

"Rogation 2025"

22nd April 2025 by Matt Earwicker

According to the 2019 edition of the Book of Common Prayer, "Rogation Days are the three days preceding Ascension Day, especially devoted to asking for God's blessing on agriculture and industry".

In a time of increasing pressures and uncertainty in both these sectors, especially in an area so involved in the production of food, it seems appropriate to revive this custom (or at least some parts of it) in our villages of Calstone, Cherhill, Compton Bassett, Heddington and Yatesbury.

I will therefore be spending the three rogation days (26th – 28th May) walking around the edge of our Benefice asking God to bless those who work here or who live here and work elsewhere, especially with regard to this year's harvest.

But walking round the boundaries is not just for those with a Christian faith. It connects us all to our roots. Most parish boundaries were determined centuries ago – some even as long ago as the Norman period – and as we follow those paths, we follow in the footsteps of many generations before us, through times of hardship and bounty, war and peace.

It also connects us to our community, reminding us where and amongst whom we live, who are our neighbours, who are most affected by the decisions we make. Historically it would have been a chance to put the boundary stones back in place if someone had attempted to steal land by moving them. But today we can simply recognise how interconnected our lives are.

Anyone who wishes to join me would therefore be most welcome. You can bring dogs or even horses (for the stretches that are bridleways, of course). You can join me for the whole three days, for a particular day, or for part of a day. Or you can download the maps and do it by yourself in peace at your own speed. For those who cannot manage the walking, there will also be a special service on Sunday 25th May at Manor Farm in Compton Bassett and there will be the usual Ascension Day morning service at St Mary's, Calstone on Thursday 29th May.

You should be able to find all the necessary information [here](#).

I look forward to seeing some of you at the end of May.