

# SEVERN STOKE AND CROOME D'ABITOT

## NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2008

40 Pence

### Forthcoming Events

#### Severn Stoke & Environs

#### Friends of St Denys

**Saturday**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> February:**  
**Severn Stoke Parish**  
**Hall at 7.30 p.m.**

#### POETIC IMAGES

An evening of poetry and Photographic Imagery with **Rev Peter Holzapfel**.  
**Tickets £4.00**  
Light refreshments included. Pay on the door.

See inside for further details.

#### Kempsey

**Monday**  
**25<sup>th</sup> February:**  
**The Firs, Kempsey**  
**At 7.30 p.m.**

An evening of light refreshments to raise funding for **The Bangladesh Crisis Appeal**. This is in place of our usual Lent Lunches. This event is open to everyone and do give it your fullest possible support.

See inside for details

### The Rector's Message

Dear Friends,

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 6th February: what are you intending to give up? I'd like to give up religion and not just for Lent but for the rest of my life. Religion is like smoking in that it can seriously damage your health: in this case your spiritual health. If you're a religious person then I strongly advise you to reconsider your ways and if you've never tried religion then my recommendation is that you should never begin. Never ever take that first puff on the opium of religion or ever get a whiff of the hypocrisy that constitutes most religions including Christianity.

And so what are the symptoms that you've caught religion? Check these out, if you dare, and see if any of them apply to you: thinking that only you are right and that everyone else is wrong: petty mindedness: a holier than thou attitude and pointing the finger at everyone else but never ever at yourself: believing that you're a "good" person when in actual fact you're a seething mass of frustration, anger, jealousy and bitterness: self-pride, arrogance and a willingness to fall to your knees in church whilst in reality this does not reflect the state of your heart: lack of compassion and accepting others as they are.

Religion has done more harm in the world than anything else and it has claimed millions of innocent lives throughout the centuries. More wars have been fought in the name of religion than anything else and, quite frankly, religion stinks. The Crusades when Christians set off to conquer the "infidels" of Mohammed and to claim Jerusalem in the name of the one true God who was, of course, white and Anglo-Saxon. The Spanish Inquisition and witch hunts across Europe and America. The European Colonialists who set off "with God on their side" to claim other people's lands as if they had a justified claim to them. Protestants and Catholics blowing themselves apart in Ireland. The Jews who have claimed Palestinian soil that they have no right to occupy. The extreme Muslims who turn viciously on their own people on the

### Reverend Peter Holzapfel

"religious" assumption that everybody has to be like them and seek to blow up the whole world in order to create a true worldwide Islamic State and to ensure themselves "a place in heaven!" The only religion, as far as I'm aware, in whose name a war has not been fought is Buddhism.

The list goes on and on and you could fill volumes with the infamies and atrocities that have been and are being committed in the name of religion and the God it seeks to serve. A "Holy War" inevitably ends up in an un-holy mess and tragedy and suffering for millions of totally innocent people.

If this is religion then I say as a clergyman in the Church of England that I want no part of it and, quite frankly, I am ashamed of what has been done in the name of Jesus Christ over the centuries. I do not want to invite anyone to a church which in any way represents such misguided values and is based on human pride, arrogance and self-seeking.

Nothing could be further from the true Spirit of Jesus than man made religion. Jesus was a person of total and absolute humility: a man of compassion and forgiveness who accepted people as they were, whilst offering them an opportunity to become all that they were meant to be: a kind man, a gentle man and one of unbelievable love who reflected the very nature of God. This has nothing to do with religion as we have misused and abused it, in order to serve our own ends rather than the true purposes of our all-embracing all-loving God.

The Lenten prayer reads "the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart God will not despise." If you're still unsure about what to give up for Lent then I advise you to give up religion for good and embrace Jesus instead.

*Peter Holzapfel (Revd.)*

**Parish Records: Funeral:** 4th January at St Denys' Church – Panthea (Ponty) Chatterton died on 27th December, after a long illness, so courageously borne. She will be sadly missed by so many. We offer our sincere condolences to Graham and the family.

Donations in memory of Ponty, given at her funeral totalled over £2,600, which at the family's request is to be divided equally between St Richard's Hospice and St Denys' Church, a generous and loving tribute to her.

**The Severn Stoke Fellowship and Study Group meets fortnightly on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month and to coincide with school terms (roughly!) at 2.30 p.m. at the homes of various Members. Next dates: 14th February, 2008 at Meadow Hill House, Severn Stoke and 28th February with Isobel Morris at Broadacre, Severn Stoke. You are welcome to join us. Please contact John and Cara (W/ 371 218) for details.**

### **United Benefice of Kempsey and Severn Stoke with Croome d'Abitot – Church News**

**United Benefice Prayer Meetings** – Welcome to our meetings (usually every other Monday) for an hour, from 8.00 p.m. on Monday, 4th and 18th February and 3rd March, 2008. For the winter, we will meet each fortnight at the homes of those taking part. Contact John and Cara (W/ 371 218) for the next ensuing venue.

We give thought and prayer for people and projects around us and for the health and enhancement of the Churches' work. You don't have to say a word unless you wish, but just be with us.

#### **St DENYS' CHURCH, Severn Stoke**

**With the re-opening of the Church for services and other functions, following the July floods, we need your help please to re-establish a regular rota for Church Cleaning and Flower arranging.**

**Church Cleaning:** We desperately need volunteers, who would be able to give a couple of hours, every couple of months or so, to help clean the Church on a Friday or Saturday, vacuuming, dusting and mopping. If you can, or would like more information, contact John Henderson (W/ 371 218).

**Flower Arrangers:** Please will you show your talent, by joining the Rota – Every help will be given to new volunteers. Please contact John Henderson (W/371 218)

#### **CHURCH CLEANING – SEVERN STOKE**

##### FEBRUARY

1st Mrs Gaywood and Mrs Linsey  
(WEDDING on 2nd February)  
8th Mrs Henderson and Mr Henderson  
15th Mrs Joan Price and Friend  
22nd Mrs Hanmer and Mrs Ewins  
29th Mrs Gaywood and Mrs Linsey

##### MARCH

7th Mrs Henderson and Mr Henderson

#### **CHURCH FLOWERS – SEVERN STOKE**

##### FEBRUARY

2nd Wedding Flowers

LENT – no flowers

## **SERVICES at ST MARY'S, KEMPSEY**

**Every Thursday 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel**

**Every Friday 11.00 a.m. Mothers and Toddlers Service**

### **FEBRUARY**

Sunday 3rd 8.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP, 9.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP at Kerswell Green,  
10.30 a.m.: Family Communion, 6.00 p.m. Holy Communion BCP

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday - 7.30 p.m.: Special United Benefice Service at St Mary's Church, Kempsey at the start of Lent.**

Sunday 10th 8.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP, 10.30 a.m.: Informal Family Service,  
6.00 p.m.: **SPECIAL SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING FOR MARRIAGE**  
**This will be a very special service when we pray for those who are about to be married in the forthcoming year and also give thanks for the love shared by those already married. Please do join us whether you're married or not and give God thanks for the love that is shared by us all in Jesus.**

Sunday 17th 8.00 a.m.: Morning Prayer BCP, 10.30 a.m.: Family Service,  
6.00 p.m.: Holy Communion BCP.

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> 8.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP, 10.30 a.m.: Family Communion,  
**6.00 p.m. HEALING SERVICE – The last Healing Service that we had was truly blessed and it has been decided to hold another. This is a lovely opportunity for you to bring before God any concerns you may have for healing either for yourself or a loved one. There will be no pressure at all to receive prayer for healing but please know that if you do wish for prayer it will be done quietly but powerfully in the name of Jesus. The service is open to all and so whether you require healing or not please come along and support each other with loving prayer.**

### **MARCH**

Sunday 2nd 8.00 a.m.: Morning Prayer BCP, 9.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP, Kerswell Green,  
**Mothering Sunday 10.30 a.m.: Family Service, 3.00 p.m.: Holy Baptism, 6.00 p.m.: Holy Communion**

## **HAPPENINGS at KEMPSEY**

**The Cornflower Club** - Meets on Wednesday, 6th, 20th February and 5th March 2.30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

**Age Concern Coffee Morning** - meets every Thursday at 11.30 a.m.. Please note that for the foreseeable future this will take place in St Mary's Church because of recent flooding affecting St Mary's House.

**Monday 25th February: 7.30 p.m. at The Firs: An evening of light refreshments to raise funding for The Bangladesh Crisis Appeal. This is in place of our usual Lent Lunches. This event is open to everyone and do give it your fullest possible support.**

## **SEVERN STOKE AND CROOME d'ABITOT PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

At their meeting in December last, members of the PCC decided that the pews should be retained and the Church furnished as before. The Pipe Organ also should be repaired and modified, with the insurance monies, so that it will be less costly in future to repair, when further flooding occurs.

The PCC is very grateful indeed to Enid Smith of Kinnersley for the generous donation of the beautiful new Communion Altar Linen. It has been given in memory of her husband, Ivor. He lived in the Parish all his life and was very fond of St Denys' Church, starting from the days when as a boy, he volunteered to pump the organ bellows by hand.

## **SEVERN STOKE and CROOME d'ABITOT PARISH COUNCIL**

The Parish Council has appointed Mr Phillip Skeys and his son, Simon, as lengthsman. From February, they will be undertaking minor highway maintenance work in the two parishes. This includes work to keep drainage systems clear (especially useful at the moment!), road signs clean and unobstructed and footways beside the road clear to their full width. They are not allowed to repair the carriageway of roads (eg fill potholes), nor work on hedges and ditches, as they are private property. These are experienced men and we expect their efforts will become obvious in the coming months.

In November last year, the Parish Council applied to the Rotary Three Counties Flood Appeal for assistance with refurbishment of the Parish Hall. In early January, a generous grant of £5,000 was confirmed, which is much appreciated.

## **SEVERN STOKE PARISH HALL**

The Parish Hall is open again for bookings with its magnificent new Kitchen fittings and facilities. Bookings through; Maggie Taylor or Trish Rowe (W/ 371 339)

## **EARL'S CROOME WOMEN'S INSTITUTE**

Tuesday, 12th February 7.30 p.m. "Stay and keep fit" - A talk by Angela Hugman

## **SEVERN STOKE SCOUT & GUIDE GROUP**

Sunday, 24th February – **Thinking Day** for the District Guides, Brownies and Rainbows  
at Bredon Hill School.

More Guides, Brownies and Rainbows wanted please and if anyone is available to help with the Group, please contact Pam Gerrard (01905 820 955)

## **The National Trust - Croome Park**

Saturday, 16th February – Winter Bird Walk – Booking essential.

Sunday, 2nd March Mothers' Day Restoration Walk, (3 miles) - Discover what's happened at Croome during the Winter.

For more details: Contact W/ 371 006 or e-mail: [croomepark@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:croomepark@nationaltrust.org.uk)



**RECTOR: Reverend Peter Holzapfel**

**Office Address;** St. Mary's Church House  
Squires Walk,  
Kempsey.

**(For messages and letters)**

**Tel: 01905 820 740**

**E-mail address; [cherrytree@tesco.net](mailto:cherrytree@tesco.net)**

Cherry Tree Rectory  
3, Oakfield Drive,  
Kempsey,  
Worcester, WR5 3PP  
Tel: W/ 820 202

**CHURCHWARDEN: Mr. Bryan Hadley Severn Stoke 01905 371 383**

## **CHURCH SERVICES at St Denys' Church**

### **FEBRUARY**

**Sunday 3rd Sunday before Lent 10.30 a.m.: Morning Prayer BCP**

**Wednesday 6th Ash Wednesday 7.30 p.m.: There will be a special **United Benefice Service at St Mary's, Kempsey** for Ash Wednesday to mark the start of Lent.**

**Sunday 10th Lent 1 9.15 a.m.: Holy Communion CW**

**Sunday 17th Lent 2 9.15 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP**

**Sunday 24th Lent 3 10.30 a.m.: Morning Praise including a Baptism**

**6.00 p.m.: HEALING SERVICE at St Mary's, Kempsey.**

**This is a United Benefice Service of Prayer for Healing.**

**Do come along and pray for healing for yourself or a loved one.**

**The last Healing Service was a very blessed occasion and**

**I feel sure that this one will be equally special and equally**

**fruitful, as we receive God's healing love and touch on our lives.**

**Thursday 28th 7.30 p.m.: Re-Licensing Service for all those who serve at the altar at Hanley Swan Church.**

### **MARCH**

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March: Please pray for our new Bishop, The Rt Rev John Inge as he is consecrated as the next Bishop of Worcester in The Cathedral this afternoon.**

**Sunday 2nd Mothering Sunday 10.30 a.m.: Morning Prayer BCP**

## **FLOOD EMERGENCY PLAN**

**For St Denys' Church –A list is maintained of names and contact numbers of able-bodied people to assist at short notice with lifting carpets, securing furniture and saving other moveable objects in anticipation of a flood.**

**We should like to extend this offer of help to householders and businesses in Severn Stoke and Croome d'Abitot, who may be in danger of imminent flooding. If your name is not already on the Church list, please let me know if you live locally and could help. Remember, the call could come at any time, day or night and you would volunteer entirely at your own risk!**

**Please contact John Henderson now, with your telephone/mobile number and email address, so that we can be prepared – W/ 371 218 or email: [johnandcara@hotmail.com](mailto:johnandcara@hotmail.com)**