



The Seeker

February

2010

The church magazine for St Mary the Virgin, Sixpenny Handley with Gussage St Andrew and St Rumbold's, Pentridge

Who's who?

Vicar

Rev Mel Durrant
The Vicarage,
Sixpenny Handley
01725 552608
rev.mel@handleychurch.org.uk

Curates

Rev Paul Skinner
01725 552785
Rev Dr Michael Foster
01258 830764

Churchwardens

St Mary's with
Gussage St Andrew

Sheila Bradley 553133
Carole Wyatt 552752

St Rumbolds, Pentridge

Jane King 552231
Mary Ferguson 552222

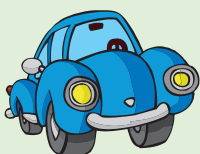
Licenced Lay Minister

John Cullingford 516453

Lay Pastorial Assistants

Ted Cox 552801
Margaret Durrant 552608
Maureen Lockyer 552492
Jean Mayne 552692
David Salmons 552721
Carol Wyatt 552572

Need a lift to Church?



Please ring Rev Paul Skinner to arrange transport.

The Vicar Writes



Dear Friends

I've been thinking about music lately, and I came across this story: A soprano died and went to Heaven. St. Peter stopped her at the gate and asked, "Well, how many wrong notes did you sing in your life?" The soprano answered "Three."

"Three times, fellows!" said Pete, and along came an angel and pricked the soprano three times with a needle.

"Ow! What was that for?" asked the soprano.

Peter explained, "Here in heaven, we stick you once for each wrong note you sang down on Earth."

"Oh," said the soprano, and was just about to step through the gates when she heard a terrible screaming from behind a door. "Oh my goodness, what is that?" she asked, horrified.

"Oh," said Pete, "that's a tenor we got some time back. He's just about to start his third week in the sewing machine."

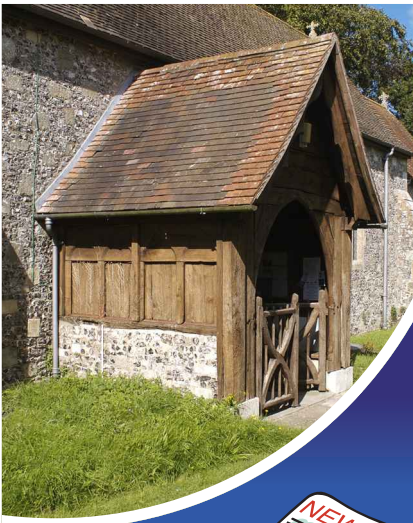
The reason I've been thinking about music is this photograph below of St Mary's Choir taken around 1924 (there's a bigger copy on the website). We think the two figures in the middle are Rev Hasluck, the Rector and Rev Archibald Turing-Bruce, the curate. I am told that Rev Bruce was almost blind, but was still in the village in the 1940s. I have some suggestions for other names, but if you can name any we would be very interested to know their stories.



Things move on, of course. We still have a wonderful choir (although the ladies do not wear those amazing headdresses) but we now also have a music group that leads our singing in the Informal service and the children's choir from the school join us on occasion.

Your Friend and Vicar, Mel

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Any Pentridge and Woodyates news for The Seeker to Maureen Swan on 01725 552561

Any other news to the Vicarage, please.



Sheila's Quilt

Sheila always said the welcome was warm but the building was cold. And so Sheila Smith and two friends set about raising money for a new heating system at St Mary's. They began making a quilt as a prize to be raffled. Eventually Sheila's battle against cancer prevented any further work taking place, and on Sheila's death in 2008 her husband, Graham, passed the quilt to his mother-in-law.

The quilt is now finished, is stunningly beautiful, and will be given as the prize for a draw to be held immediately after the Easter Sunday service. Please support Graham's mission to raise £2,000 to help Sheila's dearest wish for a new heating system to become reality. Tickets are now on sale for one pound each, available from the Vicarage and Graham Smith (01725 552149).

The return of St Paul's!

On 7th March the 11 o'clock Informal Service welcomes back the group from St Paul's Salisbury again. Please come along and support.

A big thank you to all those who provided refreshments for St Mary's Carol Singers - it was very much appreciated by all who braved the cold in the week before Christmas.

PENTRIDGE and WOODYATES NEWS

Christmas – We had a lovely candle-lit Carol Service with Readings in the church on Monday 21st December. Many people came despite the snow and frosty weather. The Carols in the Barn in Woodyates on Saturday 19th December was a great success, raising £175 for church funds. Many thanks to Richard and Mary Ferguson for hosting the evening and to all those who helped.

The new Bishop of Sherborne, the Rt Rev Graham Kings will be taking the Holy Communion service in St Rumbold's on May 2nd – all welcome.

Lent Course - 'The Glory of God is a Human Being Fully Alive'

We turn from Christmas to Lent quite quickly this year. The article opposite explains a lot of what we do at Lent – so come along at the beginning, on Ash Wednesday, at 7.30pm on 17th Feb, to St Andrew's for a reflective service of Ashing and Holy Communion as we begin our journey towards Easter.

Desmond Tutu said *"We don't need to work ourselves into a frazzle trying to impress God into loving us. Ours is a faith not of achievement. No, ours is a faith of grace. It is all a gift. The trouble is that we have been deceived by our culture of success, of achievement. The worst thing in our culture that can happen to us is not to do wrong things. No, the worst thing is for us is to fail. And so we work ourselves into a state so that stomach ulcers become status symbols."*

In contrast to all the pressures of society, if you would like to think about what being 'Fully Alive' means come along to our Lent Course which starts on Tuesday 23rd February and runs until 23rd March. It starts at 7.30pm in the Vicarage with coffee. Find out more about this amazing life and your place in it.

Mothering Sunday

And make a date in your diary for St Mary's, Sixpenny Handley Mothering Sunday service on March 14th at 10am. Children, bring along your mums and give them some flowers – mums, bring along your children and celebrate together. Dads, come along as well! We hope to welcome children from the village school and this will be the benefice service for the morning. We are all one family, so let's spend time together.

Top Ten Reasons to Celebrate Easter...

Easter is a week earlier than last year. Come along to our Palm Sunday service at St Mary's, Sixpenny Handley on March 28th beginning at 11 o'clock and meet Jess the Donkey. Then on Maundy Thursday join us at Gussage St Andrew as we remember the Last Supper with Holy Communion and foot-washing. On Good Friday the wooden cross will be carried around Sixpenny Handley in the morning and in the afternoon there is a quiet time at Pentridge and then Readings and Meditation at St Mary's in the evening. On Easter Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection with services at Handley and Pentridge.

I hope in this month's Seeker we can answer some of your questions and spur you on to find out more. But to start with, here are the (slightly near the knuckle) Top Ten Reasons to Celebrate Easter;

- 10 You absolutely love the movie, "The Ten Commandments".
- 9 You look really, really good in yellow.
- 8 You still think Robert Powell is gorgeous.
- 7 You figure any Holiday that starts with a "Good Friday" can't be all bad.
- 6 You have just gone on a low cholesterol diet and don't want to waste all those eggs in the fridge.
- 5 You have this bunny suit you love to wear, but are too insecure to wear it without a reason.
- 4 It's a good time to check out your local church without being noticed.
- 3 Even though you don't know what it is, you really like the sound of going to a "Passion Play."
- 2 You think that since Jesus went to all THAT trouble to make it to the first Easter, you'd give it a go too.
- 1 You know that we celebrate the Resurrection every Sunday anyway, so why not Easter as well?



The work begins!

The church still looks the same from the outside, but inside there have been several improvements, and the most recent is still going on: We have now started the process of conserving and moving the font from its present position in the tower (where it was put by the Victorians) to a better position and creating a good social area around it. We are then lowering the floor in the base of the tower and using the space for a toilet cubicle and extra storage behind smart opaque glass doors. The font will have to be stored out of the way for a few weeks by the tomb while this work is carried out.

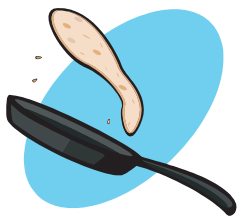
We shall then improve the welcome area, the sound and lighting, and the kitchen area. We believe this will make the church even more welcoming and an even greater resource for the village.



The font being moved from the base of the tower by our conservators Sue and Lawrence Kelland, January 2010

We have talked about these changes for a very long time and they are now happening! However, we still need to do a lot of fund-raising for this exciting project, so if you would like to know more or contribute in any way please talk to me, Mel Durrant or the church wardens.

Forty Days and Forty Nights



Pancake races are thought to have begun as long ago as 1445. The story goes that a woman lost track of the time while she was making pancakes in

her kitchen. Suddenly she heard the bells ringing and raced out of her house all the way to church still holding her frying pan and wearing her apron. One of the most famous pancake races today is held at Olney in Buckinghamshire. It is over a 415 yard course and the rules are strict; contestants have to wear an apron and a scarf and toss their pancake at both start and finish. The race is followed by a church service.

But there's more to Pancake Day than pigging out on pancakes or taking part in races. Shrove Tuesday gets its name from the ancient word 'shrive'. Shrivings are about confessing sins and receiving forgiveness and release from the guilt and pain that you have caused. This sounds like a good idea to me. And Shrove Tuesday is also a day of celebration, a time to use up meat, fats, eggs, and milky foods in a feast of all the rich foods that won't last until Easter

without going bad. The need to eat up the fats gave rise to the French name Mardi Gras which means 'Fat Tuesday'! The word 'Lent' comes from an old English word meaning 'lengthen'. As Lent is in spring, the days get longer as we move towards Easter. In church we use the purple altar frontal as a colour associated with mourning to remind us of Jesus' suffering on the cross, but purple is also the colour of royalty and so celebrates Christ's kingship in our lives. But if you have ever checked your diary, you may have noticed that Lent seems to be longer than 40 days. This is because we don't include Sundays as they are always celebrations of Christ's resurrection.

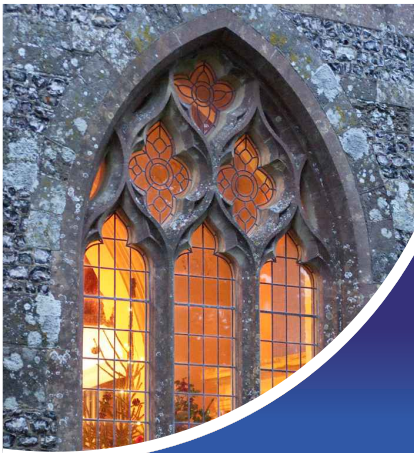
The 40 days of Lent remind us of many stories in the Bible; the 40 days and nights of rain in Genesis that brought the flood; the 40 years Moses spent in exile and 40 days he fasted before receiving the Ten Commandments; the 40 years spent in the wilderness before reaching the Promised Land; and the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness.

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent and draws on the ancient Biblical

traditions of covering the head with ashes, wearing sackcloth, and fasting. We hold a special service where we can be marked with a cross of ashes on the forehead. The ashes are the burnt palm crosses from the previous Palm Sunday. They are a reminder that death comes to everyone and we should seek to change for the better. They also remind us that God made the first human being by breathing life into dust, and without God, human beings are nothing more than dust and ashes. The ashes are mixed with oil to remind us of God's blessing and anointing, and the cross symbolises that through Christ's death and resurrection we can all be free and live in God's love.

The last week of Lent is Holy Week which begins with Palm Sunday and leads to Good Friday, the day of Jesus' death. But whenever there is a Good Friday, it means that Easter Sunday is coming. And whereas Lent recalls the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion on the Cross, Easter celebrates Jesus coming back to life and the never-ending love of God. This is the good news we celebrate on Easter Sunday, and always.

Mel Durrant



Bible Study

As we hope you see from The Seeker, the Bible is THE Book! Read it and understand more in good company on a Thursday evening once a month. Phone Heather on 01725 552308 for details.

Midweek Holy Communion

Join us on the first Wednesday of each month for a gentle service in St Mary's, on 3rd February and 3rd March at 11.30pm, followed by coffee.

Come and meet friends

Soup Lunches – Good soup and company on the 17th February and then every Wednesday during Lent, up until 31st March. Come along from 12.30 for a great meal for only £2, with profits going to the Trussell Trust in Salisbury, helping people in desperate need here and abroad.

Fellowship Group – Meeting every Tuesday for chat, laughter and biscuits, some talk around serious themes and sometimes a steak supper or a Chinese takeaway! Phone Paul Skinner (01725 552785).

During Lent the fellowship pauses to make room for the Lent Course – see the item in this edition of The Seeker.

Men's Group – A beer and a chat usually on the last Thursday of the month. Phone David Lockyer (01725 552492)

Mothers' Union – Tea, company and a good talk, usually on the second Thursday afternoon of the month, from 2.45pm. Phone Jean (01725 552692) or Mary (01725 552041) for details.

Join us during February and March 2010

SUNDAY SERVICES	St Mary the Virgin Sixpenny Handley			St Rumbold's Pentridge	Gussage St Andrew	
	Informal service includes children's time					
	9.30am	☕	11.00am	6.00pm	11.15am	9.30am
Feb 7th	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC	
Feb 14th	MP		Informal	HC		HC
Feb 17th	Ash Wednesday Holy Communion and Ashing					
Feb 21st	HC	10.30am	Informal	Evensong	MP	
Feb 28th	MP		Inf & HC	HC		HC
Mar 7th	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC	
Mar 14th	Mothering Sunday 10am			HC		#
Mar 21st	HC		Informal	Evensong	MP	
Mar 28th	Palm Sunday			Informal	HC	HC



Maunday Thurs – (April 1st)

7.30pm HC and Footwashing at Gussage

Good Friday – (April 2nd)

11.00am Stations of the Cross around Handley

2–3.00pm Quiet Hour at St Rumbold's, Pentridge

7.30pm Readings and Mediation at St Mary's

Easter Sunday – (April 4th)

9.30am Holy Communion at St Mary's

11.15am Holy Communion at St Rumbold's

HC = Holy Communion

MP = Morning Prayer

= No Service

always a warm welcome...

February 2010

See website for updates

Tues 2nd	7.30pm	St Rumbold's PCC meeting
	7.15pm	Fellowship Group at The Roebuck
Wed 3rd	10.30am	School Assembly in St Mary's
	11.30am	Holy Communion, St Mary's
Tues 9th	7.15pm	Fellowship Group 'They like Jesus, but not the Church' at 1 The Parsonage, Sixpenny Handley
Thurs 11th	2.45pm	Mothers' Union, Partnership for Older People
Tues 16th	7.15pm	Fellowship Group; Pancakes, 11 The Parsonage
Wed 17th	12.30pm	Soup Lunches at the Vicarage
	7.30pm	Holy Communion and Ashing at St Andrew's
Tues 23rd	7.30pm	Lent Course at the Vicarage, 'The Glory of God is a Human Being Fully Alive'
Wed 24th	12.30pm	Soup Lunches at the Vicarage
Thurs 25th	7.30pm	Men's Group

March 2010

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Tues 2nd	7.30pm	Lent Course at the Vicarage
Wed 3rd	11.30am	Holy Communion and Ashing at St Andrew's
	7.30pm	St Mary's PCC meeting, Vicarage
Tues 9th	7.30pm	Lent Course at the Vicarage
Wed 10th	12.30pm	Soup Lunches at the Vicarage
Thurs 11th	2.45pm	Mothers' Union, Lent Meditation with the Vicar
Sun 14th	10.00am	Mothering Sun Service at St Mary's
Tues 16th	7.30pm	Lent Course at the Vicarage
Wed 17th	12.30pm	Soup Lunches at the Vicarage
Tues 23rd	7.30pm	Lent Course at the Vicarage
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