



New Forest Edge Churches: Brangsgore, Burley, Hinton, Sopley and Thorney Hill

Services

8am Brangsgore
9am Hinton
9am Thorney Hill
10.30am Burley
10.30am Brangsgore
11am Sopley



News for 19th November
TRINITY 24



Christmas at St Mary's Brangsgore



Christingle: 3rd
Dec at 10.30am

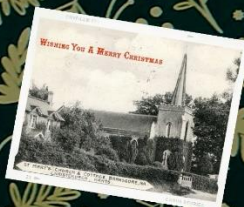
Carols by
Candlelight:
17th Dec at 6pm



Interactive
Nativity: 24th
Dec at 4pm



Christmas Day
Communion:
10.30am



www.newforestedgechurches.org

Interactive Nativity

CELEBRATION FOR ALL
AGES WITH MULLED
WINE AND MINCE PIES
CHRISTMAS EVE AT 4PM





What happened at General Synod this week?

In one recent PCC meeting in our benefice, a new piece of business was introduced which a few members had reasonable concerns about. It quickly became evident that there were two points of view in the room. Rather than get into an argument, those in favour

of the innovation graciously decided to let it go. This is what it looks like when members of a local church love and respect each other. I suppose we could have fought it out, winner takes all, but imagine the pain caused in the parish by pressing ahead with something that 30, 40 even 49% of the PCC had serious misgivings about. It would not be loving.

The General Synod of the Church of England meeting this week was brutal. What happened and what did we learn?

Very little has changed. Despite headlines like 'Church of England backs plans for trial blessings of same-sex weddings' (The Guardian), only one small change was introduced to what had been agreed in February this year. In February, Synod agreed to allow the bishops to continue to develop prayers to be used for same-sex couples. These were explicitly not prayers to bless a relationship (to the justified disappointment of progressive campaigners) and it was stipulated that any prayers must not undermine the doctrine of the Church of England that marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman, based on the teaching of Jesus. This task was an impossible one and the bishops have not been able to produce anything that pleases anyone. This meeting of the synod was simply to recognise the limited progress they had made so far. I think that they imagined that they would have made more progress when they planned the extra meeting – Synod does not normally meet in November – so this meeting was an expensive waste of time. The only new development is that the Bishop of Oxford persuaded the Synod to ask for a trial period of 'stand alone' services using the prayers already drafted. Previously, the prayers were just to be used as part of ordinary Sunday worship to avoid parishes offering a special event which might trick couples into thinking they were being provided with a wedding or wedding blessing. This passed by a majority of one vote! It is not clear where these trial services may be offered, and they may not be available in all dioceses. Trial services can only be used for two years before needing a formal vote with a very unlikely two thirds majority (more on this later).

The Church of England is not well. Whereas an ordinary parish would think hard about introducing a major new development after such a bitter argument with such a tiny majority, for campaigners in the Synod it really is a case of winner takes all where the ends justifies the means. The Bishops received independent legal advice earlier this year which most likely instructed them not to go ahead with the changes. The publication of this advice was repeatedly asked for, but was voted down, again by a tiny minority. The bishops meet in secret and minutes of their meetings are not made public. Again, requests to change this were

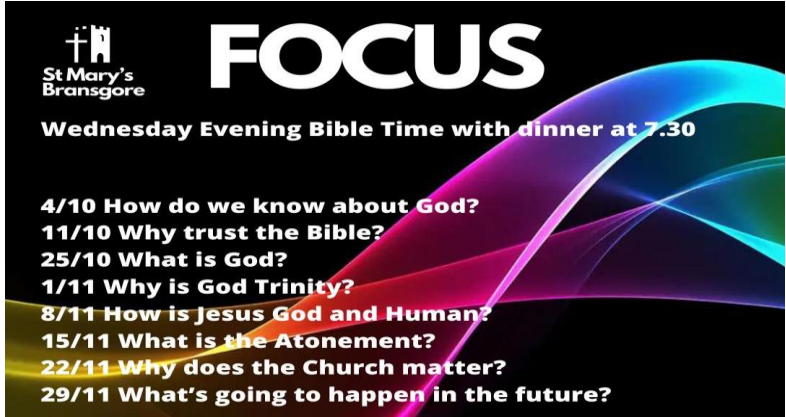
narrowly voted down, as were numerous other requests to provide transparency and information about how decisions were being made and detailed plans about legal protection for the large minority of clergy who will not be able in conscience to use the prayers of blessing. New prayers must eventually be agreed by a formal vote of the Synod, requiring a two thirds majority of bishops, clergy and lay people. It is obvious that these prayers are opposed by 49% of the Synod and the majority of bishops and progressive campaigners are doing everything possible to make sure that this vote does not take place. This is very dishonest and the kind of politics unworthy of the Church which is the bride of Christ.


Please remember that the Church of England is not 'the Church', but simply one denomination which God has graciously used in the past to serve the people of this country. The Church of Bible is the local Church, ordinary people loving and serving their neighbours with the unchanging message of Jesus Christ, participating mystically in the universal Church of every tribe, language, (denomination,) and culture. Please don't lose hope in your local Church. We are doing our best to honour the One who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. However you feel about the national Church or this latest news, let us continue to stand shoulder to shoulder.



*Christmas at
Sopley
Church*

- **Traditional Carol Service, 17th Dec – 6pm**
- **Crib Dressing – Christmas Eve, 11am**
- **Nearly Midnight Mass – Christmas Eve, 8pm**
- **Christmas Day Family Service – 11am**



 **FOCUS**

Wednesday Evening Bible Time with dinner at 7.30

**4/10 How do we know about God?
11/10 Why trust the Bible?
25/10 What is God?
1/11 Why is God Trinity?
8/11 How is Jesus God and Human?
15/11 What is the Atonement?
22/11 Why does the Church matter?
29/11 What's going to happen in the future?**



A traditional service for all ages

 **Christingle**

SUNDAY 3RD OF DECEMBER AT 10.30AM

**St Mary's
Bransgore**

Time Together Christmas Lunch

12.00 on the 14th
December at the
Carpenter's Arms:
£20-24

CHRISTMAS AT ALL SAINTS' THORNEY HILL

Carols by Candlelight: 10th December at 5pm
Holy Communion: 25th December at 8am



Matins

A NEW LATER SERVICE AT 11AM, IN ADDITION TO 9AM COMMUNION, ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Time Together Retreat: 18-20th October '24

EVENTS@NEWFORESTEDGECHURCHES.ORG



the
greenhouse
christian centre

Prayer & Pastries

THURSDAYS AT 10AM
AT SOPLEY CHURCH

WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?

Autumn talks exploring
what Jesus did and said in
Mark's Gospel