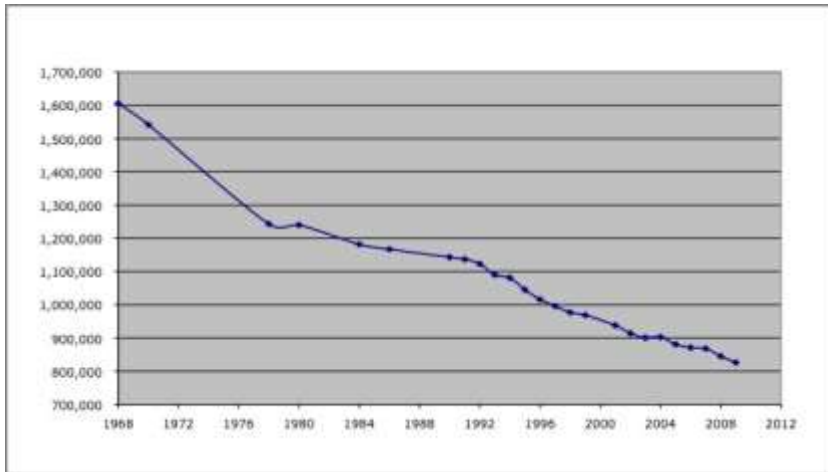


ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



Parish Church of St Guthlac
Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

<http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

Minister in Charge: Revd Richard Bonney 07595536338
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Churchwardens:
David Hunt
Tina Jarvis

Sunday 23 October 2016 Communion for All

WELCOME TO ANY OF YOU VISITING US FOR THE FIRST TIME!

Please announce yourself to one of our welcomers and sign in the welcome book so that we get to know you by name! Also, please introduce yourself to Revd Richard or one of the Churchwardens. St Guthlac's is YOUR local church. We feel part of the local community and we hope that you will feel part of the church community. **We have a welcome sheet:** please ask for one if it is not handed to you on arrival.

Newsletter No 223

FORTHCOMING SERVICES AND MEETINGS

TODAY, 4.00 pm	Skellig discussion
Wednesday 26 Oct., 7.30 pm	Choir practice
Thursday 27 Oct., 9.30 am	Holy Communion
Thursday 27 Oct., 7 pm	Knighton Youth Group
Friday 28 Oct., 3.30 pm	Messy Church (Stoneygate Baptist Church)
Sunday 30 Oct., 10.30 am	Communion for All

PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL We have been asked to keep **Liz Vickers, Darryl Varley, Bob Newell, Ann Spring, Dorothy Wollaston, Derek Atkinson** and **Saty French** in our prayers. For other prayer requests, please speak to the Revd Richard.

THE REVD RICHARD WRITES **Must we do to our rural churches what Beeching did to the railways?** As a result of Beeching's Report in the 1960s just over 4,000 route miles were cut on cost and efficiency grounds, leaving Britain with 13,721 miles (22,082 km) of railway lines in 1966. A further 2,000 miles (3,200 km) were lost by the end of the 1960s, so that with these and earlier cuts around a third of the network was lost. When the 'loose canon', Giles Fraser, proclaims that 'we must do to our (chiefly rural) churches what Beeching did to the railways' we know what is meant. The Church of England is the custodian of 15,700 churches, 78% of them listed. 'They are a millstone around our necks, sapping the energy of our wider social and religious mission, and transforming the church into a buildings department of the heritage industry... Theologically, they are little more than rain shelters. And yet the C of E treats them with a reverence that ought to be reserved for God himself.' Last year, the bishop of Worcester, John Inge, faced pleas from some rural vicars that they were 'close to drowning'. In a report he proposed a conversion of hundreds of buildings into 'festival churches', used by local communities for the rest of the year. But Beeching-scale closures, he said, "would send out a very powerful message that the church and Christian faith have had their day in this country". Somehow, empty buildings sent no such message.

Echoing the Beeching analogy, Simon Jenkins notes that two thousand medieval churches in England have fewer than 10 worshippers, and 8,000 more can barely muster 20. More than 900 churches are now on the English Heritage "at risk" register, with 159 added last year alone. 'As long as parish churches are seen as shrines belonging to a tiny minority of the community, any hope of wider commitment is pie in the sky. Struggling local churches must be secularised, desanctified. They must be vested in an endowed local trust or parish council that literally owns them, so they become community assets, for whose upkeep local rates can be levied, as with public parks and gardens. There will be many spills along the way. But these buildings cannot be demolished or nationalised. There is simply no alternative.'

Simon Jenkins does draw one helpful parallel from the railways, suggesting that 'nothing is for ever'. Years after the Beeching cuts, many of his branch lines have been brought back into use by the boom in rail tourism. There are now some 200 "heritage" railways in Britain, most on Beeching lines. 'But it took voluntary effort, imagination and, above all, ownership to bring this about', Jenkins comments. 'If Britain one day really does see a Christian revival, "heritage" churches will have been preserved and at its service. For the time being, there is no point in pretending.'

The discussion takes place at a time when there are predictions that today's figures of 18 people for every 1,000 regularly attending Anglican services is likely to decline further to 10 people for every 1,000 within the next thirty years. A paper posted on the Church of England website suggests Canons B11 and B14 should be relaxed to suit the 'requirements for regular worship in parish churches in sparsely populated benefices'.

Sources: Simon Jenkins 10/10/2016; Giles Fraser 15/10/2016; Harriet Sherwood 17/10/2016; https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2867478/ac_16_59_-_simplification_task_group.pdf

Image on front page, figures for 'usa' [usual Sunday attendance]:
http://www.churchsociety.org/issues_new/church/stats/charts/Attend-usa-1968-2009.jpg

APPOINTMENT OF VICAR OF KNIGHTON The Bishop is pleased to announce the appointment of the Revd Adrian Jones, Bishop's Policy Adviser and Chaplain, as Vicar of the Benefice of Knighton. **Adrian's service of collation will be conducted by Bishop Martyn on Thursday, 9 February 2017 at 7.30 pm at St Mary Magdalen, Knighton.**

Adrian writes: **"Friends – I'm so pleased that Bishop Martyn has offered me the post of Vicar of Knighton, and that finally it can be announced! The interview day confirmed for me a real sense of calling to Knighton and I am looking forward to getting to know you all and beginning ministry with you in 2017. As we are already local, you may well see myself, or Alison and the children around the area – do please say hello and introduce yourselves. Best wishes – Adrian."**

Bishop Martyn says: "It is with very mixed feelings that I have announced the appointment of my Chaplain Adrian Jones as the next Vicar of St Mary Magdalen Knighton. Adrian has been a wonderful support to me in my early months as bishop, as I know he was also to my predecessor, and I am very grateful to him. There has been a clear sense of God's call to Adrian to return to parish ministry and I have no doubt that he and his family will be an enormous blessing to the people of St Mary's and the community of Knighton. Please hold him in your prayers as he prepares for this transition. He will continue as my Chaplain until the new year and start [of] his ministry in Knighton in early February."

FOR THE NEWSLETTER Please send material to be included in the next newsletter to administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk

SKELLIG There will be a meeting **TODAY at 4.00 – 5.00** in the Welcome Area to chat about the book Skellig by David Almond. There will be tea/ coffee and cakes.

M.U. OCTOBER MEETING Unfortunately, Neil cannot now be our Speaker, but we are pleased to be able to welcome a representative, Dave Webster, from an organization called "Warning Zone". This very worthwhile venture is based in Frog Island, Leicester, and provides an inter-active area in a visitors centre for schoolchildren and young persons to learn about the many dangers that they may face in the modern world. Visitors are more than welcome. **We meet at 2.15 p.m. on Tuesday, 25th, in the Parish Centre Lounge off Brinsmead Road.**

MESSY CHURCH Friday 28th October from 3.30pm. Calling all families and helpers - we need you to come to Stoneygate Baptist Church on this date to enjoy an afternoon of fun, crafting and some quiet time for worship. All children must be accompanied by an adult and all are welcome to stay for a cooked tea. Donations towards the tea expenses will be gratefully received. Further details from Judi Stone

ADVENT REFLECTIONS: TUESDAYS IN ADVENT 6:30 pm in church.

Starting on **29th November**, take a little time out from the mad rush of Christmas shopping to reflect on the meaning of the Advent through readings, prayers and reflections, lasting no more than 45 minutes.

THE FAITHFUL FORGOTTEN The Plight of Christians in Palestine **Tues 29th Oct 7.30pm** Bishop Street Methodist Church. A talk by Jeremy Moody, Chief Executive of Embrace the Middle East.

ST MARY'S LEAFLET DISTRIBUTION LIST Despite valued and valiant efforts by a dwindling number of parishioners we are likely to have approximately 900 Christmas leaflets which we are unable to deliver this year from St Mary's. The Guides and Scouts have volunteered to assist within a defined area but this will result in some existing distributors being invited to offer their services in new roads. **If you currently help distribute leaflets for St. Mary's please** indicate on the sheets at the back of St Mary's, or by contacting me direct, which roads you are able to cover. Simon Britton

WELCOME TO GEOFFREY HAMES, ST. GUTHLAC'S ORGAN STUDENT!

It is a two-year organ studentship, and Geoffrey has begun organ lessons with Roxy Summerfield. Later on he will play parts of services. The project is being taken forward by a small group reporting back to St. Guthlac's PCC and the Worship Committee on a termly basis. I know you will all wish Geoffrey well, please make yourselves known to him and later on you can ask him how he is getting on. I know how encouraging you will be! Yolanda

UNWANTED FURNITURE Open Hands are now collecting certain furniture and electrical items to pass on to those in need. Details of what is needed and how to request collection can be found at www.openhandsleicester.org.uk/donate-furniture.php