



The Seeker

www.handleychurch.org.uk



August

2015

**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*

Sheila Bradley 553 133
Roy Warner 552 787

St Rumbold's, Pentridge

Mary Ferguson 552 222
Jane King 552 231

Licenced Lay Minister

John Cullingford 516 453

Lay Pastorial 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
Carole Wyatt 552 572

(Area code 01725)

RIDE+STRIDES for Churches

Saturday 12 September

Ride+Stride is a sponsored event in which people walk or cycle or horse-ride between churches, exploring our wonderful Dorset countryside and enjoying the hospitality of our church communities.

Every year since 1991 the Dorset Historic Churches Trust has organised Ride+Stride, which is its main source of income. This enables it to help churches and chapels of all Christian denominations meet the increasing costs of maintenance, restoration and improvement of facilities.

They have given Sixpenny Handley significant help over the years. Last year we had a record number of participants from our churches – 13, ranging from 7 to 70 – and we made a record amount of £541.

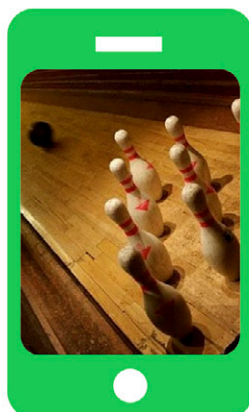
In 2014, more than £80,000 was raised overall to help conserve Dorset's churches, chapels and meeting houses and to help keep them active and at the heart of their communities for the use of future generations. Half of the money raised is returned directly to your nominated church and the other half is used to fund Dorset Historic Churches' grant programme.

Visiting Dorset's beautiful churches on foot, by bicycle or on horseback provides a fun day out, suitable for children, families and friends. To register as a participant, for further information on what's happening in Dorset, or to request a sponsorship form please see your Ride+Stride Organiser, John Cullingford, on (01725) 516453

MALE CARERS GROUP

Skittles, friendship and information

In Partnership with Whitecliff Surgery and Eagle House Surgery



**2:00-4:00pm Last Wednesday
of the month**

The Railway Hotel, Oakfield Street,
Blandford, DT11 7EX



Pramacare provide many support services for carers, their families and people living alone, and The Male Carers Group is just one.

They also helped set up our own Crossroads Café, in the parish office every Wednesday – do come along.

Pramacare have an office (and the fairtrade shop) in Blandford.

Please contact Chloe Mutton on 07790 803156 or email to chloe.mutton@pramacare.co.uk for more information.





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
Sid Day, Brian Hansford and
Ron Groves. The baptisms took
place of Matilda Moralee and
Alana Barrow

Get a tax break!

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 be payable by 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.

www.easyfundraising.org
Shop online and raise funds for

Sixpenny Handley Church

Just visit easyfundraising.org and search for our church and follow the simple steps to sign up. Each time you shop online you'll earn us a donation, just by making an extra click!

£370 raised so far!



Dear Friends

Your friend and vicar, Mel

Within our local church there has been a lot of talk this year about being positive, about how we can *Pray, Serve, Grow*.

One of our great strengths is that we are connected to our communities, through people and through our buildings. Yes, the buildings are a strain on resources and they take a lot of effort to maintain, but they are also a constant physical reminder of God's love, present in our midst. And they are beautifully cared for.

Here, in our churches, you can feel the prayer that has soaked into the walls over the centuries. And our churches serve everyone. However, one of the problems with living in small villages is that we can easily think the church is small as a whole. But we are not small: we are one of the biggest organisations in the world! Just within Salisbury Diocese alone there are:

991 Lay Pastoral Assistants
848 Churchwardens
391 Retired clergy
203 Licensed Lay Ministers
198 Stipendiary (paid) clergy
107 Self-supporting clergy

... and many others not on the list! This is an amazing wealth of resources.

We are often told we live in a secular society – and yet over 60% of the UK population identify themselves as Christian, and 85% visited a church at least once in the last year. Turn the news on and the chances are there will be at least one story with a faith aspect. So the challenge is to live out what we say we believe.

There are so many things in the world today that can pull us down, make us be negative. God gives us the task of standing up for what is good – the good that is summed up in that little word 'love.'

The Bible says, *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails* (1 Corinthians 13).

Did you know?

It costs over £40,000 each year just to keep our churches open and functioning. Remember, we get no funding from the government at all, so if you would like to keep the church open near you, we need your help!

Please think about giving regularly. There are different ways you can give. The easiest is a Standing Order, which gives regularly for you. A set of dated envelopes also helps you to give regularly. Please talk to us if you are interested - and think about giftaid if you are a UK taxpayer so we get 25% extra at no cost to you.

The Church is for everyone, so please contact the vicar if there is any way we may be able to help you.

it's time for the famous

PENTRIDGE BARBEQUE

Saturday 1st August
from 7pm

Music from Alec James and Friends

tickets £12.50 - children £5 - under 5s free
(01725) 552222 - 552231 - 552608
in aid of St Rumbold's Church, Pentridge

We hope to see you at the Pentridge Barbeque – the event of the summer!

MANNA FROM HEAVEN

After they famously crossed the Red Sea, it is very difficult to work out the path the Israelites followed in the wilderness. Scholars struggle over it continuously, and those little maps at the back of your Bible (which I for one, find very confusing) always fade away to a dotted line of *they went somewhere round about here*.



Whoever wrote down Exodus for us is obviously quite interested in the route, as we are regularly given place names. Through this they are telling us the story is grounded (quite literally) in real places and real people. But there is also a deeper focus, which is not on where they are going, but on what is *happening*.

The people are in the wilderness, and (not surprisingly) there is a shortage of food. There is a food crisis, and this leads to a faith crisis. And the people grumble: They wish they had stayed in slavery, things were so much better in the olden days, why did they ever leave Egypt?

But the story continues. God gives them manna from heaven and food abounds, even in the desert wilderness.

The way it is written is very straightforward. I think we are meant to notice the naturalness of the way the Bible tells us the manna (and the quail) appear. We are meant to see that God is not only in what we think of as supernatural – but also in the everyday.

Do you know why it is called *manna*? It is the Hebrew word for ‘*what is it?*’ They didn’t know! Well, there is one theory that tells us that it might be the result of an insect that burrows into the fruit of the tamarisk tree. It excretes a yellowish-white flake or ball. During the warmth of the day this disintegrates quickly, but in the cold of the morning and evening it congeals and can be picked and eaten. It has a sweet taste and is rich in carbohydrates and sugars. And the surprising thing is that it is still gathered today, and baked into a kind of bread – and is still called *manna*!



And as for quails, they migrate between Africa and Europe and can get blown over the wilderness and are often so exhausted after their long flight they can be caught by hand.

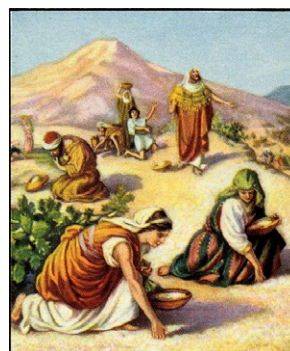
The Bible sees both manna and quail as gifts to his people from God’s good creation. Of course, there are unusual features of the story as well, but no effort is made to make the feeding of the people look like extra special actions of God, and the people give no sign of surprise. It is just how it is.

Don’t get me wrong. I believe in a God who works amazing miracles.

Sometimes the miracle comes in God’s timing, and if we look for God only in the extraordinary, only in the deep, deep sea or up on the high mountain top, we will miss the way that God gives us so many blessings over and over again: Blessings in the ordinary, in the every day.

If we don’t recognise God in the ordinary bits of our lives we will be in danger of missing so much, and as a result feel a profound sense of the absence of God. Yet I believe that God is with us all the time, and God wants us to be aware of his love every day, in the air we breath, in the food we eat, in the friends we meet, in the life we live. After all, just being alive is the most amazing miracle in itself!

Everything we have comes from God, so this summer let’s make an effort to see him every day – and say *Thank you!*



Lord you give me life and the gift of freedom

Through Your love I exist in this world

May I never take the gift of life for granted

May I always respect the right to life of others.

Amen.



+ 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

▼ **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, or The Walnut Tree on the last Wednesday, 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.

◆ Fellowship Group

The Fellowship Group (usually) meet on alternate Thursdays for chat, laughter and biscuits, some talk around serious themes with a Roebuck steak on the first Tuesday of the month! Phone Paul Skinner (552 785).

☕ **Men's Group** — A beer and a chat usually on the last Tuesday 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 Summer

SUNDAY SERVICES	St Mary's 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
Aug 2 nd	HC	(10.30am)	#	Evensong	HC	#
Aug 9 th	MP		#	Evensong	#	HC
Aug 16 st	HC		#	Evensong	MP	#
Aug 23 rd	MP		#	Evensong	#	HC
Aug 30 th	HC		#	Evensong	MP	#
Sept 6 th	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC	#
Sept 13 th	MP		Informal	Evensong	#	HC
Sept 20 th	#		Harvest	Evensong	MP	#
Sept 27 th	MP		Informal	#	#	Harvest 6pm

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

HARVEST



Looking ahead, make a date for our Harvest Festivals – at Sixpenny Handley on Sunday 20th September, at 11 o'clock, at St Andrew's on Sunday 27th September at 6pm, and at Pentridge on Sunday 4th October at 11.15am. All of them are followed by refreshments – do come and celebrate the wonderful world around us, and stay for something to eat afterwards!

August

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	12 HC	13	14	15 ▼
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 ▼
23	24	25 ☕	26 *	27	28	29 ▼
30	31					

Summer Holidays

The summer holidays are on us, and things quieten down a bit during August. Our pre-school drop-in Teddy Bears have a break (perhaps they can go down to the woods for a picnic), and the 11 o'clock Service at Sixpenny Handley has a break over the school holidays, combining with the 9.30 service. The Fellowship Group also has a rest over August. We start up again at the beginning of September. All other drop-ins and services run as normal, so please join us.

September

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 T	25	26 ▼
27	28	29 ☕	30 *			

Saturday 12th — Ride and Stride around Dorset's historic churches