



The Seeker

handleychurch.org.uk



June 2016

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

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The Bishop of Salisbury writes

I hope churches will find ways of praying and talking about the Referendum to help people engage and make prayerful, thoughtful, decisions. It is one of the most important political decisions of our lifetime. There are Christians on both sides. Here are a few of the things Christians might want to make sure are considered.

Christianity in Europe: Christianity has vitally influenced European self-understanding, politics and culture. In some ways, Europe is a Christian construct. Our society now is more secular and pluralist. Although there is a risk of growing hostility and enmity, European society is enlightened and tolerant. How do Christian faith and values strengthen our identity and help us to get the best from our diversity?

Love your neighbour as yourself: We live in an inter-connected world. Unless we are good neighbours, our lives on this fragile earth are threatened. I find myself praying about what it means to be English, British, European and Global. Stay or Leave, what is the vision of how we belong together?

Blessed are the Peacemakers: The European Union was created following two World Wars. It has made a huge contribution to peace and prosperity. Given the challenges we face, with instability in the Middle East and the biggest refugee movements for decades, how can we best be peacemakers?

Care for God's creation: There is a consensus about the scale of the environmental challenge facing us. We cannot continue defining success by consumption. We need to move quickly to a sustainable and renewable use of resources. Nature knows no national boundaries, so we must work together. What political institutions will best support caring for God's creation? Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Let's do it.

1,109,309

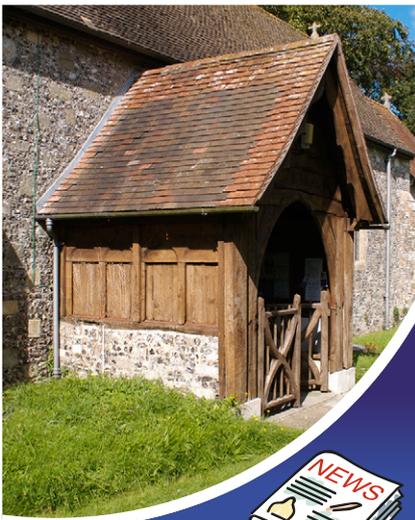
That's the amount of three-day emergency food supplies the Trussell Trust network of 424 foodbanks gave out to people during 2015/16, with 415,866 of those having gone to children. It's a 2% increase on the figures released this time last year, when we first crossed the one million mark. One million three-day food supplies given out by our foodbanks every year is one million too many. This must not become the new normal. As a society, we need to listen to the experiences of people facing hunger and poverty, and work together to find solutions to this problem.

Kane and his wife Chelsea were both working professionals, but when his mental health deteriorated and there were complications with her pregnancy, they were both temporarily unable to work. Kane said: "We never expected to need a foodbank, but our lives completely changed in two months. Just five minutes to breathe can really make all the difference, that's why foodbanks are such a lifeline."

Benefit delays and changes remain the biggest cause of foodbank use, which is reinforced by new research from the University of Hull that gives a fresh insight into UK hunger by mapping foodbank data against census data. While The Trussell Trust foodbank figures prove that the numbers of people hitting a crisis where they cannot afford to buy food are still far too high, we want to thank you for your support in helping us respond to their crisis.

Best wishes The Trussell Trust team

*There is a Trussell Trust collection
box in St Mary's church*



News items and articles welcome!

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

Thanks!

FROM THE REGISTERS



The baptism took place of Angus McIntosh

The wedding took place of Nicholas and Alison Podevyn

The funeral took place of June Elizabeth Jory

No Chancel Tax here!

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.

In full colour

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



Prayer

It does what it says on the tin in the book

Prayer Time Together

Do you have a Quiet Time? St Mary's and St Rumbold's are open every day for prayer, and of course we can pray anywhere. However, you may like to have a private little prayer at home, knowing that others are praying at the same time. If so, perhaps you can set aside a few minutes on Monday evenings at 9 o'clock. Use the prayers included here as well as your own, or just be quiet in the presence of God, knowing that you are sharing the time with others in our area.

A Prayer for Justice

Strengthen us, O God, to relieve the oppressed, to hear the groans of poor prisoners, to reform the abuses of all professions; that many be made not poor to make a few rich; for Jesus Christ's sake.

Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658)

A Prayer for God's Help

I am only a spark.
Make me a flame.
I am only a string.
Make me a lyre.
I am only a drop.
Make me a fountain.
I am only an ant-hill.
Make me a mountain.
I am only a feather.
Make me a wing.
I am only a rag.
Make me a king!

Source unknown (Mexico)



A Prayer for Daily Work

O Lord, I do not pray for tasks equal to my strength: I ask for strength equal to my tasks. *Phillips Brooks (1835-93)*

Jeremiah 29:11

'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'

A Place of Comfort in Court

An extract from Bishop Karen's sermon in Sherborne Abbey

Our churches are in fact powerhouses, be they old or new, large or small. If we truly believe that God in Christ can make all things new, what goes on in our churches must be the charging up of each one of us to go out and be the people God wants us to be. The potential is enormous and we underestimate the power of God's Word, the power of the sacraments, Jesus in bread and wine, and the power of human encounter with God's Spirit if we think otherwise.



So today I want to encourage us to see each Christian community, be it a church, a chapel, a house group, a chaplaincy, a school, college or Christian union, anywhere Christians come together for worship and prayer, confidently declaring their faith, as vital powerhouses for the work of God in the world. Places to which we belong, priests and people together, expectantly knowing that there we will be resourced, equipped and given courage to go and partake in God's mission.

One of my tasks, I see, is to encourage the local church or Christian community, to be what God has called it to be, an effective and confident body, for the celebration of God in our midst and the equipping of the saints. Powerhouses where change is not feared, but expected because of Christ's renewing power.

These powerhouses are already making a significant difference to our communities, as transformation takes place by our activities, our community involvement, by our bringing about change together.

FIRST STEPS

Adapted from John Eddison in 'Heart Castle'
with thanks to Tim Reynolds

When I went to school, one of the first books to which I was introduced was called 'First Steps in Latin'. It was not a popular book, and never became one of my favourites, but I think the title was a good one, because whatever we do in life – cooking, carpentry, cricket – has certain 'first steps', and if we can master these, then much else will follow easily and naturally. So what are the 'First Steps in Christian Living'?

The first is this, that we **believe** in Christ, One of the earliest names given to Christians was 'believers', and that is how they are still described in some countries such as Russia. But when the Bible talks about 'believing' in Christ, it doesn't just mean giving our mental consent to the fact that he was what he claimed to be, the Son of God. It means committing ourselves to him as our Saviour and Lord.

Imagine two people waiting for a bus. They are both quite sure that it will come. They have often seen it do so in the past. The timetable tells them that they are right to expect it, and if they are still in any doubt, there are lots of other people waiting for it as well. Sure enough, a few minutes later the bus arrives. The first man gets on it, but the second shakes him by the hand, waves goodbye and walks away. Both those men believe it would come, but only one of them is committed to it.

And it is that sort of faith, or belief, that God wants us to exercise – putting our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and inviting him to come into the house of our lives. There must be what we might call 'head-belief', of course. We can't begin without that. But more important still is 'heart-belief', when we commit ourselves to Jesus Christ and receive him as our Saviour and Friend.

The second step is this: that we **belong** to Jesus Christ. The letters 'i-a-n' at the end of a word often suggest this idea of belonging. A 'Canadian' is someone who belongs to Canada, probably lives there, and gives that country their loyalty and support. A Christian is someone who belongs to Jesus Christ, who has joined his side and is determined to fight under his banner against all that is bad and unworthy.

We often read of a footballer being transferred at a huge fee from one club to another. He is now under new management, and his new captain has the right to expect his complete loyalty and support. The Christian is rather like that. On the cross, Jesus paid our 'transfer fee' and as the Bible says, brought us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. We might take those three letters, 'i-a-n', and make them stand for '*I am now*.' '*I am now*' on the side of Jesus, and must fight his battles and try to please him in everything I do. '*I am now*' one of his followers, and must not be ashamed to let others see that I belong to him.

King Edward VII had a favourite dog called Caesar. It was so devoted to its master that it followed his coffin in his funeral procession. Engraved on its collar were the words, '*I belong to the King*', and those same words are stamped on the heart of every true Christian.

And so we come to the third step, and this remind us that as a Christian we **behave** like Jesus Christ. Christianity is not much good unless it makes us better people, and Jesus wants to see in his followers a reflection of himself – his kindness, patience, humility, cheerfulness, and so on.

Someone asked an old Indian gold-refiner how he knew when the gold was completely refined. 'When I can see my face in it', was his reply. And God wants to go on working at us until he can see in us the image and likeness of his Son. It will be a long process and sometimes a difficult one, but that is his purpose for us all. The Christian is someone who has been transferred that he may be transformed.

The artist Gustave Dore once arrived at the Italian border, but without his passport. In vain he protested that he was the famous French painter Gustave Dore, but the guards would not let him pass. In the end they allowed him paper and pencil, and with a few deft strokes he drew a perfect likeness of the king of Italy, and that convinced them that he really was who he claimed to be. There is an old legend (and of course, it is nothing more than that) that St Peter stands at the gate of heaven with a portrait of Jesus in his hands, and when any newcomer arrives, Peter compares him with the portrait, and if there is, so to speak, a family likeness, then he is allowed to enter.

I don't think it will happen quite like that, but it does remind us how important it is to grow more like Jesus every day, for after all, it is very difficult to convince other people that we are true Christians unless they can see we behave like our Master.

It is an old story, but there was once a small boy who was busy with a huge sheet of paper and some crayons. 'What are you drawing?' his mother asked, hoping he might be another Dore or Picasso. 'I'm drawing a picture of God,' came the solemn reply. 'Oh, but you can't do that,' she said, 'because nobody knows what God looks like.'

'I know they don't,' he said, 'but they will when I've finished.'

Garden Party

The Queen's Birthday

Make a date for Sunday 12th June as we celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday with a Garden Party on the vicarage lawn.

Come along between 3.00 and 5.30pm and enjoy tea, sandwiches and cakes as we have a good time and raise funds for the Little Pennies Preschool and St Mary's Church. And you may like to come in your Sunday best (as retro as possible!) to add to the atmosphere.

Royal Songs of Praise

The Garden Party will be followed by a Royal Songs of Praise in St Mary's at 6 o'clock. Join us to celebrate!





+ 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 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).

Join us this Summer

SUNDAY SERVICES	St Mary’s Sixpenny Handley			St Rumbold’s Pentridge	Gussage St Andrew	
	9.30am ☪	11.00am	6.00pm	11.15am	9.30am	
June 5 th	HC	Informal	Evensong	HC	#	
June 12 th	MP	Informal	S of P	#	HC	
June 19 th	HC	10.30am	Fathers’	Evensong	MP	#
June 26 th	MP		#	Evensong	#	HC
July 3 rd	HC	Informal	Evensong	HC	#	
July 10 th	MP	Informal	Evensong	#	HC	
July 17 th	HC	Informal	Evensong	MP	#	
July 24 th	MP	Informal	Evensong	#	HC	
July 31 st	HC	#	Evensong	MP	#	

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

Our Informal service is geared more towards families and includes activities for children.

Fathers’ Day: 11am June 21st at St Mary’s
Come along and celebrate Fathers’ Day, beginning at 11am. It is a bit like Mothers’ Day, but different! Come along if you are a father or not - after all, we can all show fathering love as well as mothering love. Come early for a cup of coffee and a biscuit!

Summer Holidays
The summer holidays are not far away, and things settle down a bit in church at the end of July. Over the school holidays the Teddy Bears have a break (perhaps they have a picnic), and the 11 o’clock Service at Sixpenny Handley combines with the 9.30 service. It returns to 11 o’clock at the beginning of September. Evensong, and services at St Andrew’s and Pentridge continue as normal.

June See side panel for key to symbols

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

July Updated Weekly on our website

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

▼ **Saturday afternoons – just drop in to St Mary’s**
Don’t forget if you are passing – or would like to have a chat with someone trained to listen – pop in for a cup of tea from 2.30pm (weddings permitting) This is in addition to the drop-in in the Post Office café on the first Wednesday of the month and the Walnut Tree on the last Wednesday of the month, when Mel or Paul will be available to talk about anything at all, which continues throughout the year.