

SEVERN STOKE AND CROOME D'ABITOT

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2010

The Rector's Message Reverend Peter Holzappel

40 Pence

Forthcoming Events

Severn Stoke & Environs

Wednesday 3rd February
7.30 p.m.

OPEN MEETING

at Severn Stoke Parish
Hall

The Future of St Denys' Church, Severn Stoke

All welcome

Saturday 20th February
7.30 p.m. at Severn Stoke
Parish Hall

QUIZNIGHT

Come and enjoy the fun!

See inside for details

Kempsey

Sunday 28th February at
7.00 p.m. in St Mary's
Church

FILM EVENING

followed by refreshments
and discussion.

Monday 8th March at
7.30 p.m. at The Walter
de Cantaloupe

Discussion

and light refreshments

See inside for details

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Please submit Copy by 2nd
Monday next month

Dear Friends,

A Rabbi once asked God "How is it that people no longer hear You speaking to them?" And God answered "Because they don't bow low enough."

When I heard this I was reminded of how, when speaking with young children, we often bend or even kneel down so that we're on the same level as them. Why do we do this? We do it so that we're able to hear more clearly what they're saying. If we apply this to our conversations with God, and wonder why we don't hear Him speaking to us, it maybe because we don't get into the right position and the reason for this is that we don't really want to hear what He is telling us. It's not that God isn't speaking but that we're not listening. We don't mind listening to God as long as He's telling us things that we want to hear. It's surprising how very passionate and committed Christians often hear God speaking to them in words that fit in with their plans and schemes.

This, by the way, is my second attempt at writing this month's Pastoral Letter. I've ditched my first attempt because I thought it was too direct and challenging and might offend some people. I was frightened that some people might even stop taking the Magazine. I learned a valuable lesson about the dangers of overstepping the mark at last year's Remembrance Service and I wouldn't want to do it again. Perhaps I'm improving? But is this really the way that God wants us to be even though it suits our purpose and keeps everyone happy. We don't bend down to hear Him because we're too busy standing on high and tickling our ears with words we like to hear.

Another reason we bend down to speak with children is to avoid distractions because children speak in low voices and, usually with so much going on around, it's difficult to catch what they're saying. We need to focus on them alone. But when it comes to speaking with God I'm very content to have as many distractions as possible because I don't find prayer very easy. I'd rather be doing things, getting on with the job, than just sitting there speaking with God and so "my doing" is often a good excuse for not listening. And, of course, if we're not listening then we're not going to hear what He has to say.

And the last reason for kneeling down when speaking with children is to get on the same level and not to loom over the top of them like some two-legged mountain. Also to kneel or bow is to express humility. The period leading up to Easter, which we call Lent, is all about humbling ourselves before God and being truly sorry, indeed broken-hearted, for our wrongdoing and the injury we've caused to others. Part of The Lenten Prayer goes "a broken and contrite heart God will not despise" and so we're invited to humble ourselves before God. This, of course, is the very last thing that most of us want to do and so we continue to stand proud and tall in our self-centredness and self-delusion.

And so I encourage us all to humble ourselves before God and to bow down low enough so that we can hear Him speaking to us. It's worth remembering that there would have been no Easter had not God humbled Himself by becoming a child on earth and then being humiliated and crucified. And so, let's try and follow in His footsteps and bow our knees, like the three Kings, so that we might hear The Christ-Child speaking to us.

May God grant you and may you grant yourselves a truly blessed Lent.

Peter Holzappel (Revd.)

HAPPENINGS in SEVERN STOKE and environs

The Walkers and Hikers Carol Service in St Denys' Church on 12th December last was packed and we are very grateful to the Vicar for taking a wonderful service, for the generosity of those attending, for the warming refreshments provided by Rosie Styles and others and for Mike and Lyn Everitt for making it all possible.

Thank you to all those who supported the Carol singing at Orchard House, Kinnersley and for being a merry crowd.

Sorry that the Friends of St Denys Coffee Morning at Jean and Hugh Hanmer's had to be postponed to some time later in the year, due to miserable weather!

Your Church needs You!

You should all have received a letter from the Rector about the future of St Denys' Church, inviting you to a Public Meeting on 3rd February at the Parish Hall at 7.30 p.m. Over the years, we have lost our School, a Pub and the Village Shops. Please come to the Meeting, as the future of St Denys will depend upon your caring.

If you have not received the letter, please contact John Henderson (W/371 218).

HAPPENINGS at KEMPSEY

The Cornflower Club meets every other Wednesday at 2.30 p.m., 3rd and 17th February and 3rd March in The Parish Hall. Everyone most welcome to come and join this very active and enjoyable club that meets every other week. A warm welcome assured and a good time promised.

Age Concern Coffee Morning - meets every Thursday at 11.30 a.m. at St Mary's House.

"Little Angels" for Babes & Toddlers meets at St Mary's Church each Friday at 11.00 a.m.

Women's Fellowship meets in St Mary's House on Wednesday, 10th February at 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 17th February, ASH WEDNESDAY (Start of Lent), and 3rd March,
LENT LUNCHESES at The Firs from 12.30p.m. to 2.00p.m. Please do support these lovely Lenten lunches, enjoy fellowship together and raise funds for those in far greater need than ourselves.

Sunday 28th February: 7.00p.m.: at St Mary's Church

"FILM EVENING" followed by refreshments and discussion

The film that will be shown will be thought provoking and I'm sure will stimulate much discussion. This is open to everyone and anyone within our parishes and it would be great to see you and welcome you. It will not be a religious service and you don't need to be involved in any way with church to join in. It should be a really good evening for all those who come along.

Monday 8th March: 7.30p.m.: "DOES EASTER HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANCE IN OUR

SOCIETY TODAY?" No, it's not an exam question and you're certainly not being marked on your answer, but it is an INVITATION to come and discuss it over a drink and light refreshments at **THE WALTER DE CANTELUPE** here in Kempsey. This evening is open to everyone and it would be great to hear your views whether you're a regularly involved with church or not. You won't be embarrassed or put on the spot in any way but any views, feelings or opinions that you have would certainly be welcome. So, do come along and have a good evening at the Walter.

(PLEASE NOTE that there will not be a Prayer Meeting tonight)

CHURCH SERVICES at St MARY'S, KEMPSEY

Every Thursday 10.30 a.m.: Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
 Every Friday 11.00 a.m.: "Little Angels" for Mothers, babes and toddlers.

FEBRUARY

Sunday 7th 8.00 a.m.: Morning Prayer BCP, 9.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP at Kerswell Green,
 10.30 a.m.: Family Service, 6.00 p.m.: Holy Communion BCP.

Sunday 14th 8.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP, 10.30 a.m.: Informal Family Communion, 6.00 p.m.: Evensong

Wednesday 17th "ASH WEDNESDAY" - 7.30pm: UNITED BENEFICE Holy Communion Service to mark the start of The Lenten Season

Sunday 21st 8.00 a.m.: Morning Prayer BCP, 10.30am: Family Service, 6.00 p.m.: Holy Communion BCP

Sunday 28th 8.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP, 10.30 a.m.: Family Communion,
**7.00p.m.: "FILM EVENING" followed by refreshments and discussion in St Mary's Church:
 EVERYONE MOST WELCOME**

MARCH

Sunday 7th 8.00 a.m.: Morning Prayer BCP, 9.00 a.m.: Holy Communion BCP at Kerswell Green,
 10.30am: Family Service, 6.00 p.m.: Holy Communion BCP.

CITIZEN'S ADVICE BUREAUX

Recently, my husband lost his job, and only has redundancy money for three months. I only have a part-time job which would not cover the cost of the mortgage. Is there anything I can do to make sure we don't default on our loan and face repossession?

Facing the prospect of repossession can be frightening, but losing your home is not the inevitable outcome of financial difficulties. Since January 2009, a number of different Government schemes have been introduced to prevent it happening, like Homeowner Mortgage Support, and for the most vulnerable households facing the immediate threat of repossession, there is also a local Mortgage Rescue Scheme. This is operated by Elgar Housing Association on behalf of the Local Authority.

Firstly, it's really important to get advice no matter what stage you are at. If you think you are going to have problems paying the mortgage, do contact your lender or visit your local CAB to talk through options of maximising your income – perhaps claiming Support for Mortgage Interest or renegotiating affordable payments for a period. Under the government's mortgage protocol, lenders are obliged to help and make all reasonable attempts to help borrowers find a way through a difficult patch.

You should make your mortgage your top priority. If you have other unsecured loans, creditors or catalogues you might have to pay less towards them to make sure you can meet your mortgage payment. Get in touch with everyone you owe money to and let them know what's going on. You should also claim all the benefits and tax credits you're entitled to. This might take some time so while you are doing it keep in touch with your mortgage lender so they know what you are doing. If you need help – ask – that's what your local CAB is there for.

It is important to remember that lenders should show that they have exhausted every possible option before applying for a possession order. Even on the day of a possession hearing, there are things that can be done - around four in five repossessions can still be stopped if the households attend court and access free advice. To find out if your court has such a duty desk scheme go to www.nhas.org.uk

Finally, remember that concerned homeowners can get free, impartial advice from their local Citizens Advice (www.adviceguide.org) or from www.direct.gov.uk/mortgagehelp, or from one of National Debtline's advisers on 0800 808 4000.

Malvern Bureau open:

Mon, Tues & Thurs 9.30 am – 4 pm
 Fri 10 am - 4 pm

Telephone advice: Wed 10 am – 4 pm Tel: 01684 563611

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, 8th and 22nd February. We meet each fortnight at the homes of those taking part. No Meeting on Monday 8th March due to the gathering in the Walter de Cantaloupe to discuss “Does Easter have any significance in our Society today?”
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.

SEVERN STOKE SCOUT & GUIDE GROUP

As part of the **Centenary Celebrations of the Scouting Movement**, some of the Brownies will be representing the Area Thinking Day at Worcester Cathedral on 21st February.

28th February—The District Thinking Day at Pershore Abbey.

17th March –Mothers Day Tea Party hosted by the Brownies

SEVERN STOKE and CROOME d'ABITOT PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Support for Graveyard Maintenance

A parish council has the authority to provide, or contribute towards the provision of a cemetery, where inhabitants of the parish may be interred. This is irrespective of the denomination of the owners of that cemetery. All residents of our two parishes have a right to be buried in the churchyard of St Denys Church, yet this is currently maintained wholly at the expense of The Friends of St Denys. In view of the increasing cost involved, the Parish Council has decided that it would be reasonable to contribute £500 this coming year towards the maintenance of this graveyard.

The Parish Council wishes to make it clear that it has neither the intention, nor the authority, to support any particular religious faith. Equally, the Council is clear that it should support the maintenance of the graveyard; its contribution being used solely for that purpose.

EARL'S CROOME WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Tuesday, 9th February — ‘Corn Dollies’, a talk by Chris Cooke and the Competition “A small doll”, made of any material.

MOTHERS UNION – Upton Deanery

Wednesday, 4th February at 2.15 p.m. at Upton Church Room— A talk by Mrs Mavis Firkins on “Asha”, the Worcester Charity.

St. Mary's & St. Denys' website - a new, updated look www.stmaryskempsey.org.uk, – **Check out this website!** Please do get in contact, via the Contacts page, if you have anything to contribute.

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CHURCH SERVICES at St Denys' Church, Severn Stoke

FEBRUARY

Sunday 7th: Second Sunday before Lent

10.30 a.m.: Holy Communion CW.

Sunday 14th: Sunday before Lent

9.15 a.m.: Morning Prayer and Praise.

Wednesday 17th "ASH WEDNESDAY"

7.30pm: UNITED BENEFICE Holy Communion Service at St Mary's Kempsey, to mark the start of The Lenten Season

Sunday 21st: Lent 1

9.15 a.m. Holy Communion BCP

Sunday 28th: Lent 2

10.30 a.m. Morning Prayer and Praise

MARCH

Sunday 7th Lent 3

10.30 a.m.: Holy Communion CW.

CHURCH CLEANING – SEVERN STOKE

FEBRUARY

5th Mrs Henderson and Mr Henderson
 12th Mrs Cox and Mr Cox
 19th Mrs Humphrey and Mr Humphrey
 26th Mrs Everitt and Mr Everitt

MARCH

5th Mrs Joan Price and Friend
 12th Mrs Hanmer and Mrs Ewins
 19th Mrs Gaywood and Mrs Linsey

CHURCH FLOWERS – SEVERN STOKE

FEBRUARY

5th Mrs Henderson
 12th Daphne Derrett (One week only, as Lent begins on 16th February.)

Further copies of this Newsletter can be obtained on-line:

www.stmaryskempsey.org.uk and click on **Home Page** for St Denys' news and events.