

## **“COME TO ME ALL WHO ARE HEAVY-LADEN AND I WILL REFRESH YOU”...**

Funding is now committed for St John's *Securing the Future* project and work will start during the first week of January 2019. We expect the church will be completely closed for most, if not all, of 2019. The following schedule, for our church services, will come into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January.

This gives us as a Benefice an opportunity to do things differently for a year and, as one PCC member said: “this will enable us to become more of a Benefice.”

This will affect all of us and sometimes will not please many of us, BUT.....

I am grateful to the Churchwardens and therefore the PCC of St Ben's to endorse the following plans for next year.

### **Mission.**

This is in three parts:

1. Community Singing at St Ben's on a Wednesday every fortnight is a must to continue. This encourages many people in our local community to come together and sing.
2. Friday Soup Lunches at St Ben's is also very important in continuing.
3. The new relationship between Meare School and Meare Church is in its infancy and needs to be encouraged over the coming year.

The challenge is to keep all this going alongside keeping our regular worshipping community together. So the following has been agreed by various church groups:

### **1<sup>st</sup> Sunday:**

8am HC [BCP] at St Ben's  
11am HC combined service at St Ben's

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday:**

8am HC [BCP] at St Ben's  
10.30am/11am URC/St Ben's  
11am HC combined service at St Mary's, Meare  
5pm: Healing Service at St Ben's

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday:**

9.15am HC mainly St John's congregation at St Ben's  
11.15am Café Style at St Ben's Church

### **4<sup>th</sup> Sunday:**

9.15am HC mainly St John's congregation at St Ben's  
11am Matins at St Mary's, Meare  
11.15am Praise & Teaching at St Ben's

**Every Tuesday & Wednesday:** 9am Morning Prayer at St Ben's

**Every Tuesday:** 10.30am HC at St Ben's

All this will constantly be discussed and, if necessary, changed but I hope that this will work for the next 12 months. For this to work it needs to be 'bedded in' by prayer and that is why I have called us to a day of retreat/prayer on the first Sunday of Advent in all three churches. This is an opportunity to pause, to reflect and prepare for Advent, Christmas and next year. We are also launching our year challenge of prayer together on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December so I hope you will pick up your prayer cards and the first of the fortnightly daily readings and reflections.

May God release us of our burdens and encourage us in our prayers so that we are prayerfully ready to receive the Christ-child this Christmas and embrace our new life in our Benefice next year.

God Bless.

