



**Beckington Benefice  
Newsletter 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

(The abundant donated produce on its way to Frome Foodbank)

**Harvest Festival Food Donations**

Thank you to everyone who very kindly donated food at Harvest Festival Services which were held around the Benefice for the Frome Foodbank. As you can see from the picture above, we were overwhelmed with your generosity. Beckington's donation alone from their Harvest Festival weighed in at 89kg.

**“A big thank you to everyone who took part in, or supported the Harvest All Age Service at St Mary’s Church, Berkley on 1<sup>st</sup> October, also to everyone who donated items for the food bank. You’ll be pleased to know that when our contribution was weighed, it amounted to 49kg.” Caroline White**

The need for donated food continues...

St George’s Church in Beckington along with St Mary’s church in Berkley have drop off points where you can donate food and toiletries, which are collected weekly. If you are able to purchase just one extra item when you do your weekly grocery shop, this will help the foodbank considerably. To find out what the current needs in the foodbank are, and importantly, what they already have enough of, you can now download (for free) from your App store ‘Bank the Food’ or visit [Donate food - Fair Frome](#)

Thank you to all who decorated the churches across the Benefice for our Harvest Celebrations.



(One of the many decorations around the Benefice celebrating Harvest)

## Rural Forum 2023

Six of us from around the Benefice attended this years Rural Forum which was held in Bagley Baptist Church, Wedmore. It was a day packed with encouraging, (and challenging) topics, discussions and workshops, this year we had live artist Andy Gray, who drew out key points whilst the day was developing!



Bishop Michael, of Bath and Wells, spoke about how we all have different gifts, which come from the grace of God, and our response with gratitude will develop and cause growth of faith – thus being the people God wants us to be. What riches! Something Bishop Michael said has stayed in my mind strongly...the rural church has the most immense gift and resource ...creation.

We were also treated to an inspiring talk along with a short meditation by Brian Draper, author of book 'Soulful Nature' and BBC Radio 4's 'Thought For The Day' presenter, on God's beauty in the space outside... nature.

Brian spoke about people 'unfurling' similar to the unfurling of Ferns, symbolic maybe of how we sometimes feel as we are able to express ourselves when we are free in nature: going from brace to embrace.

I have been extremely fortunate and was able to scoop a little 'exclusive' article from Brian, just for you; the readers of this Newsletter!... Enjoy



(picture-stock image)

**"I love the words of Winnie the Pooh: "It's the first day of autumn!" he says. "A time of hot chocolatey mornings, and toasty marshmallow evenings, and, best of all, leaping into leaves!" Such child-like enthusiasm! Yet it's only natural, too, as we get older, to feel a swirl of *mixed* emotions as autumn rolls in like a morning mist. It's a season of paradox, after all - of light and dark, colour and decay, endings and beginnings. One way I've found to help me welcome autumn more lovingly is to step out into it, with reverence. Turn off my phone, walk slowly, take a breath, pause to use my senses, let my soul stir.**

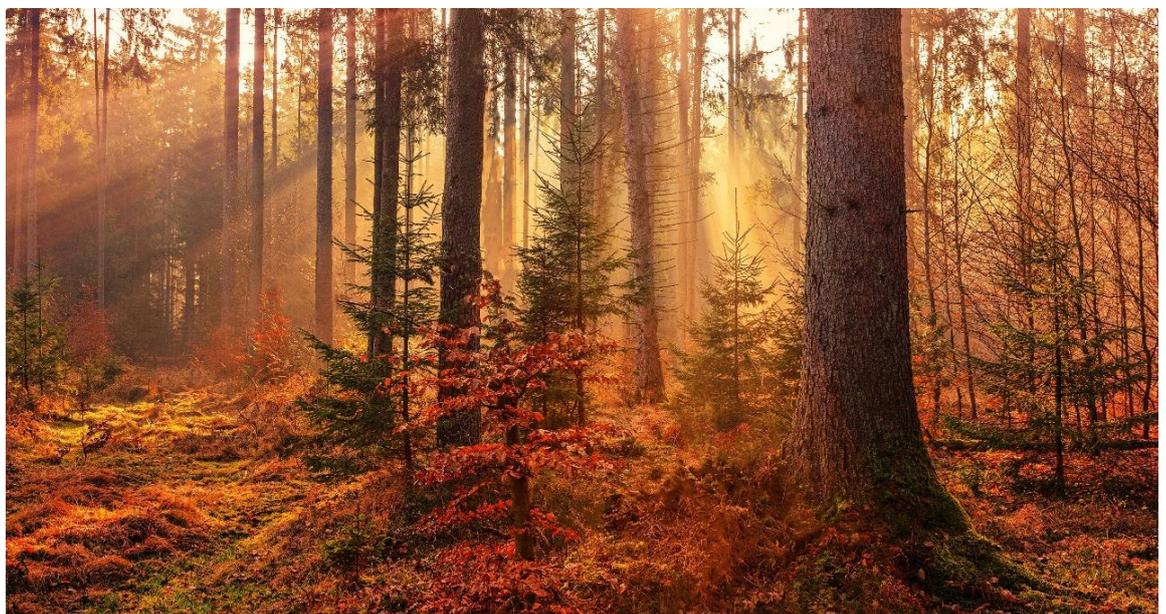
**I love to stand with a tree, for a while. Watch its leaves fall. The writer Glennon Doyle says she has roots like a tree which reach deep into the soil. That rich soil, she continues, "is made up of every girl and woman I've ever been, every face I've loved, every love I've lost, every place I've been, every conversation I've had, every book I've read and song I've sung, everything, everything crumbling and mixing and decomposing underneath. Nothing wasted."**

**Her powerful meditation reminds me that in autumn we stand on holy ground - not the marble of a cathedral floor, say, but a sacred leaf-strewn carpet of colour and mud like a woodland path! And for all its sense of relinquishment, autumn sings of abundance, too, as we've been reminded with harvest. In John Keats' wonderful ode 'To Autumn' he writes of a season which conspires with the sun to '*load and bless with fruit*' the bending apple trees and vines.**

**We, too, can be loaded and blessed with fruit! Remember: life in God's kingdom is not about winning or being 'successful' but about bearing delicious fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. So 'think not of the songs of Spring' as Keats says, addressing autumn personally: for '*Thou has thy music too.*' Her melody may contain a few more melancholy minor notes, but it's uniquely beautiful, isn't it? - reconnecting us, always, with her Creator, and ours.**

**I'm sure the best way to get through the season is to get *in* to it - to step out, onto holy ground. To breathe the air, let our soul stir and - why ever not? - to let the child within us leap into those leaves!**

**Brian Draper**



(picture-stock image)

## Joyous News From Joseph & Sarah Bilal

We have had some wonderful news from Joseph and Sarah Bilal who are to become grandparents in November! Tinate and Tim are expecting their first child - Praise God for this answer to prayer.

Joseph also wishes to **“pass on my love and greetings to everyone in the benefice.”**

## Free Online Theological Webinars

Two members from the Beckington Benefice are currently studying with Westminster Theology College (WTC) and can highly rate this college for its sound teachings of the scriptures. WTC are offering free online talks which will be accessible for anybody who wants to understand more about the Bible and faith in the life of the church. The talks will be given by different members of the WTC faculty and will look at a different aspect of the season. The first one is on the subject of Harvest with Dr Jasper Knecht on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm. Dr Lucy Peppiatt will then follow on the subject of Advent on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm with further webinars on Lent and Easter. Following these talks, there will be an opportunity to ask questions.

For further details and on how to book your place, please visit <https://wtctheology.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=bdf063dbcf5a2aedf109c169e&id=dc6af53a40&e=0504d619a4>

## Bell-ringing Boost

Are you a member of the Beckington Bell-ringing practice group or maybe you know someone who studies campanology –

If yes, you may be interested to know a new bell-ringers training centre has been opened at Holy Trinity Church, Street. The centre hopes to attract new and experienced ringers. Mike Palmer, tower captain at St John's Glastonbury says, “This will provide a wonderful opportunity for people, young and old, to learn a skill exercising mind and body – and make a real contribution to the community.” The new facility allows learners to develop their skills without disturbing the peace, thanks to muffled clappers and some technical wizardry which sees sensors on the bells feedback the outcome of their efforts.

(Bath and Wells Diocese)

## Events

**Community Coffee Morning  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 10.30am-12md**

68 Goose Street Beckington

Come along and join our friendly group of people. A chance to make new friends.

Absolutely everyone welcome.

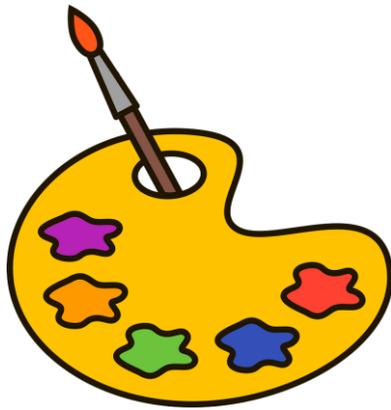
Come and join us at the  
Community Coffee  
Morning on October 25th  
at 68, Goose St.  
10.30-12.

Every last Wednesday of  
the month we gather  
together, making new  
friends, spending time  
with those we already  
know.

*it's coffee time*



You will be made very  
welcome.



## *New Informal Art Group*

On Alternate Wednesdays at Clifford Suite (Village Hall)  
10am–12noon

Chance to paint/draw/collage or create (in your own way),  
together just for pleasure

1<sup>st</sup> meeting on WEDNESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 10am

If you are interested contact: [jo@mijocasey.plus.com](mailto:jo@mijocasey.plus.com)

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Rodden are holding another Bridge Afternoon including a gorgeous tea on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October starting at 2.00pm in Rodden Church Hall.

To book a place, please contact Jim Dowling on 01373 462515 or [flintford2@gmx.co.uk](mailto:flintford2@gmx.co.uk)

### Worship

October/November 23	Service @ Church
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	10am Morning Worship Beckington 11am Matins (*) Lullington 6pm BCP Holy Communion Rodden
<b>29<sup>th</sup> October</b>	11am Joint Benefice Holy Communion Lullington
<b>5<sup>th</sup> November</b>	10am Matins (*) Beckington 10am All Age Service Berkley 11am BCP Holy Communion (*) Lullington
<b>Remembrance Day 12<sup>th</sup> November</b>	10.30am Remembrance Service Beckington 6pm BCP Holy Communion (*) Rodden



(\*) Traditional language using Book of Common Prayer – BCP

## Churchwardens

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### Berkley:

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Jeanette Hayward: 01373 832315

### Lullington & Orchardleigh:

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Mike & Wendy Wilsher 07590 110860

## Postscript From Around our Benefice...

***Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you. Isaiah 54:10***



These pictures show a recently fallen tree in Orchardleigh churchyard – amazingly no damage to humans or St Mary's Church was done! In fact, the opposite; once seasoned, we will use the wood to heat the very church it grew next too, even my newfound 4 legged friend, Blossom, made use of the fallen tree with an irresistible chew.



Just because something has been broken or torn from its foundations, life still, and does, go on.

Thankfully our God is unshakable and unbreakable; steadfast in his covenant to us.

Deborah X

To circulate information on this newsletter, please contact Deborah at [beckington.network@gmail.com](mailto:beckington.network@gmail.com) or telephone 07443 750052 **before the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month** with your articles and/or details of your upcoming events, making sure to include dates, times, and venue. Thank you.