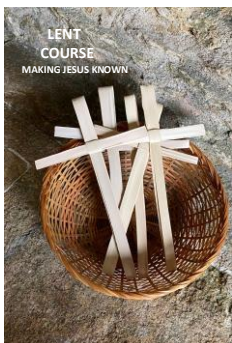
*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free"*

This course focuses on the passage which underpins our new [diocesan vision](#), Luke 4. It comprises six written reflections, questions and a prayer to aid weekly groups or individual study.

### **LUKE 4:31-37**

*"And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority. And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice,*

*"Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God."*



*But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm.*

*And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!" And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region."*

Here Jesus speaks with authority (*Luke 4:32*) and acts with authority (*Luke 4:36*). 'With authority' doesn't mean Jesus' tone of voice or his preparedness to issue commands on the Sabbath.

So, what is this authority? and where does it come from? Where does any authority come from? For those gathered in the synagogue, authority would have to be bestowed, conferred. Later in Luke's gospel, the chief priests and elders ask Jesus an entirely reasonable question: "Tell us, by what authority are you doing these things? Who is it who gave you this authority?" (*Luke 20:2*).

Jesus has not assumed authority; he has accepted it. 'Authority rests upon his shoulders' (*Isaiah 9:6*), yes, but it has been placed there by the Authority of all authorities, the source of all authority. And to bear this authority is to bear a cross.

In the wilderness, the devil tempts Jesus to exercise authority and use it to his own advantage (*Luke 4:1-12*). Don't you want to exert your authority, the devil asks, over these stones, over the angels, over the nations? And Jesus' response is always to refer to a higher authority: the authority of scripture, the authority of God.

Jesus offers us an example of authority as openness to the will of God. He never uses his authority to vie for dominion, to play the world's game. Instead, his authority is for others, for teaching, healing, and serving. Later in Luke, Jesus makes this explicit.

He says, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves (*Luke 22:25-26*). And he spells it out: 'I am among you as one who serves (*Luke 22:27*).

Authority is 'being among', as service, even as an obligation. Jesus seems to suggest that authority is to be understood not as over others, but under them, and under God.

And so he refuses to describe or impose his authority in ways the world will recognise or accept. He is a king like no other, a benefactor like no other. This authority is not a licence; it is love.

Like Jesus' listeners in the synagogue, our lives are patterned by the experience of worldly authority. This authority finds expression in political power, in cultural norms, in society's expectations and even in the misuse of religious teaching. These days the world's authority can be articulated as an algorithm.

### Questions

- Where do you feel the world's authority impinging on you, distorting you and your outlook?
- How does Jesus' authority continue to disrupt and dismantle the world's authority?
- In the light of Jesus' example, what does 'Courageous Christian Leadership' look like?
- Can you think of non-Biblical examples of authority being exercised as service, as love?

### Prayer

*Almighty God, this Lent,  
grant us the courage to follow Jesus into the wilderness,  
entrusting ourselves solely to Him who showed us that true authority  
comes only through obedience to Your will.*

*Amen*



**COLIN HEBER-PERCY**  
Colin is vicar in the Savernake Team, part of the Pewsey Deanery. He is the author of the best-selling *Tales of a Country Parish* and writes regularly for *Country Life* and many other publications.

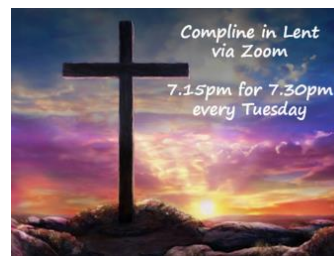
## Lent Compline over Zoom

Do join us for 'Compline over Zoom',  
every Tuesday from 20th February to 19th March, inclusive.  
The link is open from 7.15pm, with the service starting at 7.30pm.

Join Zoom Compline Meeting using this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89904228328?pwd=ajNmak8vS1ovalM0aFRjMDU0TkNoQT09>

Or, from Zoom 'Join Meeting' using: Meeting ID: 899 0422 8328 Passcode: 360725



### ***Praying for our communities***

This week in the Stour Vale we pray for the community in Stour Row, the congregation 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:***

Maria (ES), 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) and Shelia Kirby (KM).

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 for Ukraine***

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 of all hope and peace, we bring to you the needs of our broken and hurting world.

Our hearts are breaking with images of lives lost and torn apart by grief in Israel and Palestine.

We pray for an end to violence and warfare so that the challenging work of rebuilding may begin.

Help us, O Lord, to affirm our common humanity so that in our differences we may build together for justice and peace.

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.

### God loves your tears.

*Jesus Wept*  
*John 11:35*

Tears of joy. Tears of sorrow. Tears of frustration. There are days when the tears fall like raindrops for all the world to see. And there are times when you hide yours away so that no one can see.

But God sees. *Always*. He knows every tear that falls, and He writes them in the records of heaven (Psalm 56:8). He holds your heart in His hand and your tears in His heart.

It's not that God loves to *see* you in sorrow or pain. It's not that He loves to *see* your tears, but he loves the way your tears draw you nearer, still nearer to Him.

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

### Benefice Lunches

Do join us at the Crown on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March – 2 courses for £15, Main only for £11 and there is the option of the smaller portion senior citizen's lunch too.

Let Revd Clare or Jill know if you'd like to come along for a relaxed lunch in the company of others from the Benefice.



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

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:clare@evzone.co.uk)

Clare's usual 'Day Off' is Monday

Follow us on Facebook at

[www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089949903748](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089949903748)

or search for 'The Church of England in the Stour Vale' on Facebook, or follow the link on the Benefice Website.



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

