



The Seeker

handleychurch.org.uk



#6 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



Carol Services by candlelight — 6pm

Friday 13th December — Gussage St Andrew
with 6dH Benefice Choir

Monday 16th December — St Rumbold's Pentridge
with the Penwood Silver ensemble.

Sunday 22nd December — St Mary's Handley
with the 6dH Benefice Choir.

Don't miss...

Plough Sunday
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Woozel Hunt
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4pm Christmas Eve





**News items
and articles welcome!**

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

Thanks!



Now you can!



Look out for the new crisp packet
recycling point in St Mary's

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.

In full colour

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



Bishop Nicholas is leading the call for all parts of the Church of England to step up action on the climate and wildlife crises.



In guidance sent to bishops, dioceses and church
leadership teams, the Church's Environmental
Working Group, chaired by Bishop Nicholas, outlined
what is needed to tackle the problem, from heating
buildings to protecting wildlife in churchyards. And in the future, local churches
would need to be ready to provide sanctuary in extreme weather events and
support climate refugees from within and outside of the UK as the impacts of
global warming accelerate, the guidance said.

The Environmental Working Group advised that a programme of action was
needed to change heating from oil and gas and focus more on the comfort of
church users rather than always aiming to heat the whole space.

The programme would also need to focus on installing energy efficient lighting,
switching to renewable energy, cutting heat loss, and for church properties, where
appropriate, to generate their own electricity from renewables.

A key first step will be to measure the carbon footprint across all parts of the
Church where it is not done already, including churches, housing, schools,
farming, forestry, investment portfolios, and offices.

The working group then went on to warn that the Church of England must protect
and enhance nature across its land and buildings, including churchyards and
investment assets.

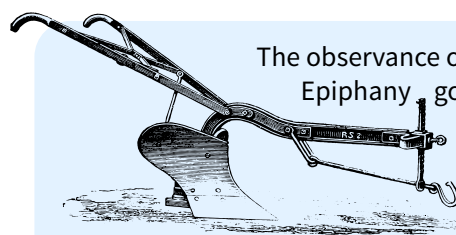
Action has already been taken to divest the Church's investments from the most
polluting fossil fuels, and commitments have been made to start to divest in 2020
from companies that are not helping the shift to a low carbon economy.

Bishop Nicholas, who is lead Bishop on the Environment, said:

"As Christians and as a Church we hope to be good stewards of God's creation and
to care for the environment. We commit to respond to the serious circumstances
we face.

"It will need the commitment of everyone in the Church to engage strongly with
our communities and establish creative policy frameworks that get the best out of
people, not just because of anxiety but for the love of this wonderful creation."

The Environmental Working Group is planning to bring a motion to the General
Synod in 2020 proposing revised carbon targets for the Church that would see it
aim for net zero emissions by 2050 – and to move faster where this is possible.



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, Handley and St Rumbold's, Pentridge, where ploughs will be
blessed and thanksgiving for all those who work on the land.

Plough Sunday Services 5th January 2020

10:00am — Family Service at St Mary's, Sixpenny Handley

11:15am — Holy Communion St Rumbold's Pentridge

DIARY OF A COUNTRY PARSON – DECEMBER



A Christian Perspective on the General Election

I can hardly believe that we are at the end of another year, but political uncertainty and stability continues. 2019 has probably been the most turbulent political time in this nation for several decades and sadly we are more divided as a people than ever.

Many people believe religion and politics should be separate bed fellows, but the bible shows us time and time again that this isn't possible. God called Moses to set his people free from the tyranny and slavery of the Egyptians. The Old Testament prophets constantly railed against the leaders of their time for ignoring the widow, poor and outcast. Amos 8.4-6 Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor of the land, saying, "When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat?"—skimping on the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales, buying the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, selling even the sweepings with the wheat.

Jesus in the Gospels continually condemns the leaders of his day for their own self-interest and greed while the poor go hungry. It's just not possible to read the bible without including the political message at its' core, that God has a care for the poor,

needed, stranger and oppressed and that as Christians we should too.

How then should this influence us as Christians? Firstly I strongly believe as Christians we have a duty to engage in the political process and not just ignore it, or vote for the same party year on year without any real thought. Our democratic rights in the nation were hard won, from the suffragette movement to those who gave their lives for our freedom in two world wars.

Secondly as Christians we should in theory all be "floating voters" not simply nailing our colours to a mast of tradition, class or ideology. All UK mainstream political parties have both good and bad in their policies. What we need to do is look at the facts and see how these policies will not only affect us but our communities and the nation as a whole. We should also think of the effects on future generations and not just the here and now. My one criticism of ALL political parties is they are all too urban/city centric and do not understand the many challenges rural communities face. Many new candidates are now selected for seats where they have never lived and though this may change as they begin to serve their constituencies their knowledge of local issues can be

greatly lacking. We should however not fall into the trap of the cult of personality, making our political decision solely based on whether we like the look or sound of a person or if they come from our background, this is disingenuous. Political parties are more than their leaders and at the end of the day they are just as human as us. Politics has shown us in recent months that party leaders of all colours regularly don't get their own way and have to work with others.

Thirdly we have a duty as the prophets and Jesus before to hold our [prospective] leaders to account especially in speaking up for the poor and marginalized. For example I believe that as one of the richest countries in the world the rise in the use of foodbanks in this land is shameful and that between 2017-18 there were 4.1 million children living in poverty which is estimated to rise to 5.2 million by 2022. What would Jesus have to say about this issue? It's worth reflecting on when canvases appear at the door and before we put an X on the ballot paper.

Finally as Christians we are called to love one another as he has loved us and more to love our enemies. In what has become a bitterly divided nation this love, and unity is needed more than ever before. So no matter what our political allegiance is on the 12th December we all need to work together for the greater good of our communities and look out for those who for whatever reason are struggling on life's pilgrimage. So I would encourage us all to remember that firstly we are citizens of Our Father's Kingdom and with this goes responsibilities to care for others and that we should pray and seek God's guidance as we come to vote. Then when it's all over no matter who's got in we should work together to better our communities.

Blessings

Canon Richard Hancock. TSSF



+ 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

MEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB

2nd Saturday of the month at St Mary's at 8.00 followed by breakfast at Hanlega's. Signup form at back of church or email; canonrick@icloud.com

MAGNIFICAFÉ

A weekly morning café in St Mary's Church on Thursday mornings from 9am–12pm. Perfect for those who have just dropped off children at school and fancy a coffee, natter as well as cake, toast and even scrambled eggs. Open to all.

TEDDY BEARS

Teddy Bears will be part of Magnificafé so there will be things for those with toddlers to engage with and we plan to run a Café version of Alpha so people can discover more about the Christian faith today.

SUNDAY SERVICES	Gussage St Andrew 9.00am	St Mary's Handley 10.00am ☕	St Rumbold's Pentridge 11.15am	St Mary's Handley 6.00pm
Dec 1 st	#	Family Service	HC	HC
Dec 8 th	HC	HC	#	Evensong
Dec 15 th	#	☪ Informal	MP	HC
Dec 22 th	HC	#	#	Carols
Dec 29 th	#	HC	#	#
Jan 5 th	#	Family Service	HC	HC
Jan 12 th	HC	HC	#	Evensong
Jan 19 th	#	☪ Informal	Matins MP	HC
Jan 26 th	HC	HC	#	Evensong

HC Holy Communion **MP** Morning Prayer **#** No service ☪ Breakfast 9.15



Boxing Day 6dH

Join us outside St Mary's Church at 10:30am

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.

After last year's inaugural hunt when a live Woozel was seen, why not 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 which 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 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 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 10:30am. Flamboyant hunting dress is encouraged. The hunt will last about an hour and finish back at St Mary's for mulled wine and mince pies (as long as the Woozels haven't eaten them!!!). **Lord Blakeney, Hunt Master**

Services at St Mary's now start at 10am

1st Sunday – Family Service

2nd and 4th Sundays – Holy Communion

3rd Sunday – Informal Service

Church... Now with added Breakfast!

Join us early for our Informal Services from about **9.15am** and enjoy breakfast with company!

