



The Seeker

handleychurch.org.uk



Dec 2018

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

Who's who?

Vicar

Revd Canon Richard Hancock
The Vicarage
Sixpenny Handley
01725 552 182

Curates

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

Churchwardens

St Mary's with
Gussage St Andrew

Chris Stokes	552 672
Sue Curtis	552 397

St Rumbold's, Pentridge

Mary Ferguson	552 222
Jane King	552 231



MAMMA MIA!

Movie Night!

Saturday 8th December 8pm in St Mary's Church Sixpenny Handley

This is going to be a FAB night! Come along, watch the film, dress up and sing the songs. Suggested £5 donation on the door with all proceeds to St Mary's Church. Prize for best Fancy Dress! Bar available, in support of 1st Woodcutts. A great way to kick off the Christmas Fun. Spread the word.



Boxing Day 6d Handley

Meet outside St Mary's Church at 11am

Come and join the fun on Boxing Day as we hunt the mythical Woozel in 6dH, to protect all our mince pies. The Woozel is a mysterious creature who likes nothing more than stealing people's Christmas mince pies.

An ancient treaty going back to 1630 (or about half past four) given by Lord Blakeney's ancestors, allows the Woozel to be hunted one day a year on the Feast of Stephen.

Hunting the Woozel is an eccentric affair. Once a Woozel nest is found, they are baited with fresh mince pies often placed in a festively decorated fishing net. Young children then lure the Woozel out by telling it Christmas Cracker jokes collected from the day before. However, there are those who want to ban the hunt and they can often be found at such events waving 'Save the Woozel' placards, shaking rattles and singing Good King Wenceslaus which frightens the Woozel back into its nest.



If you would like to join the hunt or be a hunt protester, meet outside St Mary's Church at 11am. Flamboyant hunting dress is encouraged. The hunt will last about an hour with a drink at the end. Prizes for the best joke, Woozel net and hunting attire. A great way to get the family some fresh air and walk off the Christmas food. **Lord Blakeney – Woozel Hunt Master**



**News items
and articles welcome!**

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

Thanks!



FROM THE REGISTERS



**The wedding took place of
David and Debbie Judd**



**Scratch
choir**

Calling all singers!

St Mary's church in Sixpenny has started a scratch choir for our Christmas Carol Services. We've had a great turn out so far with a variety of voices, male and female, which resulted in a rich, well balanced, joyful sound! We are a very friendly group who meet at the vicarage to sing carols with the occasional help of a little sloe gin too! We are hoping to sing carols at The Penny Tap too before Christmas. We usually practice on Thursdays at 6.30pm – 7.30pm. If you enjoy singing at any level do come along. It is hoped that after Christmas the Choir will continue to meet and prepare for special services in the village. Interested? Please do get in touch. **Kate Hancock**

DIARY OF A COUNTRY PARSON

I've been with you all now for just over two months and what an exciting two months it has been as my family and I have settled into Sixpenny Handley and the Benefice. So, I would like to share with you some of my highlights of the past few months to give you an insight into what a Country Parson actually gets up to.

Firstly, I should say that I am only technically ½ a Country Parson. This doesn't mean I have suffered some ghastly rural accident, rather that I have two jobs. The second half of my role is as a Rural Field Officer for the Diocese. In layman's terms it means I'm a consultant on the Bishop of Sherborne's team looking at how we can reinvigorate the rural church and make it more relevant for people today in our communities. As they say that's a whole other story which I'll leave for another time.

Kate, Alex, Ben and I, (oh plus two cats Duchess and Spats) arrived in Handley around 10:30pm on the 31st of August after a quick stop off for fish and chips on route. Our first night in the vicarage was in sleeping bags on the floor. However, thanks to Sue Curtis and her team we came into a lovely clean house all ready to accept our furniture. The aptly named 'Bishops Move' truck arrived the following morning and the next three weeks can be best described as unpacking and sorting out eighteen years of stuff we had accumulated from our last parish. I am now on first name terms with most of the charity shops in Blandford and regularly see items of ours on display in their windows. I have to confess I even bought a sugar shaker that had been ours and didn't realize this till I got it home and showed Kate!!! Over those three weeks we received a lovely welcome from people in the village which made us feel very much at home.

Kick off, so to speak, was Monday 24th September when I was licensed by Bishop Karen and installed by Archdeacon Antony into the new role. It was lovely to see so many people in church representing the communities of Handley, Pentridge and Gussage St Andrew, including a fabulous turn out from the Scouts who also saved the day with their sound system as ours had gone BANG the week before. Amongst the many welcomes received that evening two in particular stand out. Firstly, from little Livy Brewin who welcomed me on behalf of

Sixpenny First School and Simon Parker who welcomed me on behalf of the Penny TAP, which is fast becoming my second home. It was a great service so a big thank you to all of those who were involved.

One of my first duties was taking assembly at our lovely school and it's a real privilege to be able to go in once a week and share a Bible story with the children. How lucky we are to have a school in the village. I was also able to visit Little Pennies and tell the story of the lost sheep. Much fun was had with the children as we searched for my little toy lamb called Mint Sauce.

However, not all the duties of a Vicar are so joyful such as funerals. Funerals can be filled with mixed emotions, but on the occasions when it is a person who has lived a good long life, like Dorcas Adams aged 101, there can also be much to celebrate about the person's life and involvement with a community. This was also mirrored in the All Souls service, where we came together to remember those we love but see no longer, knowing they are surrounded by God's light and love. Now each day, one of the candles that was lit in memory of a loved one, is relit in the church and burns for 24hrs. It was also a privilege to take my first wedding of David Hall and Debbie Judd. There is truly nothing like a village wedding.

As well as getting to grips with taking services in the three churches some new initiatives have already been launched. St Mary's already has a great informal service twice a month which is led by a lay team in the form of Jackie, Naomi, Louise and Mark. Working with this team we have developed a new family service for the 4th Sunday of the month. Our first go was a great success and I particularly enjoyed processing around the church at the end with all the children, banging tambourines and other instruments. Ian Beckett, Max's dad, even sent me a video message from Max saying how great he thought the service had been. Our next one will be on Sunday 27th January 2019 at 10 am so come and join the fun.

In any rural parish marking the passing of the season and rural life is very much part of the function of the parish church. Harvest is one of those key festivals and all of our churches were beautifully decorated for the event. The Harvest service at St Rumbold's Pentridge sticks out for me, singing those

traditional harvest hymns surrounded by the beautiful Dorset countryside. Afterwards we ate cheese and drank cider in the churchyard. It could have been a scene from Thomas Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

Part of being a Country Parson is getting out into the community and meeting the locals. I've enjoyed the Wednesday Coffee mornings down at the Parish Rooms hearing some of the stories of the village. There's also the chatter in the village shop and the butchers while we queue. I have to add the quality of my full English has gone up 100-fold since we have arrived! There is of course the Penny TAP. What a great community facility, particularly now the pub has closed. It's fantastic to see so many families and young people getting together. Not long after my first visit I spied a sign-up sheet for a brewery trip. I needed no persuasion to sign up for this. In the end it turned out to be quite an adventure as the first vintage bus broke down on route to Rushmore Golf Club where breakfast was planned. However, our spirits were not dampened and Badger Meaden and Nigel Turton were on the case. After a few phone calls another bus was arranged and Mrs Vicarage came to the rescue picking up Nigel the bus driver and I, so we could collect another bus. In a sense we got an upgrade as an open top bus was laid on and we headed to Wimborne to visit the Eight Arch Brewery Co. I was taken aback to be presented with my own tankard by the TAP, which was well used on the day. I had to do eighteen years' service in my last parish to be presented with such an item. I felt I had definitely made the right move. I can't say much more about the trip. As the saying goes, 'what happens on tour stays on tour', but I was impressed with some of the Handley chaps and their interest in ladies' fashion, as well as their keenness to support the local charity shops.

Beer and Cider seems to be becoming a recurrent theme. It was great to be involved with the amazing village fireworks and I was put to work behind the bar pouring pints of fine ale and cider. This gave me insight into what a great active community we have. Ben and Kate, aka Mrs Vicarage, were in the burger tent. I think I had the nicer aroma about me by the end of the evening!

Finally, Sunday 11th November was our

Remembrance Day parade and service, marking the 100th Anniversary of the Armistice. As an Officiating Military Chaplain at the Defence Academy Shrivenham I have, over the past 18 years, seen some grand ceremonies with the great and the good. I have to say this service meant so much more to me. It was great to see so many young people involved, particularly from the Scouts. As I reflected in my address this is when we remember the sacrifice of the young for our futures. The last name on our war memorial is Donald Bennet RN. He was sixteen years old. He died on HMS Hurst Castle which was torpedoed on 1st September 1944. If he were alive today, he would probably be in an Explorer's Uniform having fun and playing games. Back then he was in a Naval uniform fighting and dying for his country. How fitting that so many of our young people were there to pay tribute to him and others. We should be mighty proud of our young folk today in the village and support them in all their endeavours.

So, you may ask where is God in all of this? Well, for me he is right there with us in everything, from the funerals, weddings and even on the brewery trip. This was shown to

us through his son Jesus who like us lived an earthly life. He was not locked away in a place but spent his time with everyday people at weddings, by the lake, on the streets and in people's homes. He died for our tomorrows showing us how much God loves us all. It's why I'm a Christian and a Vicar because I simply want to try and share that love as he did. In a few weeks' time we will celebrate that great feast of Christmas. In the carols we will hear the word 'Emmanuel' which means 'God with Us'. In my few weeks here in Handley I can safely say God is with us. He's been in many of the people I have met, some of them church goers, others not. God doesn't limit himself to those who go to church as we are all his children. I believe if we can open our lives and hearts to God, he has the power to transform us all for the better.

Thank you to all for making my family and I so welcome and I'm looking forward to sharing the pilgrim journey with you in the coming years.

Oh, and the beer!!!
Blessings, Canon
Richard Hancock



The Alpha Course

Starting Tuesday 12th February
7-9pm Sixpenny Handley

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith. Each session begins with a simple meal then we watch short film presentation which looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. Alpha is run all around the globe, and everyone's welcome. It runs in cafés, churches, universities, homes—you name it.

No two Alphas look the same, but generally they have three key things in common: food, a talk and good conversation. There is no charge to attend Alpha, though you might like to make a small donation towards the food.

If you would like to register an interest and come along to the first session, (there is no obligation to attend the others) then please contact the Vicar at canonrick@icloud.com

“WHAT'S THE MEANING OF LIFE?”
“DO I HAVE A PURPOSE?”
“IS THERE MORE TO LIFE THAN THIS?”
“IS THERE A GOD?”
“WHAT AM I DOING HERE?”

Alpha

FIND OUT ABOUT THE ALPHA COURSE



+ 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


* Special Event

Please refer to the main text for details of special events marked on the calendar.

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.

 **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	Gussage St Andrew	St Rumbold's Pentridge	St Mary's Sixpenny Handley	
	9.30am	11.15am	9.30am	6.00pm
Dec 2 nd	#	HC	HC	Evensong
Dec 9 th	HC	#	Informal	Evensong
Dec 16 th	#	MP	HC	Carols
Dec 23 rd	#	MP	Informal	HC
Dec 30 th	#	#	HC	#
Jan 6 th	#	Plough Sunday		Evensong
Jan 13 th	HC	#	Informal	Evensong
Jan 20 th	#	MP	HC	Evensong
Jan 27 th	MP	#	Family at 10am	HC

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

Christmas services

Fri 14th Dec 6.00pm Carols at Gussage St Andrew
 Sun 16th Dec 6.00pm Carols at St Mary's, Sixpenny Handley
 Mon 17th Dec 6.00pm Carols at St Rumbold's, Pentridge
 Sat 24th Dec 4.00pm Christingle, St Mary's
 11.30pm Midnight Communion, St Mary's
 Sun 25th Dec 9.30am Holy Communion, St Mary's
 11.15am Holy Communion, St Rumbold's

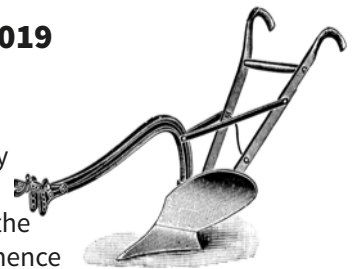


Plough Sunday Services – 6th January 2019

9:30 am St Mary's, Sixpenny Handley

11:15 am St Rumbold's Pentridge

The observance of Plough Sunday on the First Sunday of Epiphany goes back to Victorian times, but behind it there is a much older observance, associated with the first working day after the twelve days of Christmas, hence 'Plough Monday' in some places.



In medieval times some ploughs were kept in the parish church, and some churches kept a 'plough-light'. In days when work was scarce in winter, the observance looked forward to the time of sowing with the promise of a harvest to come.

To mark the beginning of the agricultural year there will be special services at St Mary's at 9:30am and St Rumbold's, where ploughs will be blessed and thanksgiving for all those who work on the land.

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