



# Five Crosses

## NEWSLETTER

### MAY 2019

Tintinhull, Chilthorne Domer, Yeovil Marsh,  
Thorne Coffin, Lufton

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United Benefice Website can be found at <http://fivecrosses.weebly.com>

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### *Dear Friends,*

What a joy it was to celebrate Easter. It is always a joy because Easter is the greatest of all the Christian festivals. Sadly though, during Holy week, as we prepared to celebrate the resurrection we all were saddened to see the great medieval cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris in flames. It is always shocking to see such buildings damaged in this way. Fortunately, it seems that the damage is not irreparable and restoration looks possible (although that may have changed a little by the time you read this – it's hard to tell until a full survey of the damage has been carried out). Seeing this great historic church in flames made me think along these lines: Churches – however grand, or humble – are but the places where Christian communities meet to worship, to receive Christ in the sacrament, to hear the word of God proclaimed, to share our faith with one another. Indeed, our Church buildings are NOT the Church. The people of God are the Church.

When I was reading theology at university one of our lecturers used often to say that even our greatest cathedrals were but *a tent over a table*, a shelter over the altar where the eucharist is celebrated. And that is true of Notre Dame as much as it is true of our beautiful parish churches in this benefice – St Margaret's, St Mary's, All Saints, St Peter's and St Paul's and St Andrew's. This is not to say that the buildings are not important; they are – for all sorts of reasons. They are important to the church communities in the villages, they are important to the village communities themselves. And we demonstrate how important they are in the ways in which we make them beautiful and in the ways in which we care for them. Visitors, some from far away, tell us how beautiful, or peaceful, or spiritual our churches are when they write notes in our church visitors' books. Our ancestors have cared for our churches for generations (at our oldest buildings for many centuries) and we, in our own time try to care for them too. Like great cathedrals care and maintenance is a non-stop process – there is always something that needs to be done.

If we were to fail to care for our

buildings we would be disrespectful of the trust given us by our forebears, and failing those who will come after us. But it is not hard to see that this might be a reality in the not too distant future. All of our churches (the Christian communities, not the buildings) face an uncertain future. It is clear that the numbers worshipping Sunday by Sunday in almost all of our church buildings has been falling for a number of years. If the numbers continue to fall the churches will be forced to close at some point in the future. Should that happen then our much-loved buildings will be at risk. If they are not used, and not maintained they will inevitably fall into disrepair.

The problem is not a lack of money. We have, or are able to raise, the money that we need; and we are very grateful to our village communities for the support they give. The problem is, to put it simply, that there are not enough people who are active members in our churches to ensure their continued life for many more years. Although Thorne Coffin and Yeovil Marsh appear to be the most vulnerable to this it is also true of Tintinhull, Chilthorne Domer and Lufton.

Perhaps some of you reading this used to attend church and for a variety of reasons might have let it slip. Maybe you have always meant to come along but have never quite got around to it. We're not perfect Christian communities but we can assure of a warm welcome. It would be good to see you and the invitation is there for everyone. If you're anxious about coming on your own we've people who would be more than happy to bring you along with them one Sunday morning.

*With blessings in Christ, Fr Peter*  
**Letter from the Right Reverend  
Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton:  
"Finding the best in the world"**

"It's Somerset day on Saturday, 11 May. It is an opportunity to profile some of the delights of our county and develop relationships across our communities. It is on this day that we remember Alfred (a failed 'Bake Off' contestant?) taking on the Vikings from the Somerset marshes and winning, thus spawning a 'make Somerset great again' moment.

Now, don't get me wrong this isn't about us in Somerset trying to prove we are better than anyone else. We have seen plenty in recent days which has sought to divide rather than unite us as a country. Rather, this is an opportunity to value the uniqueness of some of our wonderful people, places and possibilities here in Somerset and across the diocese. I do hope you will join in! See [www.somersetday.com](http://www.somersetday.com) for more details.

And surely that is what the Church should be about too. Celebrating all that is good, joyful and abundant in us. It reminds me of those words from Philippians 4:8...

*'Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.'*

It is so easy to get caught up with negatives, with the glass half empty syndrome, with stuff that brings us down rather than building us up. I wonder if we might make this month one where we encourage ourselves and others to find the best in the world and people around us. Live life in all its fullness! (*John 10:10*)" Ruth+Taunton

**News from Around the Parishes  
LUFTON**

*Susan Collins writes:* "At the time of preparing this copy we are in Holy Week – a

solemn period of contemplation and reflective expectation of the joy of celebrating that Christ died on the cross to save us, but rose again in glory. There are so many sad things occurring in the world, including the dreadful fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. Hopefully, the injured fireman will recover, but there appear to be no other human tragedies as a result. We must all pray for those affected – the regular worshippers and thousands of visitors, all of whom help to keep the Cathedral open. Closer to home I hope that the Easter Egg Hunt that Frances planned in our churchyard will have been popular on Easter Monday. We hope that all in the benefice and beyond will have enjoyed the Easter period and that you will join us on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 10.30 am for the United Benefice Eucharist Service, which will be followed by refreshments.”

### **YEOVIL MARSH**

*Christine Salmon writes:* “At Yeovil Marsh we are looking forward to holding a family event with Hog-roast, activities, stalls, plants, cakes and table top sale opportunities in June. If anyone would like a table-top please call to book one of the remaining spaces £5 deposit ad £5 balance on the day - (412927 for Christine or 420538 for Mike) – Funds raised will help towards hall repairs and decorations. We are looking at Saturday 8th or 22nd June 2019 late afternoon - tea time, please let us know of preferred date or reasons that may cause issues for either of the dates suggested. We want to get as many people together as we can for some family fun.”

### **CHILTHORNE DOMER**

*Angie Clothier writes:* “St Mary’s PCC held their AGM last month. The same members were re-elected. Thank you to them. It is always good to have new people on a committee, so if anyone would like to join us please say.

The Big Breakfast is back this year on Bank Holiday Monday 27 May at the Recreation Centre. Breakfast served from 10am - 2pm. Cream teas & cakes served all day. Please come & support the Church and the Rec.” We remember Leonard

Simpson and those who mourn. His funeral was held at St Mary’s in March.

### **TINTINHULL**

*John Gower writes:* “I write this in Yorkshire doing Grandfatherly duties. It’s a beautiful county but I still can’t think of anywhere I would like to live than Tintinhull. I knew the production by “Graffiti Classics” was going to be good - the evening exceeded my wildest expectations. They’re not only brilliant musicians they are also great comics; judging by the feed-back we have received, I am not alone in my views. Ray deserves special thanks for all the energy he put into this production but it would have been a failure without the tremendous support we received. It was noticeable that, particularly when clearing up, the PCC members were assisted by villagers whose help we had not expected which was so supportive. This is one of the many reasons I love Tintinhull. The amount raised was in the region of £ 1250. Thank you again particularly also to those who bought tickets, supported the raffle and bar! We have a lovely Church but we need all your help to support the restoration required in the future. The annual PCC meeting was held in April. Pat and I will continue as Church Wardens for another year; we are both very grateful for all the help we have received during the year. Philippa Loughran is retiring from the PCC after about 25 years; we thank her for her input over these many years. Thanks also to the others who are volunteering to remain as PCC members. Finally, I hope you had a fulfilling Easter and our thanks to Fr. Peter for his dedication during this period.”

A diary note and ‘some hopes’ from Janet Young: “**Poetry and Prose** evening 13<sup>th</sup> June 7 to 8pm followed by refreshments. If you would like to contribute to this event please let me have the title of your poem, piece of prose or short story (maximum length 5 minutes ) by the 19<sup>th</sup> May. Either by email – [mail@jyoung.55.plus.com](mailto:mail@jyoung.55.plus.com) or speak to me in Church. Many thanks in advance.”

## SERVICES DURING MAY 2019

Date	Tintinhull	Chilthorne Domer	Lufton	Yeovil Marsh	Thorne Coffin
<b>May 5<sup>th</sup> Easter 3</b>			10.30 am Benefice Eucharist		
<b>May 7<sup>th</sup></b>		10 am Eucharist (BCP)			
<b>May 12<sup>th</sup> Easter 4</b>	8 am Eucharist (BCP) 10.45 am Together4God	10.45 am Matins	6 pm Evensong		4 pm Evensong
<b>May 19<sup>th</sup> Easter 5</b>	9.15 am Parish Eucharist	10.45 am Parish Eucharist	6 pm Holy Communion (BCP)		8 am Eucharist
<b>May 26<sup>th</sup> Easter 6</b>	9.15 am Parish Eucharist	See Yeovil Marsh	6 pm Eucharist (BCP)	11 am Parish Eucharist – Yeovil Marsh & Chilthorne Domer	
<b>May 30<sup>th</sup> Ascension Day</b>				7.30 pm Benefice Eucharist	
<b>June 2<sup>nd</sup> Easter 7</b>	10.30 am Benefice Eucharist		6 pm Evensong		

**Tintinhull Continued: Ray Cozens writes: The Flower and Handicraft Show was a great success on a lovely afternoon. Thanks to all those involved and those who came to view —we raised £338.36p. Graffiti Classics was a sell out and very much enjoyed. Thank you for your support for the entertainment and interval meals. The evening raised £1,335. 87p.**

**From the editor:** *If you wish to write a small inclusion for June's issue please let me have it on or before 19th May to avoid disappointment. Many thanks to all our contributors and deliverers throughout the Parishes.*

**Hilary Cozens**