



# The Seeker

## December

## 2013



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 552 608  
rev.mel@handleychurch.org.uk

#### Curates

Rev Paul Skinner  
01725 552 785  
Rev Dr Michael Foster  
01258 830 764

#### Churchwardens

*St Mary's with  
Gussage St Andrew*

Sheila Bradley 553 133

*St Rumbold's, Pentridge*

Mary Ferguson 552 222

Jane King 552 231

#### Licenced Lay Minister

John Cullingford 516 453

#### Lay Pastorial Assistants

Ted Cox 552 801

Lydia Carter 552 720

Margaret Durrant 552 608

Margaret Jones 552 358

Maureen Lockyer 552 492

Jean Mayne 552 692

David Salmons 552 721

Carole Wyatt 552 572

(Area code 01725)



Celebrate  
the **REASON**  
for the **SEASON**  
with friends

#### Carols by Candlelight, 6.00pm

Sixpenny Handley — Sunday 15th December  
Gussage St Andrew — Friday 20th December  
Pentridge — Monday 23rd December

#### Christmas Eve, Sixpenny Handley

CHRISTINGLE — 4.00pm (NEW TIME!)  
Midnight Communion — 11.30pm

#### Christmas Day

Family Communion  
Sixpenny Handley  
9.30am

Holy Communion  
Pentridge  
11.15am



#### Eat the Christmas Story!

The Real Advent Calendar is a great way to share the real meaning of Christmas. There's a line of the Christmas story and a chocolate star behind each window. Behind the final window is a 24-page Christmas storybook. A donation is made to The Children's Society and the chocolate is Fairtrade. It costs £3.99 and is available from Tesco.

Details at [www.realadvent.co.uk/shop](http://www.realadvent.co.uk/shop) (And please remember to buy chocolate with the Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance logos!)



[christmasstartswithchrist.com](http://christmasstartswithchrist.com)

#### This Year's Present

Do you still fancy giving someone the Goat? Or how about having a Hen Party? Or (Straw)berried Treasure, a Field of Dreams, Another Brick in the Wall, or some Health-Esteem? When you don't know what to give, give something else. Many charities give more than a gift, they give dignity, hope and freedom. [Salvationarmy.org.uk](http://Salvationarmy.org.uk) and many others give a present that really means something to someone in need. You get a card to give to your loved one telling them what you have done. Someone you will never meet gets a better life.



[www.handleychurch.org.uk](http://www.handleychurch.org.uk)



News items and articles welcome!

Please drop them in to the Vicarage, or email; rev.mel@handleychurch.org.uk

Thanks!

## FROM THE REGISTERS



### The funerals took place of

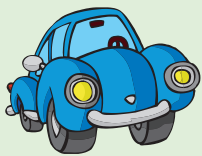
Bill Bailey, Sydney Herrington, Olive Waterman-Smith and John Moloney

### The baptisms took place of

Sophie Read and Tia Walton

### The wedding took place of

Graham and Elaine Smith



Need a lift to Church?

Please ring Paul Skinner on 01725 552785 and we should be able to arrange transport.

Download from our website archive!



- The Seeker – in full colour!
- Minutes of PCC meetings
- Church forms and reports



Dear Friends

Your friend and vicar, Mel

I heard the other day that the cutbacks are going to affect some of our favourite Christmas songs this year. For instance, The 12 Days of Christmas has to be cut back to The 6 Days of Christmas. And there can definitely only be two French hens...We shall only be able to Deck the Hall, and there will only be Frosty, the Snowflake. Sorry.

But we can still sing. Singing is good for you. It is an aerobic activity that increases oxygenation in the blood and exercises major muscle groups. It also reduces stress levels through the action of the endocrine system, which is linked to our sense of emotional well-being. (I have to admit I didn't know that.) It also releases the endorphin oxytocin – in fact the equivalent amount of oxytocin as a bar of chocolate or a mince pie. All this from singing!

I'll let you in on a secret - God likes a nice bit of singing! The Bible says God rejoices over his children with singing. And there's more. The word 'carol' comes from the French word 'caroler', which means, not to sing, but to dance. And dancing, of course, is very healthy exercise. It just gets better!

Jesus said that the Kingdom is for those prepared to become like children. He doesn't mean being childish, he means being open to new ideas, open to celebrating love and life. And the first Christmas was a truly awesome party! Angels turned up in their droves lighting up the sky. Wise Men brought presents. And even the lowliest, poorest people were invited. Everyone could come. After all, it was God's Party!

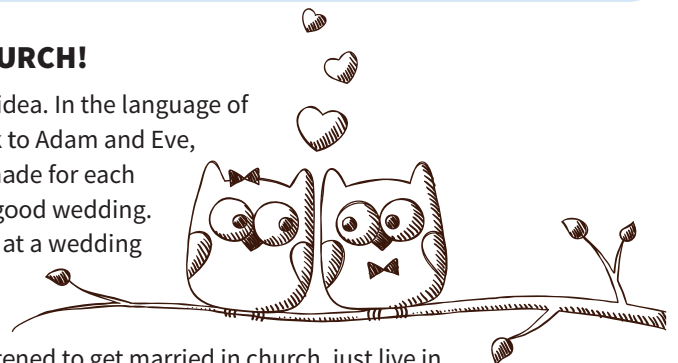
And we can have a party at home as well. Why not fill up wine glasses with different levels of water and see if you can get a tune going? And you might like to stop the neighbours complaining about the noise by inviting them in for a glass of something (perhaps not water) and a carol karaoke.

Let's fill the neighbourhood with the sound of singing as we celebrate the biggest birthday party. After all, we are lowering our blood pressure, strengthening our muscles, improving our sense of well-being, bonding with our neighbours, celebrating Jesus and worshipping God. And that has to be good!

## This is the time of year when we start planning ahead – so why not think about a wedding or a christening?

### GET MARRIED IN CHURCH!

Marriage is a very ancient idea. In the language of the Bible it goes right back to Adam and Eve, who were quite literally 'made for each other'! And Jesus loved a good wedding. He turned water into wine at a wedding reception, his first recorded miracle.



You don't have to be christened to get married in church, just live in the area or have some other link. If you are not sure, just ask the vicar! And it needn't cost the earth. The church service costs only about £500, depending on details.

God intended marriage to offer the right place to grow in love and support for each other, fulfill our sexuality, and provide a stable and secure environment for bringing up children. A good marriage will change us for the better, and as we change, our marriage grows with us.

Christians believe marriage is a gift from God. At its best it mirrors the love God has for us – love that remains true, faithful protective and respectful. Do something good today. Talk to the vicar about getting married in church.

# To you who bring small children to church...

Adapted from an article on [www.veritasvenator.com](http://www.veritasvenator.com)

There you are sitting in church. Your child is restless. You try to quieten them. Nothing. You try to pacify them with food. You go to the children's corner. Nothing. Eventually, you resort to the last thing you wanted to do. You pick them up and, feeling everyone's eyes on you, march out of the building. You are embarrassed and frustrated. You think to yourself, "There's no point in coming to church. I get nothing out of it."

I want you to know there *is* a point and just how encouraging you are to many. The little lady who often feels alone, beams at the sight of you wrestling with your little one. She's been there herself. She knows how hard it can be, and she smiles because it brings back precious memories. To see young parents and their small children brightens her day.

The elderly man who always seems to be grouchy notices you too. He seems to be always talking about how children these days have no respect. But he sees you, and you give him hope that maybe the church isn't doomed after all, because there are still young parents who bring their children to worship.

The couple unable to have children notices you too. They'd love to be in your shoes. They'd love to talk to you for a little while about the joys of your children. They need you. Then there's everybody else. Some of them *will* be frustrated by noisy children in church. They have this idea that reverence is the same as absolute silence. It isn't.

## GET CHRISTENED IN CHURCH!

Thank God for the gift of life, give that life the best start possible, and get the support of millions of Christians across the whole world! Christening and baptism are different words for the same thing. For your child, baptism marks the start of a journey of faith, turning towards Jesus and becoming a member of the worldwide Christian family.

You are only baptized once and can happen at any age. What matters is that those concerned are committed to bring up the child as a Christian. Teenagers and adults can also be baptized, making the choice for themselves. This is usually accompanied with Confirmation.

The Church believes that God's love is available to all, so even if you are not a regular churchgoer you can still have a baptism. However, you might prefer to have a Thanksgiving Service, thanking God for the gift of your child. You do not make the same promises, and you may also have a Baptism service at a later date. Thanksgivings and baptisms usually take place within the church's main service, as it is important that the congregation supports and welcomes you. However, if circumstances make this difficult, talk the vicar.

Baptism, like God's love, is free. You may wish to find out more about the Christian faith before you make a decision. Talk to the vicar today or look at the Church of England website.

When parents brought their children to Jesus, the disciples rebuked them (Matt. 19.13-15). But Jesus rebuked his disciples. He said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." The term translated "children" in Matthew and Mark's Gospels is *paidon*. The word *paediatric* comes from this: it means infants or children, boys or girls. When Luke wrote his account, he used the word *brephos*, which means *infants*. Luke wasn't contradicting Matthew and Mark, as he wrote that they brought infants 'also' (Luke 18.15-17).

Think about it. The children would have squirmed, perhaps cried. This was probably why the disciples rebuked the parents. They may also have thought the children were too young to understand the blessing Jesus was giving them.

Bring your children to church. If you don't hear crying, the church is dying. As hard as it might be for you as a parent who's half-asleep on a Sunday morning, take courage. You are an encouragement, and you are starting your children's lives in the right way.



***If you don't hear crying,  
the church is dying***



Trish Chorley: 01725 552776  
Trussell Trust Ambassador



Thank you to all those who have supported the Trussell Trust during the past year. The need for food has doubled during the year, however our giving was well down. It would be very much appreciated by those who have empty cupboards if everyone could give one extra item per month. Many mothers go without food for days on end in order to feed their children on the little they have, and it has been known for them to beg from a neighbour in order to do this.

Food weight for 1st November 2012 - 31st October 2013 was 303.7kg. This amounted to 757 items. (The previous year was 408.5kg) We did not count the items in 2011/2012. 108 Shoeboxes were filled and will be shortly on their way to Bulgaria. They are so much appreciated by all who receive them. If you would like to fill one next year, it is a good time after Christmas to start collecting things like woolly hats, scarves & gloves in the Winter Sales!



### + 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, 7.15pm. Phone Mike on 01725 552 720 for details.

### Come and meet friends

\* **Drop into...** the Post Office Coffee Shop on the first Wednesday from about 11 o'clock, or The Walnut Tree on the last Wednesday, for a coffee and chat with the vicar.

### T Teddy Bears

Pre-school children and their carers are invited to St Mary's on Thursday mornings during school term from 10.30am to noon, for fun, drinks and biscuits and maybe a Bible story or two. There is no charge.

### L Sunday Lunch

Join us at Hanlega's, on the campsite, on the first Sunday of the month for Sunday lunch – Everyone is welcome.

### ◆ Fellowship Group

The Fellowship Group (usually) meet every Tuesday for chat, laughter and biscuits, some talk around serious themes and sometimes a Roebuck steak! Phone Paul Skinner (552 785).

☕ **Men's Group** – A beer and a chat usually on the last Thursday of the month. Details from David Lockyer (552 492).

☘ **Mothers' Union** – Tea, company and a good talk, usually on the second Thursday afternoon of the month, from 2.45pm. Phone Sheila (553 133) or Mary (552 041) for details.

## Join us this Christmas and New Year

SUNDAY SERVICES	St Mary's Sixpenny Handley		St Rumbold's Pentridge		Gussage St Andrew	
	9.30am	☕	11.00am	6.00pm	11.15am	
Dec 1 <sup>st</sup>	HC	(10.30am)	Informal	Evensong	HC	#
Dec 8 <sup>th</sup>	MP		Informal	Evensong	#	HC
Dec 15 <sup>th</sup>	HC		Informal	<b>Carols</b>	MP	#
Dec 22 <sup>th</sup>	MP		Informal	Evensong	#	HC
Dec 29 <sup>th</sup>	Family HC		#	#	#	#
Jan 5 <sup>th</sup>	HC		#	#	HC	#
Jan 12 <sup>th</sup>	MP		Informal	Evensong	#	HC
Jan 19 <sup>th</sup>	HC		Informal	Evensong	MP	#
Jan 26 <sup>th</sup>	MP		Inf & HC	Evensong	#	HC

HC = Holy Communion | MP = Morning Prayer | SofP = Songs of Praise | # = No service



### For unto us a child is born!

We wish you a joyful Christmas and we hope that you will join us at some of the events listed here.



Sun 8th Dec	2.30pm	Scouts Christmas Celebration, St Mary's
Sun 15th Dec	6.00pm	Carols at St Mary's
Wed 18th Dec	10.30am	Sixpenny Handley First School Christmas Assembly, St Mary's
Fri 20th Dec	6.00pm	Carols at Gussage St Andrew
Mon 23rd Dec	6.00pm	Carols at St Rumbold's, Pentridge
Christmas Eve	4.00pm	Christingle, St Mary's
	11.30pm	Midnight Communion, St Mary's
Christmas Day	9.30am	Family Communion, St Mary's
	11.15am	Holy Communion, St Rumbold's, Pentridge



### December

See side panel for key to symbols

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 L	2	3 ◆	4 * ☘	5 T	6	7
8	9	10 ◆	11 HC	12 T	13	14
15	16	17 ◆	18	19 T+	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Wed 4th 2:30pm Mothers' Union. St Mary's, Advent Service  
7:30pm PCC Meeting. Vicarage,

### January

Updated weekly on our website

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 L	6	7 ◆	8 *	9 T ☘	10	11
12	13	14 ◆	15 HC	16 T	17	18
19	20	21 ◆	22	23 T+	24	25
26	27	28 ◆	29 *	30 T☕	31	

Thu 9th 2:45pm Mothers' Union AGM. Sixpenny Handley,  
Tue 28th 12:15pm Mothers' Union Communion. Salisbury Cathedral