



The Seeker

handleychurch.org.uk



April 2017

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
ask@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

Roy Warner 552 787

St Rumbold's, Pentridge

Mary Ferguson 552 222
Jane King 552 231

Licensed Lay Minister

John Cullingford 516 453

Lay Pastoral Assistants

Lydia Carter 552 720
Margaret Durrant 552 608
Margaret Jones 552 358
Maureen Lockyer 552 492
Jean Mayne 552 692
David Salmons 552 721

(Area code 01725)

Soup Lunches

This year we thought we would have our Soup Lunches in St Mary's after Easter, when the weather is better and we can celebrate good news together. We start on Wednesday 26th April and they will run for six weeks.



This year we shall be raising funds for charities linked with childhood cancers, such as CLIC Sargent and Salisbury Hospital STARS Appeal. Come along from 12.30 for a chat, with lunch served at 1.00pm. It will be the usual (and famous) mix of homemade soup and bread, followed by cake, tea, coffee and biscuits. Come and enjoy some great food in good company, helping a very good cause.

Transport can be provided, so please do come - and bring a friend or neighbour. Phone 01725 552608 for more information or to offer help.

Saturday Afternoons – 2.30pm Drop-in

From the beginning of May our Saturday afternoon drop-ins at St Mary's, Sixpenny Handley start up again. If you are passing – or would like to have a chat with someone trained to listen – pop in for a cup of tea from 2.30pm (services permitting!) This is in addition to the drop in in the Post Office café on the first Wednesday of the month when Paul or I will be available to talk about anything at all and continues throughout the year.

Teddy Bear 5th Anniversary – Sunday 14th May

Come along to our celebration of another year of Teddy Bears! St Mary's will be celebrating five years of our pre-school drop in at the 9.30am service. Come along for some stories, songs and cake - and don't forget to bring your teddy!



Annual Meetings

It is the time of year to hold our Church Annual Meetings. Join us at St Rumbold's on Tuesday 25th April beginning at 6.50pm and at St Mary's on Sunday 30th April at 6pm (in place of the evening service). If you would like to help with the running of our churches in any way, please come along!



As Sure as Eggs is Chocolate

It is not long before we will be buying Easter Eggs – crème eggs have been in Styles since before Christmas!

Please remember to look out for the Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance logos on the chocolate you buy, to make sure no child labour was used in the production of the food we buy. And don't forget the Real Easter Egg, fairly traded and with the only egg to tell the Easter story, produced by the Meaningful Chocolate Company.



News items and articles welcome!

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

Thanks!

FROM THE REGISTERS



The funerals took place of

John David
Robin Raban-Williams
Ann Adams
Michael Palmer

In full colour

A full colour PDF of The Seeker is available from our website.



No Chancel Tax here!

If you are buying or selling a house in Sixpenny Handley, remember that you do not have to pay for a search for Chancel Tax. This was an historic tax that might have been due from property built on land that was once owned by the church. This tax is out of date and cancelled. If you need written proof to go with your documents, please contact the church office.

Dear friends...

On Palm Sunday the crowd cheers as Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey. For many of us it is such a familiar picture we don't think twice about it. But it is clear that Jesus has prepared his entry into Jerusalem carefully. He has sent two disciples off to fetch a donkey - having walked all the way from Galilee, he will ride the last half-mile or so in an overt declaration of who he is and what he is to do.

Then, coats spread on the animal, Jesus rides into the city, everyone waving palm branches and singing, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!' and 'Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!'

This is a direct quote from the Old Testament, from Psalm 118. Except they change it very slightly: they put the word 'king' where the original has just 'he'.

The people of Jerusalem will be in no doubt who is coming. And the reference to 'peace' is a sign that Jesus comes not as a warrior king on a mighty horse, but a peaceful king on a donkey.

The authorities are horrified, appealing to Jesus to stop the singing. They say it will upset the fragile balance of power that keeps them in authority. They have a very different idea of peace and they expect Jesus to agree with them. After all, this song refers to the Messiah, not a carpenter from Nazareth.

But Jesus doesn't agree with them. Not only does he accept the crowd's adulation and affirmation of his kingship, he says that if the crowd were silent, you would hear the very stones of the city cry out. It is as if the brickwork knows better than the inhabitants what is going on, and who is coming. Creation will recognize its Creator.

And so the authorities move on in their thinking. This man is dangerous. He is a threat. He must be rejected. He must be killed.

And, indeed, Jesus is a threat – but not in the way they think. He challenges them, and us, because

he says things can be better. He offers peace not war, love not power, forgiveness not threat. And so he is threatened himself, because the world cannot cope with this thing we call 'love'. And the threat of what is to come, the shadow of the cross, grows ever stronger.

We see so many forces of selfishness and greed, small-mindedness and narrow thinking in our world today. We all need to stand up and say this is not the world we want. We want a world of truth and love and support – the world I believe God wants us to have. Come along to church this Easter and celebrate the Good News that, whatever mess we make of things, God loves us and is with us. Always.

Your friend and Vicar, Mel



Lee Abbey is a beautiful house and community on the rugged north Devon coastline. Visitors often comment that it is a 'thin place', in the sense that God is felt to be very near. It is a great place for families, as there are lots of things for different ages to do. We are planning a visit in July. Please have a look at the brochure, the website or talk to us if you are interested in coming – but hurry, places are very limited!

Lent and Easter Flowers

Our churches are simply decorated through Lent. Then, between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, they are filled with colour and life as we celebrate the best news ever – the Resurrection.

If you would like to contribute to the Easter flowers, you will find a collecting box in the church, or you can leave a donation (suitably marked) in the wall safe by the door.



A LOOK AT THE CROSS

Mel Durrant

If you had to choose one object to represent supreme bravery, a supreme act of heroism in the face of terrible enemy fire, what would it be? Surely, the Victoria Cross. Or if you wanted to have an internationally accepted symbol of compassion? Surely you would choose the Red Cross.

The cross is the symbol of Christianity, of course. It is our 'logo'. The symbol of our faith is not a cradle, to remind us of the lovely Christmas story, or a crown, though Jesus was a king; but a cross, because it was there that he did something of such bravery and compassion that it made all the difference. Sometimes we have the figure of Jesus on the cross to remind us of his death, but more often the cross is empty, to remind us of his Resurrection.

A small boy, whose grandfather was a bishop and seeing a silver cross dangling round his neck, asked, '*Grandad, why do you always wear that key?*' His grandfather was just about to explain that it was not a key, when he paused and realised that it was indeed the most important key in the world, because it could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in.

I remember once seeing what I thought was rather an ugly building floodlit on some important occasion. The light completely transformed it into a thing of beauty. It is like that with the cross. We don't sing, as you might expect, '*When I survey the monstrous cross*', but '*When I survey the wondrous cross*.' So let us '*survey the wondrous cross*' for a few moments.

The cross shows us the Truth – the truth about ourselves and about God.

Imagine you are abroad on holiday. Everything is perfect. There is just one thing wrong; you are not well. By the third day you toss and turn, and then wake from a feverish sleep to see someone leaning over you. You recognise him as a well-known doctor from home. You realise there must be something very wrong, if this doctor has come all the way from England to see you!

This is how we should feel when we look at the cross. We begin to realise that there is something very wrong with us – what the Bible calls 'sin'. And the only cure is for Jesus to come to save us. If God could have sent an angel to put things right, we can be sure he would have done it. But, '*there was no other good enough to pay the price of sin*', and '*God so loved the world that he sent his only Son*'.

In the life of Jesus we see a wonderful example of how to live. In what Jesus said we have the most marvellous teaching the world has ever heard. But first of all we need more than a good example, and more than good teaching. We need a Rescuer, a Saviour.

Imagine you are floundering in the sea. You are out of your depth, and you cannot swim. It won't help if I jump into the water and give you a marvellous exhibition of swimming, even if I could. Nor will it be of much help if I shout instructions from a nearby boat. The day may come when you will be glad of an example, and swimming lessons, but right now what you need is a Rescuer – someone who will leap in beside you, perhaps at great risk to themselves, and get you home.

Of course I hope we try to follow the example of Jesus and pay careful attention to his teaching. But before we can do either, we need him as our Saviour. By dying on the cross, I believe Jesus shows his love and power, bares the penalty and pays the debt of human sin, and makes a way for us into the presence of God. I know this language sounds heavy and old-fashioned, but it is still important. It is still the most important thing I can tell you.

I am told that in Greece, everyone is given a boiled egg painted bright red at Easter. When you meet a friend, you say 'Christ is risen' and crack your egg against theirs, to let out the new life. I have said before that an egg looks a little bit like the stone over the empty tomb. And out of it comes a little chick, bright yellow - a symbol of new life springing up in the colour of sunshine.

Prayer Time Together

You don't have to be good, clever or holy to pray. Prayer is not about clever words, it is about paying attention to God. Jesus calls this 'purity' - 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God' (Matthew 5:8). St Mary's and St Rumbold's are open every day for prayer, but of course we can pray anywhere. And we never pray alone, for we are always praying in fellowship with the whole Church.

'Be still and know that I am God.' Psalm 46:10

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord, Amen.

The confession from Holy Communion

An Easter Prayer

Christ is risen: The world below lies desolate.

Christ is risen: The spirits of evil are fallen.

Christ is risen: The angels of God are rejoicing.

Christ is risen: The tombs of the dead are empty.

Christ is risen indeed from the dead: The first of the sleepers.

Glory and power are his forever and ever.

Hippolytus of Rome, c190-c236

An Easter Blessing

May the celebration of resurrected life bring new hope to our being,

May the victory over earthly death turn our eyes to the promises of heaven,

May the empty tomb help us to leave our sorrows at the foot of the cross,

So that God's hope, promises and forgiveness reign in our lives forever.

Amen.

Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Hebrews 13:1-2



+ Bible Study Group

As we hope you see from *The Seeker*, the Bible is THE Book! Read it and understand more in good company on alternate Thursdays at 7.15pm. Details from Mike on 01725 552 720.

Come and meet friends

☪ Soup Lunches

Every Wednesday after Easter at 12.30pm St Mary’s Church.

▼ Drop into St Mary’s – on most Saturday afternoons from 2.30pm during British Summer Time for a cup of tea and a chat with someone trained to listen.

*** Drop into...** the Post Office Coffee Shop on the first Monday of the month from about 11 o’clock for a coffee and chat with the vicar or curate.

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.

☩ Lent Course

7:30pm at St Mary’s. Meet friends and explore what Lent and Easter are all about.

☪ Men’s Group – A beer and a chat to finish off the month at 7.30pm. Details from David Lockyer (552 492).

☪ Mothers’ Union – Tea, company and a good talk, usually every second Thursday of the month, from 2.30pm. Details from Mary (552 041).

SUNDAY SERVICES	St Mary’s Sixpenny Handley		St Rumbold’s Pentridge	Gussage St Andrew
	9.30am	6.00pm	11.15am	9.30am
April 2 nd	Holy Communion	Evensong	HC	#
April 9 th	Informal	Evensong	#	HC
April 16 th	Easter Sunday HC	#	MP	#
April 23 rd	Informal	Evensong	#	MP
April 30 th	Informal	Annual M	MP	#
May 7 th	Holy Communion	Evensong	HC	#
May 14 th	Informal	Evensong	#	HC
May 21 th	Holy Communion	Evensong	MP	#
May 28 th	Informal	Evensong	#	MP

HC Holy Communion **MP** Morning Prayer **SofP** Songs of Praise **#** No service
 Our Informal service is geared more towards families and includes activities for children.



Holy Week – is open week!

Come along to Sixpenny Handley church anytime between Palm Sunday and Easter to experience the story in a different way. Five scenes from the Last Supper to the Tomb will be set up around the church and you are invited to work your way around on your own. Follow the story and experience something of what is going on. The church is open all day.

Palm Sunday – 9th April

Maundy Thursday – 13th April

6:00 pm ‘Last Super’, St Mary’s

Good Friday – 14th April

2–3:00 pm Quiet Time, St Rumbold’s, Pentridge
 6:00 pm Readings and hymns, St Mary’s

Easter Sunday – 16th April

9:30 am Holy Communion, St Mary’s
 11:15 am Holy Communion, St Rumbold’s

See side panel for key to symbols

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

Wed 5th 10.30am School Praise Assembly, Sixpenny Handley
 Tue 25th 6.50pm St Rumbold’s Annual Meeting

See website for updates

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