

# Stour Vale Letter No.213

## Services in the Stour Vale – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May

9:15am Holy Communion Buckhorn Weston  
10:30am Morning Worship Stour Provost (CW)  
11:00am Holy Communion Fifehead Magdalen  
11:00am Morning Worship Kington Magna (CW)



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



**Readings for Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May**      *7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter*  
Acts 1.15–17, 21–end  
1 John 5.9–13      John 17.6–19

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

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

**Every Wednesday** – Said Holy Communion 10:30am East Stour Church

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May**– Benefice Lunch 12:30pm The Crown East Stour

**Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May** – Stour Vale Prayer Group 2pm East Stour

### **Acts 1.15–17, 21–end (NIV)**

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) <sup>16</sup> and said, “Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. <sup>17</sup> He was one of our number and shared in our ministry.”

Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, <sup>22</sup> beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

<sup>23</sup> So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. <sup>24</sup> Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen <sup>25</sup> to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” <sup>26</sup> Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

### **John 17.6–19 (NIV)**

“I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. <sup>8</sup> For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. <sup>11</sup> I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. <sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

<sup>13</sup> “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. <sup>14</sup> I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. <sup>15</sup> My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

## ***Prayer in the Benefice – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May***

Prayer is the secret weapon of the Kingdom of God. As a church community, prayer is the most important thing we can do. Everyone can pray, and everyone's prayers make a direct difference to the situations we pray for.

If you would like us to pray for something, or someone, then please contact Fiona Hedges ([fjhedges1@gmail.com](mailto:fjhedges1@gmail.com)) or Jill Perry ([octavoeditorsvb@gmail.com](mailto:octavoeditorsvb@gmail.com)). Please make it clear if you would like the prayers included in this newsletter, or if you would like them to be prayed for at one of the Benefice prayer sessions, where they will be kept confidential.

Please join us in prayer this week, either by adding the topics to your usual daily prayers or by praying the specific prayers suggested below:

### ***Sunday: Church Events: Services this Sunday, Open Garden Events around the Benefice.***



Glorious Lord, bless all the church services happening today, in our Benefice and throughout the world. May you be worshipped and glorified in every village, town and city of the UK, and in every nation around the world. We also pray for the various Open Garden Events around the Benefice over the summer, that they will have good weather and that people will be inspired to worship you as they see the beauty of creation. Amen.

### ***Monday: Christian Aid Week.***

A prayer from Christian Aid (<https://fundraise.christianaid.org.uk>)

Loving God, we give thanks for the vital work of Christian Aid and for all who support it. Help us to hear the voices of those enduring extreme poverty. It is hard to listen to stories of pain. Show us how compassion for others can bring healing and fullness of life for all. Help us to understand that we are one through your love, for every human being is loved by you, beyond measure. Amen.

### ***Tuesday: World Leaders and Forthcoming Elections***

King of Kings, we pray for rulers and statesmen who are called to leadership in the affairs of the world. Give them vision to see far into the issues of their time, courage to uphold what is right, and integrity in their motives. May their service to their people promote the welfare of all. We pray for all voters in the build up to elections here in the UK, in America and elsewhere. Give them clear understanding of the issues, policies and manifestos, and discernment in their selection of candidates. May your will be done. Amen.



### ***Wednesday: All who are suffering, especially Henrietta (KM), and Margaret (WS); those who are bereaved especially family and friends of Shelia Kerby (KM); those who are struggling financially.***

Merciful Father, pour your love and healing power onto all who are suffering through illness, bereavement, loneliness or isolation. We remember especially (Henrietta and Margaret) and people we know personally. Remove their pain and give them joy and peace. Amen.

### ***Thursday: Todber***



Sovereign Lord, please bless all who live and work in Todber. Guide and inspire the PCC as they seek to preserve the church and plan for its future. May it provide a focus for the village and opportunities for community through the events held there. Amen.

### ***Friday: Diocesan Synod Elections***

Good Shepherd, we pray for the Diocesan Synod, and the important decisions made there for the Diocese of Salisbury, that impact us in the Stour Vale Benefice. We ask that the current round of elections for representatives of each deanery, and thus each parish, will lead to the people you are calling to this important work to be elected, so that your will may be done through them and the work of the Synod. Amen.

## Saturday: Ourselves

A prayer from Christian Aid ([www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-03/j440600-caw24-daily-devotional-1.pdf](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-03/j440600-caw24-daily-devotional-1.pdf))

Jesus, you showed us what love is by laying down your life for us. Help us this Christian Aid Week to reflect that same sacrificial love through generous giving and courageous action for those in need. 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.

*We have just celebrated Ascension Day; Canon Paul Hardingham considers the Ascension.*

### The Truth of the Ascension

*'While He was blessing them, Jesus left them and was taken up into heaven.'* (Luke 24:51).

The Ascension is a hugely neglected festival, which deserves to have a bigger place in our church life. How do we understand it?

*The Ascension tells us that Jesus is in control: 'Jesus has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand'* (1 Peter 3:22). Jesus occupies the top spot in the universe; the control of our world is in the safe, scarred hands of Jesus. We can offer Him our worship and allegiance, knowing that His plans are better than those of any Prime Minister or President.



*The Ascension tells us that God is committed to His world: 'And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus'* (Ephesians 2:6). Jesus did not leave His humanity behind when He ascended, for we are raised with Christ to heaven. Therefore, God is bound to His world and we can trust Him to fulfil His purposes for our lives and world.

*The Ascension gives us a job to do: 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations'* (Matthew 28:18,19). God's way of working in the world is through us. He commissions us for this task at the Ascension and equips us at Pentecost. We are called to make disciples, starting in our workplace, family and community.

*'Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks with compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world.'* (Teresa of Avila).

Parish Pump

### God loves your feet.

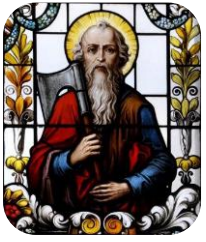
*How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"*

*Isaiah 52:7*

Barefoot in the sand, splashing through the puddles, or tottering in high heels. Your feet carry you wherever you want to go. So let them carry you to worship. Let them carry you to friends in need. Let them carry you to those who don't know Him, to those who need both good news and the Good News. When your feet carry you closer to God and to those who need Him, He blesses every step you take.

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

## 14<sup>th</sup> May – St Matthias, the replacement apostle



If you're saying to yourself, 'Who?' you'll be in good company. May 14<sup>th</sup> is the feast day of St Matthias the Apostle, and in describing him thus we have said just about all there is to know about him. He gets just one mention in the Bible, in the first chapter of Acts, immediately prior to the day of Pentecost, where it tells us that he was elected to take the place in the ranks of the twelve apostles recently vacated by the betrayer Judas Iscariot.

Eusebius, in the fourth century, says in his history of the apostolic era that Matthias was one of the 70 disciples sent out by Jesus (Luke 10:1), and that seems reasonable. When it was necessary to fill the vacancy among the apostles it would be natural to turn to someone who had followed Jesus from earlier years, as well as being a witness of the resurrection. Two names were suggested and prayed over. Then the apostles cast lots, following the Old Testament practice of the high priest's Urim and Thummim, one assumes. When they did, 'the lot fell on Matthias'.

Casting lots to fill vacancies on committees or councils, or even to appoint bishops, might seem to us to be rather risky. The Victorian preacher Campbell Morgan even suggested, that the 11 acted in haste and pre-empted God's choice of Saul (later known as Paul), who at that time was busy persecuting the Church, arresting Christians and having them thrown into prison. He hadn't yet travelled the Damascus Road.

Be that as it may, Matthias was elected, and for us he can stand for all those excellent, consistent, reliable and faithful servants of Christ who never make a headline, not even in the parish magazine. Yet still he was chosen because he could be a 'witness', and so are we.

Doubtless he fulfilled that responsibility admirably, without, as we say, 'setting the Thames on fire'. Let's salute him on his day – the 'Unknown Apostle'.

Parish Pump

### Plant Sales reminder – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May

**Final day of the West Stour Plant Sale** with stalls selling plants at the bottom of driveways.

**Kington Magna Plant Sale** Godwin's Orchard (SP8 5EW), Refreshments and Raffle as well as plants.

**Todber Coffee morning and Plant Sale** At the church from 10am to Noon – lovely cakes to go with a cuppa as well as plants for sale.

### 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.



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