

GRABBIST HILL BENEFICE BULLETIN

Alcombe

Dunster

Timberscombe

Wootton Courtenay

March 2025

This month we enter **Lent**, so see below for various Lent events. Please take note of our respective **Mothering Sunday** services on the schedule below. In both Alcombe and Dunster there will be *bouquets of flowers* offered as part of the service – do invite friends. There's a special **Messy Church** service at Timberscombe that Sunday too.

I (Kenneth) am on the lookout for a reasonably computer savvy person to take up the production of this monthly letter. The template is all set up in Word so it's not too difficult to navigate! **DO GET IN TOUCH IF YOU CAN HELP!**

COFFEE MORNING

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, DUNSTER

Friday 28th March, 10.00am - 12.00pm

Tea, coffee, sweet & savoury treats, raffle



Chance Encounters

Sunday 16th March, 3.30-6.15pm

ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL ALCOMBE

Games, Bring and Shared Tea and Worship

WARM WELCOME

ST PETROCK'S, TIMBERSCOMBE

Every term-time Thursday, 10am - 12 noon

Hot drinks & refreshments All welcome



The following LENT events are open to ALL in the Benefice:

ASH WEDNESDAY (5th March): Holy Communion + Imposition of Ashes. 2pm St Michael the Archangel, Alcombe

LENT COURSES:

Timberscombe, Tuesday 18th March, 1st & 15th April. 10.30 am at St Petrock's
using the novel *The Shack* by Wm Paul Young. Copies are available at the back of church.

Alcombe, Thursday 27 March & 10 April, 12noon -1.30 at St Michael the Archangel

Session 1, *The Bible* (Manual, Riddle or Sign?), Session 2, *Following Jesus in Community*, led by Kenneth. Just turn up on the day, but please get in touch if you are interested in [joining online](#) (contact details on next page at the bottom).

LENT SOUP LUNCHESES: Thursdays 13th and 27th March and 10th April. 12.00 pm at St Petrock's, Timberscombe

Service Rota

Date:	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
Sunday:	NEXT BEFORE LENT	FIRST OF LENT	SECOND OF LENT	THIRD OF LENT	MOTHERING SUNDAY/ FOURTH OF LENT
	No KC				
Liturgical Colour:	GREEN	PURPLE	PURPLE	PURPLE	PURPLE
Readings:	Please check readings with the service leader				
0930	WOOTTON COURTENAY HC (BCP) said NMB				
1000	ALCOMBE HC (CW) NB	ALCOMBE HC (CW) NB	ALCOMBE HC (CW) KC	ALCOMBE HC (CW) NB	ALCOMBE All-Age HC (CW) NB
1100	DUNSTER HC (CW) LC	DUNSTER HC (CW) KC	TIMBERSCOMBE HC (CW) NMB	DUNSTER MP (CW) MJ	DUNSTER Mothering Sunday Service KC
	TIMBERSCOMBE HC (CW) NMB	TIMBERSCOMBE HC (BCP) NMB	WOOTTON COURTENAY HC (BCP) said NB	TIMBERSCOMBE MP (CW) KC	TIMBERSCOMBE Messy Church NMB
		WOOTTON COURTENAY Songs of Praise Local		WOOTTON COURTENAY HC (CW) NMB	
1530			ALCOMBE Chance Encounters Local		
1700	ALCOMBE Evensong Local	ALCOMBE Evensong Local		ALCOMBE Evensong Local	

MIDWEEK EUCHARISTS:

In Alcombe every Wednesday (9am) and Thursday (11am, with refreshments, and on the 6th & 20th, SOUP)

KEY **NB** = Rev Nicola Butcher, **NMB** = Rev Nicola Butt, **LC** = Rev Lore Chumbley, **KC** = Rev Kenneth Cross, **MJ** = Rev Margaret Jackson,

JM = Rev Juliet Montague, **RP** = Rev Rik Peckham, **BP** = Rev Barry Priory, **TW** = Rev Tim Woods **Local** = arrangement organised in parish

HC = Holy Communion, MP = Morning Prayer, BCP = Book of Common Prayer, CW = Common Worship

The View From Grabbist

March 2025

You may have observed that I find great inspiration from the natural world! I have meandered over the months through fungi, seasons, dead leaves and hilltop views. The natural world is *the* in-your-face reality which we cannot escape, whether in rural Exmoor or bustling Exeter. While she is utilised and misused in our vain human attempts to build permanence, Mother Nature relentlessly bursts through our folly. Even on the filthiest pavements, daisies and thistles peak out.

Pause ... and take a *breath*. Inhalation is your receiving of the finest gift. As you reciprocate, you offer back your exhaled air to the atmosphere. Really, there's no ultimate clear-cut distinction between 'atmosphere', 'you' and 'the environment' - we altogether *are* nature. When does the air become you? Am I too not 'the environment' for the trillions of microbiomes in my body which keep me alive? Does my toenail stop being me when I snip it off? ...there's no escape, we inter-are!

It is my belief that it is *all* holy, all of nature a sacrament accessible to our senses which shimmers with wonder, intricacy and intrigue, which unspeakably hints at the Divine, the fullness of Reality utterly beyond our senses.

Lest you think my specs are rose-tinted, it's not just the aspects of nature that delight us that are sacramental. Nature is indeed red in tooth and claw; as well as collaboration, there's competition, an inbuilt creative tension. Evolution's flow tinkles and sparkles delightfully like a mountain stream, yes, but it also creaks, cracks, crashes, weeps and roars with destructive force. These aspects too echo the Divine Mystery which is at once fierce and homely, fearful and gentle as a dove, utterly other yet intimate, and can be heard in the groan of creation '*waiting for the children of God to be revealed....*', a groan that resonates in our own heartaches and struggles as God's offspring (Rom 8.19-23).

In this light, I invite us this Lent to ponder the life of Jesus, his temptations, wrestles and passion just as much as the liberation, compassion and light that shines through his life. This Christ way is the embodied, fleshed-out, messy way of the cross, the way of death and new life, a pattern laced throughout the cosmos. Deep, silent contemplation of this way sits alongside wide-eyed beholding of nature. The two are intertwined. As the ultimate icon, Nature - if we dare allow her - points us beyond herself, by the impetus of the Divine Spirit who is her very life, to the Christ who upholds and indwells all, by the same Divine Spirit.

This is the Christ who beckons us to come home to the Heart of Love, to indwell all things in him - a fearful yet delightful path, the only authentic path there is. As St Augustine said, '*let us flee to our beloved homeland, for there the Father is, and there is everything*'.

Great, indeed, is the mystery of faith.



Kenneth

WHO'S WHO

Incumbent: Rev'd Kenneth Cross 07708 925800, kennethjcross@gmail.com, usual days off: Monday & Tuesday
Associate Priests: Rev'd Nicola Butcher 07740 081070, rev.nicolabutcher@gmail.com, usual day off: Monday (*Alcombe*)
Rev'd Nicola Butt 01643 84171 3 (*Timberscombe & Wootton Courtenay*)
Rev'd Margaret Jackson 01643 822501 (*Dunster*)
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