



# The Seeker

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



## December

## 2015

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

### Who's who?

#### Vicar

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Sixpenny Handley  
01725 552 608  
[ask@handleychurch.org.uk](mailto:ask@handleychurch.org.uk)

#### Curates

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01725 552 785  
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### 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)



### A Christmas Prayer

Lord, you know what it means to be vulnerable  
A fragile young life, a defenceless young babe  
So may my heart be vulnerable and open  
This Christmas with Christ, walking closer each day.  
Amen.

### Churches Respond to the Refugee Crisis

Migration has played a key part in the history of mankind. Many of us have stories of how our ancestors moved within and across countries, perhaps seeking sanctuary from hardship, wars, or just looking for a better life. Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus fled from persecution and became refugees in a strange land.

Churches across Dorset and Wiltshire are responding to the current refugee crisis in a number of ways. The Bible tells us that 'faith without works is dead', and parishioners at St James' in Luggershall picked up on this and discussed how they could help. They decided to pray, donate clothes through *Salisbury Solidarity for Calais* Refugees, donate money through *The Red Cross*, and write to their MP and County Councillor expressing their concern for helping refugees, wherever they come from.

St James' Alderholt collected a carload of clothes and bedding which will be distributed to Syrian and Iraqi refugees living in destitution in the city of Dohuk in Iraqi Kurdistan by the charity *Samara's Aid Appeal*. St Mary's, Longfleet in Poole is sending three vans with food, toiletries and other essentials to 'the jungle' in Calais. Churches in Shaftesbury have also sent a vanload. In Marlborough, local churches, the Town Council and other bodies met in St Mary's to explore what help could be offered should refugees come to the town. A letter expressing the views of the meeting, called 'Marlborough Welcomes Refugees' was sent to Wiltshire Council, their MP and MEP. Indeed, local MPs, including Salisbury's John Glen, have commended the Church for their response. Churches Together in Salisbury is helping plan the reception of Syrian refugees directly from camps in the Middle East via the government scheme. *Alabare* and *The Trussell Trust* are coordinating with official agencies locally.

The Bishop of Salisbury, Bishop Nicholas, said 'the government's pledge to take 20,000 people in the next 5 years is a small start but won't be enough. We must work closely with the rest of Europe.'

'Deal with each other justly, do not oppress the refugee, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed any innocent blood. Journey in all the ways I command you, that all may go well with you.' (Jeremiah 7:6-7)

Lord of the journey, we ask your protection on all who have fled their homes. Give them strength on their journeys and grant that they may find places of compassion at which to rest. Ease their fear as they throw in their lot with strangers. And keep alive their vision of finding a secure and welcoming home. Amen.



### Band Concert • Saturday 5th December • 7pm

Sandleheath Brass Band invite you to their Christmas Concert on Saturday 5th December at St Mary's Sixpenny Handley beginning at 7pm. There will be a wide range of Christmas music, including community carol singing.

There is no charge, but donations will be welcome, and there will be a raffle in aid of the heating fund at St Mary's – let's look after our church!

This concert is sponsored by **J.W.Wells Ltd**, of Ringwood.



**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  
Terry Stenner and Terry Scott.**

**The baptism took place of  
T-Jay Walton.**

### Click'n'Support us!

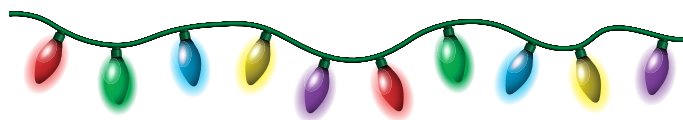
Do you shop online? Every time you buy you could also be raising money for Sixpenny Handley Church. Over 2,700 retailers, including Amazon, John Lewis, eBay and Tesco will donate a percentage of what you spend to say thank you for shopping with them. It's a really simple process; all you have to do is register at **easyfundraising.org.uk** When you're asked to choose your cause, select Sixpenny Handley Church.

Easyfundraising has already raised over £5 million for over 50,000 good causes across the UK. Spread the word to family and friends this Christmas to let them know just how easy it is to click and support!



**Dear  
Friends**

**Your friend and vicar, Mel**



As the song goes, '*So this is Christmas...*' I'm sure they come round quicker each year!

Will you be going to a pantomime this year? For us, for a long time, Christmas was defined by pantomimes – the season started with the one at Poole Arts Centre, and finished with going to the one with my parents in Exeter. They defined the season.

Pantomime is a very important part of Christmas, a great tradition, and as we realize that the clumsy woman with the outrageous hair is actually a man, and that the dashing hero is actually a girl, and they live in a world where mice can become magnificent horses and a pumpkin a beautiful carriage, we begin to see that things are often more than they first seem. And that it's fun to imagine, *what if things could be better...*

And then there are the baddies, who are so frightening we have to yell and boo at them, yet by the end of the show they will either have disappeared in a puff of smoke or they will have seen the error of their ways and become reformed characters. This is a reminder that what frightens us is often a façade, a façade that might well disintegrate or be transformed in the face of laughter – particularly if we have someone to laugh with. And everything in pantomime is brought together with a slap of the thigh and a kiss: Happy Ever After.

Well, it's a nice hope. And that hope keeps us going through Christmas, when *she's* getting stressed over the turkey *he's* forgotten that batteries are not included. For the ultimate truth of pantomime - and of Christmas itself - is that it is always *love* that wins in the end. The whole world is transformed by love.

Of course, pantomime is make-be-

lieve. But the story of Christmas is real. The baby really was born. It really happened. And if we *really* listen to the story, with open hearts and brains in gear, we might find each part of it raises questions, and questions are chances for us to learn more about God and the world, and ourselves.

For instance, a small thing - where was Joseph's family? It was his hometown, after all, and there was a culture of hospitality. In the Old Testament, Ruth and Naomi came to Bethlehem and found it a place of welcome. So what is happening now? Maybe the family space of the house was so full that there was only room with the animals, where Mary and Joseph could snatch some privacy for the birth of the child. (Or did Joseph's family provide a stable environment?)

And, back in the Old Testament, God's People had somehow understood God's dwelling as being within the Ark of the Covenant. This was a beautiful golden box carried around with them. Later this dwelling place of God was thought to move to the Temple. And yet now it is a stable. A stable becomes the first shelter for the Incarnation, for God with us, for Jesus.

God becomes human in the humblest of places.

And we know that, some thirty-three years later, the story will include somewhere even more humble; the rubbish tip outside the city. An even more awful place: The place of the cross.

The stable and the cross are all part of the same story, the story of God's love for you and me. And God is looking at us and loving us right now, and smiling. He loves a party and wants you to share it with him. Have a wonderful Christmas.

### 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 Funzi and Bodo Trust and the chocolate is Fairtrade. It costs £3.99 and is available from a range of shops. Details at [realadvent.co.uk/shop](http://realadvent.co.uk/shop) (And please remember to buy chocolate with the Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance logos!)



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** and many other charities 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.

## THE PENTRIDGE CROSS



### THE EASTER STORY IN ART AND CRAFT ST RUMBOLD'S CHURCH, PENTRIDGE, SALISBURY

Artists and craftspeople of any and every sort are invited to produce a work of art inspired by the Easter story.

We are dividing the story up into sections and invite you to explore one stage in whatever way you like. It may be as literal or as abstract as you wish, and produced in two or three dimensions, bearing in mind that the overall exhibition is in a church and intended to help people explore the real meaning of Easter.

If you would like to be involved in this exciting venture, please contact the Church office (01725 552608) by the end of December 2015, when the different stages of the story (from St Mark's Gospel this year) will be allocated.

Any medium can be used and the subject tackled in any way, taking into consideration the following;

- 1 The work needs to explore the subject of the reading and be suitable for public display in a church.
- 2 The work will be exhibited in St Rumbold's Church, Pentridge, so you need to be aware of the environment, space and lighting.
- 3 We intend that one artist will be invited to explore each stage of the story. The work will have the relevant passage from the Bible beside it, and can have a short explanation of what you are trying to do in your work, if appropriate.
- 4 You will be responsible for any insurance or transport costs.
- 5 The exhibition will be open throughout Lent and Easter and will not be permanently staffed.
- 6 Exhibits may be for sale, but St Rumbold's cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage.



## The Environment What's all the fuss?

At the Paris summit in December 2015, 196 countries will meet to sign a new climate change agreement. With the right political

leadership, it can lead to ambitious outcomes that will have a real impact on tackling climate change. Countries like the US and China are working to ensure an outcome is likely in 2015; and the years since the 2009 Copenhagen negotiations have seen some significant breakthroughs.

The 2009 negotiations were fraught and chaotic, with a last minute agreement emerging after frantic scenes on the conference floor. Yet international negotiations remain vital for countries to build on national approaches, providing reassurance that they are not acting alone, and making it easier for nations to work together towards a low carbon future.

This is why the 2015 Paris summit is important. A strong deal will make a significant difference to the ability of individual countries to tackle climate change. It will provide a clear signal to businesses to guide investment toward low carbon outcomes. It will reduce the competitiveness impacts of national policies, and create a simpler, more predictable framework for companies operating in different countries. Vitally, a strong climate deal will help to meet international development aims, which are at increasing risk from rising global temperatures. Eliminating poverty, improving health and building security are all outcomes linked to tackling climate change.

So Why is the Church Involved? We care because the world is God's creation, not ours. Because God calls us to love our neighbour as ourselves. This means that we are committed to safeguarding the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth. So we are committing ourselves to highlighting the Climate Change Paris talks to ensure action is taken.

Actions We Can Take. Within Salisbury Diocese we are aiming to bring the Paris talks to God in our prayers, and to bring them to the attention of our parishes and wider communities through practical action. What each individual church member or parish can do might seem small, but please pray. Together our actions can change society. The Bishop has commissioned special prayers that can be used in the run up and during the talks, along with Bible Studies. There is also a Green Ribbon Campaign - wear a ribbon to show your support for action on Climate Change. You might join a local pilgrimage on Advent Sunday (November 29th). Nationally there is a Pilgrimage Walk to Paris. There is also a Cycle Ride to Paris and national rallies across the country. For more information see the Tearfund website.

Finally, Hope for the Future ([www.hfff.org.uk](http://www.hfff.org.uk)), a national group allied with Christian Aid, CMS, Us, the Iona Community and Tearfund among others, can help you lobby your MP or to hold group lobby write-ins. For more details on these Diocesan and National Events please see the Salisbury Diocese Facebook page or visit [ecochurchsouthwest.org.uk](http://ecochurchsouthwest.org.uk).

Please pray for all Christians throughout the world who face persecution and suffering this Christmas. Give thanks for their steadfast witness and pray that they will know the Lord's comfort, and ask God to sustain them, protect them and provide for them. Pray also for Christians in the West who may endure contempt and hostility at the hands of secular authorities.

**Pray  
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### + 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

#### L Church Lunch

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

\* **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 Winter

SUNDAY SERVICES	St Mary's 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
Dec 6 <sup>th</sup>	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC	#
Dec 13 <sup>th</sup>	MP		Informal	Evensong	#	HC
Dec 20 <sup>th</sup>	HC	(10.30am)	Informal	Carols	MP	#
Dec 27 <sup>th</sup>	HC		#	#	HC	#
Jan 3 <sup>rd</sup>	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC	#
Jan 10 <sup>th</sup>	MP		Informal	Evensong	#	HC
Jan 17 <sup>th</sup>	HC		Informal	Evensong	MP	#
Jan 24 <sup>th</sup>	MP		Inf + HC	Evensong	#	HC
Jan 31 <sup>st</sup>	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC	#

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

## We've got Christmas – the real deal!

Sun 6th Dec 3.00pm Scouts Christmas Celebration, St Mary's  
Tue 8th Dec 2.30pm Mothers' Union Advent service, St Mary's  
Tue 15th Dec 1.30pm Pre-School Nativity, St Mary's



## Carols by Candlelight



Fri 18th Dec 6.00pm at Gussage St Andrew  
Sun 20th Dec 6.00pm at St Mary's, Sixpenny Handley  
Mon 21st Dec 6.00pm at St Rumbold's, Pentridge



## Christmas

Wed 24th Dec 4.00pm Christingle, St Mary's  
11.30pm Midnight Communion, St Mary's  
Thu 25th Dec 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 ◆	2	3 T +	4	5
6 L	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		

Sat 5th 7.00pm Band Concert at St Mary's

### January 2016

Updated weekly on our website

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