

I like to listen to the BBC Today programme on Radio 4, but it seems the presenters are becoming increasingly abrasive and hard-nosed, trying to put words into a politician's mouth until some ground is yielded, as if in a shouty, sixth-form debating contest.

On Wednesday morning (27th), the 8 o'clock news told of the Archbishops' call to the nation to remember each day those who have lost their lives to Covid... **"...100,000 is not an abstract number... each one is a person... someone we loved"**. This was followed by an interview with Robert Jenryck, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in which it was argued that many of the recent 50,000 Coronavirus deaths could have been avoided by the Government and the question was then put by Mishal Husein, **"That must be quite something to have on your conscience as a Government minister?"**.

Shocking! Unworthy! I don't like blame culture in the BBC just as I don't like it in the church. I remember being told that if you point at someone you should always bear in mind that the other three fingers on your hand are pointing back at yourself. **Please pray for the Government, the "Beeb" and all those affected by Covid19.**

Rev'd Charles Overton

The Living Word is a Bible study on the set readings thelivingword.uk (thelivingword.uk). A linked article explores the message from this week's theme: 'God's word comes through God's words', see bit.ly/Jan31article

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Sunday 7th February

10.30 am - We are scheduling a small physical service at Sarnesfield that will be streamed live but this is dependent on the strength of the wifi signal.

5.30 pm Zoom Evening Prayer

Copy for next week no later than Wednesday to: admin@weobleyandstaunton.co.uk

For more news, see also www.weobleyandstaunton.co.uk or Facebook

People & Steeple

News and contacts for the Weobley & Staunton Group of Parishes

Weobley, Sarnesfield, Norton Canon,
Staunton-on-Wye, Byford, Monnington, Letton

Sunday 31st January 2021

We have come to a 'turning point' in the year in more senses than one. For the Church's calendar, we come to Candlemas or more formally, the festival of the 'Presentation of Christ in the Temple'. It's the story in Luke's gospel of the moment when Mary and Joseph bring the infant Jesus, then 40 days old, to the temple where they are met by old Simeon and Anna.

We might note the throughgoing faithful Jewishness of this occasion. As Luke says, 'this was done 'according to the law of Moses'. Jesus remained a Jew throughout his human life and at this time of Holocaust remembrance, we do well to remind ourselves that Jesus never remotely suggested that he had come to replace Judaism – quite the reverse: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them", he said.

Simeon's words to Mary his mother that "a sword will pierce your own soul", focusses us already on what is to come – the crucifixion 30 years later when Mary will also be present. For us, though, it's not 30 years, but much nearer. We celebrate Candlemas as a turning point, the moment when we turn away from Christmas and Epiphany; and we turn to face onwards towards Lent, Holy Week and Easter.

In the midst of the present pandemic, we constantly hope for a turning point, the time when we can look to a different way of life than we have at present. Not a return to a previous normal, but to a different future that we need to face up to with hope and determination

And for us here in the parishes of Weobley and Staunton, there is another sense of a turning point; we look to the coming amongst us of our new rector. We don't turn our back on the past, but we will seek with him to continue all that has been good, weaving it into a renewed story of faith, hope and love. *Rev'd Guy Wilkinson*



Teaching with authority is distinct from holding opinions

OT: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
A prophet is foretold who will speak God's words to the people.

NT letter: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Slogans bandied about in Corinth were arrogant opinions, not inspired teaching..

NT gospel: Mark 1:21-28
Unlike the official scribes Jesus taught with divine authority.

And also read: Psalm 111

Sunday 31st January

3.00 pm Pre-recorded
Candlemas Service

5.30 pm Zoom Evening Prayer
BCP

CW: Common Worship, modern words
BCP: Book of Common Prayer

Prayer focus



If you know of anyone who is unwell, or if you would like us to pray for anyone whatever the reason, please let the Administrator or any of the clergy know.

In our Group of Parishes

The Weobley and Staunton Group of Parishes serves a rural community and we give thanks for all involved in agriculture, we pray for them, and seek ways to support them.

The Parish of Norton Canon, the Churchwardens Kim Hendricksen and Hannah Carpenter and all the church community.

Our Church Secretaries and PCC officers across the Group.

In the Diocese of Hereford:

Our Rural Dean Guy Wilkinson and all those who serve on the Kington and Weobley Deanery Synod.

Ross & Archenfield Deanery

The Wider Community

Igreja Episcopal Anglicanado Brasil

The Collect

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

God our creator, who in the beginning commanded the light to shine out of darkness: we pray that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ may dispel the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, shine into the hearts of all your people, and reveal the knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Presentation in the Temple

Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Worship & Prayer

Weobley and Staunton Group of Parishes Online Services

Pre-recorded Service available from 3.00pm.

www.weobleyandstaunton.co.uk
The Weobley and Staunton Group of Parishes Facebook Page
The Weobley and Staunton Group of Parishes You Tube channel

<https://youtu.be/ADNKgijWyOY>

Zoom Evening Prayer (BCP) 5.30 pm

The Zoom link is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81946640814>

The Service sheet can be found on the group website. Under the 'week by week' tab, click on Services.

News

Happy retirement Dean.....



How frustrating that we can't gather in Hereford Cathedral this weekend to share in the celebratory farewell services for Rev'd Michael Tavinor, the much loved, deeply admired and ever-engaging Dean of Hereford for the last 19 years. Whether in ministry, secular thinking or musical entertainment, we've all been drawn to Michael's presence and come away memorably rewarded. Turning as ever in these 'online times' to the internet, the Cathedral's pre-recorded

Sunday Worship webcast will become available on the homepage of the cathedral website at **10 am on Sunday 31 January**, and we encourage as many people as possible to watch it during the day, so that we are all united in the spirit of appreciation if not shoulder-to-shoulder on this occasion. As well as including the Dean's final sermon before retirement, the webcast will end with a collage of images from the nineteen years of his ministry among us.

<https://www.herefordcathedral.org>

Spring-cleaning - an optimistic sign

Regular readers of *People and Steeple* will know that Hereford Diocese in partnership with our Group's Parish Representatives were able to make a conditional offer of the post of Rector to our joint-benefice of seven parishes. As is the norm, this offer remains firmly in place as the Bishop's office and the prospective new incumbent continue to work through the 'red tape' that any new appointment must tie-up. So, in short, steady-state remains the status of the offer but it is worth reporting that work has been going on at the vicarage in Weobley recently in preparation for it becoming an occupied home once again.

We should take this as a good sign we think, and while so doing, thank Pat Millington and Weobley PCC for keeping an eye on the house while it's been in shut-down. A small team has been assembled to brighten it up ahead of the arrival of a new incumbent and we hope that the Spring may be about more than just new flowerings in the garden this year!



Food Bank at Norton Canon

Thank you to all those who contributed items for the food bank in January - Kim Hendricksen will be delivering donated items to the Food Bank again in February so any donations are welcome and can be left in the back of the church or in Kim's porch.

Thank you