

The Seeker

April ~ May

2012

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

Carole Wyatt 552572

St Rumbold's, Pentridge

Mary Ferguson 552222

Jane King 552231

Licensed Lay Minister

John Cullingford 516453

Lay Pastoral Assistants

Ted Cox 552801

Lydia Carter 552720

Margaret Durrant 552608

Margaret Jones 552358

Maureen Lockyer 552492

Jean Mayne 552692

David Salmons 552721

Carole Wyatt 552572



"The great gift of Easter is hope – Christian hope which makes us have that confidence in God, in his ultimate triumph, and in his goodness and love, which nothing can shake." Basil C. Hume

Palm Sunday (April 1st)

This year we welcome Jess the Donkey to Sixpenny Handley for a service at 11 o'clock. This will be quite informal (how else can it be with a donkey?!) There is no 9.30 service this Sunday. There is Holy Communion both at Pentridge at 11.15 and Handley at 6pm.

Maundy Thursday (April 5th)

Join us at Gussage St Andrew as we remember the Last Supper at 7.30pm in a quiet, contemplative Holy Communion service with music in the Taize style.

Good Friday (April 6th)

Join us around Handley village in the morning (starting at the church at 11) for about an hour. Or join us at Pentridge at 2pm for an hour of shared quiet. Or join us in Handley church at 7.30pm for our choir-led evening service of hymns and readings as we remember the most important story.

Easter Sunday (April 8th)

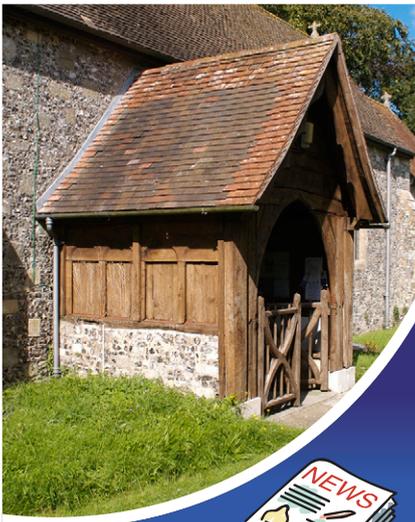
This Easter we are branching out. We have service on Easter Sunday in all three churches. At Gussage St Andrew we have a traditional Prayer Book (BCP) Holy Communion service at 9.30. At Sixpenny Handley we have a slightly more Informal Communion service (so bring the children along!), also at 9.30. Pentridge has its usual Holy Communion service at 11.15. There is no evening service on Easter Sunday but services return to normal the following week.

Consecration of the churchyard, Sixpenny Handley



Bishop Graham leads the consecration service on a fine spring day in the churchyard at St Mary's.

Our thanks go to Bishop Graham for consecrating the extension to St Mary's churchyard at the end of March. This land was given to us by the Pitt-Rivers estate back in 1946 and so it is great to finally have it set up for the function it was intended. Our thanks go to Dave Swift and his team for their clearing and earthmoving work, Nick Lawrie and his team for planting the hedgerow, to Richard Adlem for his support, to Patrick Chick and Carole Wyatt and to all the people who have made this possible. Photos on the news page of the website.



News items
and articles welcome!

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

Thanks!

FROM THE REGISTERS



The funeral of Molly Orman was
on 1st December

The funeral of Marjorie Phibbs
was on 5th January

The funeral of Robert Lockyer
was on 10th February

The blessing of the marriage of
Jo and Michael Stoate was on
29th October

The marriage of Claire and Lee
Watkinson was on 1st December

The baptism of Holly Lownds was
on 8th January



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



Jesus said, "where your treasure is,
there your heart will be also."

In 1923, nine of the richest men in America met at Chicago's Edgewater Beach Hotel. Their wealth and influence made them among the most influential people in the country. They were; the president of the New York Stock Exchange; the most influential financier on Wall Street; the head of the world's biggest monopoly; the presidents of America's biggest steel corporation, electricity company and gas company; a powerful wheat baron; the president of an international bank; and the Secretary of the Interior, equivalent to our Home Secretary.

Such men would have been the envy of America at the time – but just twenty-five years later the picture was dramatically different. By 1948 one of the men was insane, two had recently been released from prison, three others were bankrupt, and the remaining three had all committed suicide.

But that is the super rich, we say. Not us. We aren't like that. We are just ordinary people, struggling to make ends meet in difficult times.

The Russian poet Irina Ratushinskaya, spent many years in a Russian labour camp for her 'anti-soviet' activities. When she was eventually released she reflected...

A person who is deprived of everything, of family, of contact with friends, who is totally isolated, alone and without property at all, not even a toothbrush, has nothing left to lose. An enormous, powerful sense of security follows. Instead of panic, one feels God's hand on one's shoulder. We all felt that nothing really bad could happen to us. We all thought, 'if they kill us today, tomorrow we will be in heaven.'

I wish I had the same feeling now, but I don't. Under such pressure, God feels really close. It's easier to serve God when in trouble than on

holiday. When I came to the West, I thought, 'Now I'm in a world of holiday makers.'

When Jesus came, he said, 'Leave everything you have.' That was a frightening demand. A person can only develop if he or she is able to let go. It was easier for us to take risks back in the Russian labour camps because we had nothing to lose. Now, after spending ten years in the West, I do have something to lose.

She is not talking about the super rich. She is talking about people like you and me. Irina wrote those words about 15 years ago. Since then we have had the biggest wake-up call to our economy for half a century. And as we watch the world teetering around us we can only wonder about the shape of things to come.

We are *all* affected – all our pension funds, all our mortgages, all our insurance policies are tied up together in a complicated Gordian knot of financial institution that spans the globe and together are beyond the control of any one government, let alone any one person.

We think we are having a hard time. And yet there are still places in the world where people *really* struggle – struggle to get enough food, struggle to get medicines that we can buy down the road, struggle to work so that we can buy goods, and struggle with natural disasters and the effects of climate change.

Between us, we have all of us let this come about. Again, it is not any one person's fault, or any one government or institution. But we are all involved.

And so now, more than any time for a generation, is the time to stand up and be counted, to stand for what we believe rather than fall for what people tell us, to stand up and say that things are not as they should be, to campaign for better management of our *treasures on earth*, where *moths and vermin destroy*, and where *thieves break in and steal*.

And now is the time to reflect on what we really think is important in our lives. As we celebrate Easter, it is time to turn to where our real treasure lies.

Your friend and vicar, Mel

The Italian writer Primo Levi described a recurring nightmare that he had after his liberation from Auschwitz. In the dream, Levi returns from the concentration camp and recounts its full horror to his remaining family and friends, only to see them turn away disbelieving or – worse still – uninterested.

For those who suffer and tell their experience to others, it can be excruciating to encounter a reaction of embarrassment, disbelief, apathy or even denial of what they have endured.

On 22nd December *The Daily Telegraph* published an article headed “How can we remain silent while Christians are being persecuted?” This was followed on 31st December by an article in *The Economist* on “Christians and lions: the world’s most widely followed faith is gathering persecutors.” These were for me among the greatest encouragements of 2011, signalling that the persecution of Christians is being recognised as an urgent issue, no longer to be swept under the carpet. I believe that this change is due at least in part, under God, to the efforts of grass-roots Christians who have signed petitions, written letters, campaigned and prayed for persecuted Christians.

As Christians we are familiar with suffering. Our Saviour is ‘a man of suffering’ (Isaiah 53:3). Our God is a suffering God, whose heart can be broken. Such thoughts will be in our minds as we approach Good Friday and remember the suffering and death of Christ on the cross as well as his resurrection on the first Easter Day.

So we must not deny, dismiss or minimise the suffering of persecuted Christians. Is such silent indifference so far from Pilate’s hand-washing? Pilate tried to distance himself from the crucifixion of Jesus by refusing responsibility. Tragically, his example is followed by many governments and Christians today.

A small community of Afghan Christians is living in Delhi. As converts from Islam, they are in severe danger in their home country. But India does not allow them to settle permanently, and Western governments, who are quick to condemn non-Western countries for human rights abuses, will not accept them. One New Zealand diplomat even said that the converts brought their predicament on themselves by choosing to leave Islam.

Even more disturbing, in this and many other cases, is the failure of Christians in positions of political power to use their influence on behalf of their suffering brothers and sisters. The leadership of the Church is often little different.

To be silent in the face of an abuse is to condone it and share the guilt. When the House of Lords debated the position of Christians in the Middle East in December, Lord Papat, a Hindu who fled Uganda when Idi Amin persecuted the Indians in 1971, spoke of the enormity of this sin: “to witness persecution, then sit back and do nothing to stop it.”

As we reflect on the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ this Good Friday and celebrate his resurrection on Easter Sunday, let us take up the opportunity to speak up for suffering Christians where they cannot speak for themselves. Let us remember that although Pilate washed his hands, our Father God did not, but rather raised up Jesus from the dead, vindicated and victorious.

From an article by Dr Patrick Sookhdeo in barnabasaid magazine. He is International Director of the charity Barnabas Fund, which supports and campaigns for persecuted Christians around the world. More details at www.barnabasfund.org

Annual Meetings

Would you like to help in our community? We are coming up to our Annual Meetings...

Sunday 22nd April at 6.00pm

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary’s and St Andrew’s will be held at St Mary’s.

Tuesday 24th April at 7.00pm

St Rumbold’s Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Come along and share in the decision making process. There are a lot of exciting ideas and options for our churches in our villages and these are exciting times for the Church in our nation and the world.

The PCC (Parochial Church Council) is the body whose members discuss and decide matters of concern to the parish, and promote the whole mission of the Church. Please talk to the vicar, church wardens or members of the PCC if you think this might be you.

Jubilee Diamonds

Over the long Jubilee Weekend St Rumbold’s, Pentridge will be saying it with flowers. Come along and enjoy a wonderful flower festival. St Mary’s, Sixpenny Handley will also be wonderfully decorated - with flowers, pictures and work from the children’s Kids’ Club (see below). And on Bank Holiday Monday 4th June come along to St Mary’s and enjoy a scrumptious cream tea in the afternoon. Our prayers and thanks go to our Queen, ‘*Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England*’. See you there!

Kid’s Club – Kings and Queens

Sign up for our Summer Kids’ Club – begin the Jubilee celebrations on Saturday 26th May as we think about kings and queens, and even a few diamonds! Children are invited to come from 9.45am and we shall finish at 12.30. Under fives need a carer with them please. Places are limited, so be sure to book early by calling the church office on (01725) 552608.



✦ 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, 7.30pm. Mike Carter (552720) for details.

Midweek Holy Communion

Join us for a gentle service in St Mary's on the second Wednesday of the month at 11.30pm, followed by coffee.

Come and meet friends

▼ Drop into St Mary's!

Saturday afternoons in the church from 2.30pm for a cup of tea and a chat with someone trained to listen.

* Drop into the Post Office

Coffee Shop on the first Wednesday of the month from about 11 o'clock for a coffee and chat with the vicar.

T Teady Bear Drop-in

Thursday's 10.30-12 noon, following term times. Carers and small children are welcome for a chat, coffee and play, and maybe a story or two, in St Mary's Church

◆ 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 (552785).

☕ **Men's Group** – A beer and a chat usually on the last Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. Phone David Lockyer (552492) for details.

☼ **Mothers' Union** – Tea, company and a good talk, usually on the second Thursday afternoon of the month, from 2.45pm. Phone Sheila (553133) or Mary (552041) for details.

Join us for April and May

SUNDAY SERVICES	St Mary the Virgin Sixpenny Handley Informal service includes children's time			St Rumbold's Pentridge	Gussage St Andrew
	9.30am ☕	11.00am	6.00pm	11.15am	9.30am
April 1 st	#		Informal	HC	#
April 8 th Easter Sunday			#	#	HC
April 15 th	HC	(10.30am)	Informal	Evensong	MP
April 22 nd	MP		Inf & HC	APCM	#
April 29 th	HC		Informal	Evensong	MP
May 6 th	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC
May 13 th	MP		Informal	Evensong	#
May 20 th	HC		Informal	Evensong	MP
May 27 th	MPv		Inf & HC	HC	#

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



Full details of all our Easter activities on the front page!



April 2012

See side panel for key to symbols

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

Thurs 5th	11.00am	Maundy Thurs Service, Salisbury Cathedral
Thurs 12th	2.45pm	Mothers' Union, 'Nursing the Mentally Ill', Irene Burnett-Thomas
Sat 14th	11.00am	Wedding of Lisa Smith and Darren Fisher, Sixpenny Handley
	3.00pm	Wedding of Sion Woodget and Joanna Moxham, Sixpenny Handley
Sat 21st	2.00pm	Pentridge Churchyard working party
Sun 22nd	6.00pm	Annual Meeting of St Mary's and St Andrew's, Sixpenny Handley
Mon 23rd	9.30am	LPA Meeting, the Vicarage
	7.30pm	Worship Leaders Meeting, the Vicarage
Tues 24th	7.00pm	Annual Meeting of St Rumbold's
Fri 27th	Evening	Walk and Talk, Pentridge
Sat 28th	-	Service of Rededication for LPAs, Salisbury Cathedral

May 2012

Updated weekly on our website

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

Sat 5th	1.00pm	Wedding of Amy Day and Guy Summerville, Pentridge
Thur 17th	7.30pm	Ascension Day Service, Gussage St Andrew
Sat 26th	10.00am	Kids' Club Kings and Queens