



# The Seeker

handleychurch.org.uk



Feb 2019

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



Sound of Music Night! — Saturday 2nd March 8pm, St Mary's

## SING-A-LONG-A SOUND OF MUSIC

*\*When you know the notes to sing, you can sing most anything!*

Come and climb every mountain with us, watch the film, dress up and sing the songs. Bring a Bottle, Glasses will be provided. Prize for best Fancy Dress! A great way to kick off the winter blues.



Suggested £5 donation on the door.

All proceeds to St Mary's Church. Spread the word.

## 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.

You can check out Alpha at: [www.alpha.org](http://www.alpha.org)

There will be an **Alpha Taster Session** in St Mary's Church Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February 7pm. Come and find out about Alpha. 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](mailto: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?"  
"IS THIS IT?"

Alpha

FIND OUT  
ABOUT THE  
ALPHA COURSE



**News items  
and articles welcome!**  
**Please drop them in to  
the Vicarage, or email;  
ask@handleychurch.org.uk**  
**Thanks!**



### Remember!

If you would like to give your child a good start in life, talk to the vicar about a christening.

If you are getting married, you can get married in your local church if you live in the parish or have some other link.

And if a loved one dies, please talk to us about how the church may be able to help.

Contact the vicar for more information. We are here for you.

### 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 near you, we need your help! Please think about giving regularly.

### In full colour

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



## DIARY OF A COUNTRY PARSON

### Join The Revolution!

Well here it is 2019! Christmas has been and gone and hopefully we are all still managing to keep our New Years resolutions. The most popular resolution is to lose weight and I too have signed up to this one. Over the past year I have put on just over a stone and am finding my waistcoats are a bit tight. Now as a Sixpenny man its important my waistcoats fit, and I should be able to get two on at the same time. So, before my 50th Birthday in May it's time to shed a few pounds.

However, I also like to come up with something of a different resolution each year and this year I have decided to take no "Selfies" for a year. This caused a laugh from Mrs Vicarage in church when I made this announcement, as she knows that vanity, particularly on social media is one of my foibles. This doesn't mean I'm going to be denying my Facebook followers the chance to gaze at my handsomeness, [Oh modesty is another problem my wife reminds me of] rather I'm going to take Usies this year.

The problem with the selfie is in the name it's just about me. I see people wondering round places all the time taking photos of themselves locked into their own little digital world often not aware of the real people around them. Life at its best is not about me but about us. If we focus on the me rather than the we, we have known community. It is through living together in community that we get the best out of life. It means we can laugh and celebrate together as well as support one another when the going gets tough.

The idea of Usies is that it means we have to interact with someone ask their name and if their happy to be in a photo with us. Even better is too involved a third person and ask them to take the photograph, more interactions. This is how we can get to know people and make new friendships. A selfie stick might be a great gadget, but it can't laugh with you, share a conversation or give you a hug when you need one. God created us to live in community with one another. The whole miracle of the Christmas story is that he decided to come and live with us in that community to be part of the interdependence we have for one another. Jesus demonstrates this in his ministry by being with people, all people, no matter who they were and then gave us the commandment of community "Love one another as I have loved you". So why not join the Usie revolution!

### The 1st Handley Woozel Hunt

Just before Christmas there was an article in the Church Times about eccentric clergy in the past and how today clergy seem to take themselves far too seriously. I'm doing my best to break this mould and I'm glad that Handley has previous experience of eccentric clergy in the form of Rev Ron Wood, Vicar and cartoonist.

Woozel hunting is a serious thing, keeping the Woozel population under control is important if all our mince pies are not going to be stolen. When I arrived in the village I soon spotted signs of Woozel nests everywhere and as the Christmas season approached stories of missing mince pies abounded.

Thankfully Woozel hunting rights were endowed to one of my ancestors Lord Blakeney by Good King Wenceslas so I decided to exercise those rights and organize a boxing day hunt. Around thirty people turned up for the hunt including lots of children and some hunt protestors. Once a Woozel nest is found they are bated 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 be found waving 'Save the Woozel' placards, shaking rattles and singing Good King Wenceslas which frightens the Woozel back into its' nest.

An hours hunting ensued with several Woozel nest found and finally a Woozel was sighted by the Vicarage fence but he got away. Mulled wine and mince pies where had in the church and prizes for jokes, Woozel nets and hunting attire distributed. The Hunt will resume next Boxing Day.



Photograph by Andrew Chorley





### We plough the fields...

It was a real pleasure and a lot of fun to lead the Plough Sunday services in our churches this year. Plough Sunday marks the beginning of the agricultural year and traditionally the ploughs and farmers are blessed. This year our farmers from Handley and Pentridge did us proud bringing their ploughs to be blessed. In times past this was very much a tradition of the church and local community. Other key times were Rogation in May, when the community would beat the boundaries of the Parish. Lamas at the beginning of August was when the first

wheat was cut, ground and a loaf baked and brought into church to bless the beginning of the harvest. Then finally Harvest Festival. It's really important we keep these traditions alive and for the church to demonstrate that it stands alongside its farming community, as well as giving thanks to our creator for all the benefits we receive from his hands. Jesus often used farming metaphors when he taught and was himself described as the Good Shepherd who was prepared to lay down his life for the sheep. This we will mark at our Easter celebrations. I look forward to celebrating the other rural festivals with our farmers and community this coming year. In the meantime, please, pray for all our farmers and their families.



### End of an era at Shaftesbury

This afternoon, (being the 10th of January when I wrote this) I went to the last ever Dorset cattle market at Shaftesbury. After 60 years of operation it closed its gates for the last time at the end of the sale. The site is being sold by North Dorset Council to the supermarket chain Lidl.

The place was heaving with farmers from all over the region coming to mark this sad but historic day. The sight of a dog collar, (two in fact, as I was joined by the Rev Richard Kirlaw the Rural Officer for Salisbury Diocese) was welcomed. The market filled with rugged Dorset faces, many of whom had farmed the land in this area for several generations. I spoke to one farmer who recalled coming to this market

for the first time with his father some 50 years ago.

One of the joys of rural living and ministry is that we are surrounded by the land and its beauty. We see the seasons come and go and from the Vicarage up on the hill, I see creation paint a new picture each morning reminding me of the greatness of God our creator. However, as a rural community we must never forget that the land is a place of work and production not just a changing picture postcard. Farming is hard work and despite all the modern technology the season can still play havoc for our farmers. If the fields are too wet to plough or sow, extremely dry summers which affect the production of silage, which if

followed by a long hard winter will mean a shortage of feed for the cattle. To add to this farmers are subject to the whims of a worldwide market where prices and farming futures can be changed in the blink of an eye. However we will still expect to walk into the new Lidl in Shaftesbury and only pay £1 for a litre of milk, or pence for our fruit and vegetables.

I firmly believe one of the roles of the rural church and community is to support our local farmers. Many of us are familiar with Fairtrade for our tea, coffee or bananas, but do we apply the same principles to our own home grown produce? Should not our farmers get a fair price for what they produce? Supporting our farmers ensures they are fully a part of our communities.



### + 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

#### A The Alpha Course

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith with a meal. No charge. Do as few or many sessions as you wish. Details from the Vicar; canonrick@icloud.com

#### \* 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.

♣ 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	10.00am	6.00pm
Feb	3 <sup>rd</sup>	#	HC	HC	#	Evensong
Feb	10 <sup>th</sup>	HC	#	Informal	#	Evensong
Feb	17 <sup>th</sup>	#	Matins (MP)	HC	#	Evensong
Feb	24 <sup>th</sup>	HC	#	#	Family	Evensong
Mar	3 <sup>rd</sup>	#	HC	HC	#	Evensong
Mar	10 <sup>th</sup>	HC	#	Informal	#	Evensong
Mar	17 <sup>th</sup>	#	Matins (MP)	HC	#	Evensong
Mar	24 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am St Mary's HC – Joint service with Chase Benefice				
Mar	31 <sup>st</sup>	HC	#	#	Family	Evensong

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

**Ash Wednesday March 6<sup>th</sup>**  
 Holy Communion and Ashing  
 7.00pm, St Mary's

**Make a Mothers' Day – March 31<sup>st</sup>**  
 Join us for a very special Family Service on Mothering Sunday, 26th March at 10.00am at St Mary's. We can all show mothering love, and this is something to celebrate together as well as in our families.

### St Mary's Teddy Bears

All pre-school children and their carers are invited for a drink and a biscuit, a good natter and a play in the church. There is no charge and you don't need to come to church at other times – we just love seeing you! Come along for as long as you can between 10.30 and noon and make your Thursdays brighter.



February							See side panel for key to symbols	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat		
					1 *	2		
3	4	5	6 HC	7 T	8	9		
10	11	12 A	13	14 T ♣	15	16		
17	18	19 A	20	21	22	23		
24	25	26 A	27	28 T				

Fri 1st 7.00pm Alpha Taster Session, St Mary's, Handley

March							See website for updates	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat		
					1	2 *		
3	4	5 A	6 HC	7 T	8	9		
10	11	12 A	13	14 T ♣	15	16		
17	18	19 A	20	21 T	22	23		
24	25	26 A	27	28 T	29	30		
31								

Sat 2nd 8.00pm Sound of Music night, St Mary's, Handley