

The Seeker

February

2012

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

Who's who?

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You might have heard that the time of faith is past; you might have been told that God is an idea whose time has been and gone. You might have wondered if Richard Dawkins and his chums are right. But then something happens – it might be candlelight in someone's eyes, or a piece of music or sunset, something that simple, or it might be an angel appearing in your dream and you just know that there is more.

You know there is *more* and, perhaps just for a moment, you are lifted into a world where all the joy you have ever known is gathered together into one almighty *now*. This is what, in the trade, we call *worship*. And it comes from God.

You may have heard some churches did not sing 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' this Christmas, because Bethlehem these days is not still and not silent. And *the hopes and fears of all the years* are rather quashed at the moment. Indeed, during the ethnic cleansing of recent years, many Palestinians have fled their homes and villages to become refugees in camps in and around Bethlehem. There is no sign that things are getting any better – They need our prayers. They need *love* and *peace*. They need a change of *heart*.

And Israel/Palestine is not the only area facing conflict. The 'Arab Spring' we have heard so much

about, looks, in places, in danger of turning into an 'Arab Winter'. And there have been earthquakes and floods around the world, and the terrible famine in East Africa...

Here at home we are, perhaps, more fragile than for many years. Europe and the Euro are struggling. And we see the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. We all need some Good News.

There is Good News – lots. The Trussell Trust, started in Salisbury, is going national. And there are many other charities and people and churches reaching out, seeking to change the world for the better. So perhaps now is the best time for a generation to stand up and be counted.

The protestors outside our cathedrals may have been rather vague in what they stood for, but there is a real feeling around that things *are not right*. Things need to change.

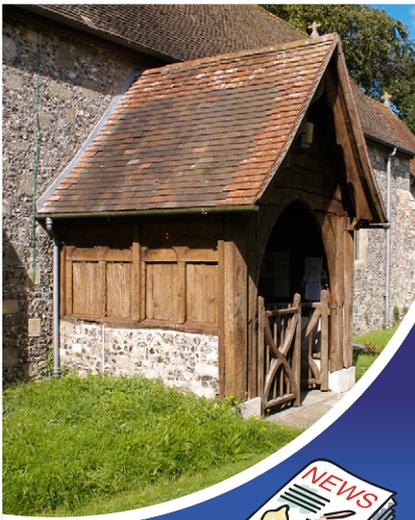
Yes, St Paul's Cathedral famously messed up in their reaction to the protestors. They managed to change a debate over the future of capitalism into a story about themselves. But others, including our own new bishop, have stood up, risked ridicule, and said that something needs to be done.

As we look from Christmas to Easter, we all need to go to Bethlehem and from there to Jerusalem. It is the longest journey we will ever make. And it is also the shortest journey we will ever make. Its beginning can be found in that stable, a way in a manger. And the end and beyond is found on a cross on a hillside: The Infinite in the finite. It is the only story that makes sense of the world.

And it starts in that stable and ends on a hillside. And everyone can go.

Your friend and vicar, Mel

www.handleychurch.org.uk



News items and articles welcome!

Please drop them in to the Vicarage, or email;

rev.mel@handleychurch.org.uk

Thanks!

Churchyard Update

The extension to St Mary's churchyard is being consecrated by Bishop Graham on Saturday March 24th at 12 o'clock. We shall then be able to move the soil by the back gate and tidy up both areas. Our thanks go to everybody who has worked very hard on this project.

We are also hoping to renew the surface on the footpath in the churchyard. If you would like to contribute towards this please contact the vicarage.



Need a lift to Church?

Please ring Paul Skinner on 01725 552785 and we should be able to arrange transport.

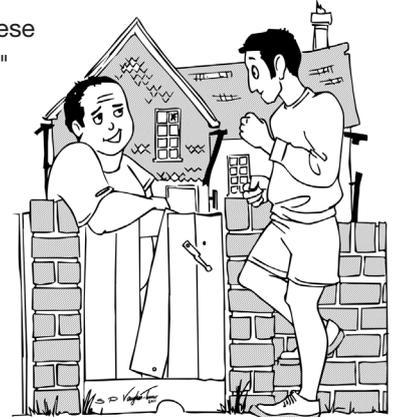
Download from our website archive!



- The Seeker — in full colour!
- Minutes of PCC meetings
- Church forms and reports

A Lenten Diet

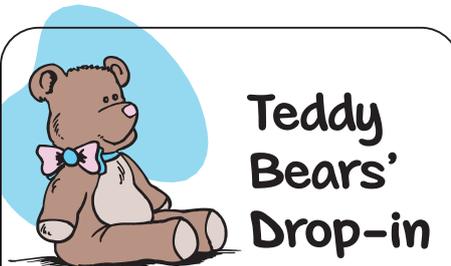
'Twas the month after Christmas, and all through the house,
 Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.
 The mince pies I'd nibbled, the chocolate I'd taste
 and the holiday parties had gone to my waist.
 When I got on the scales there arose such a number!
 When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber),
 I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepare;
 The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rare,
 The wine and the rum balls, the bread and the cheese
 And the way I'd never said, "No thank you, please."
 As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt
 And prepared once again to do battle with dirt...
 I said to myself, as I only can,
 "You can't spend a winter, disguised as a man!"
 So, away with the last of the brandy cream dip.
 Get rid of the fruitcake, each cracker and chip.
 Every last bit of food that I like must be banished
 Till all the additional ounces have vanished.
 I won't have a biscuit, not even a lick.
 I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.
 I won't have hot chocolate, or malt bread, or pie.
 I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.
 I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore...
 But isn't that what Lent is for?
 Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.
 A happy new you, and to all a good diet.



I could do this Lent thing easily; the wife says 'give up' is my middle name!



Yes, I have given up chocolate for Lent- all this is for afterwards!



Teddy Bears' Drop-in

Look out for our Teddy Bears' Drop-in at St Mary's, beginning after Easter.

Come along with pre-school children on Thursday morning from 10.30am for fun, company and a chat. We will follow school terms – look out for more details later.

Lent and Easter

After pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, Lent begins on Wednesday 22nd February with our service of Holy Communion and Ashing at 7.30 in the evening. At this service we spend time in quiet reflection, and as a sign of new beginning we are marked with an ash cross made from last year's palm crosses. It is a beautiful time together – please come along. Look out for special groups and events during Lent as we move from the Good News of Christmas to the drama and resolution of Easter.

Palm Sunday is April 1st and at St Mary's we share an Informal Service as we remember the excitement of the entry into Jerusalem and the beginning of Holy Week. On Maundy Thursday the mood darkens as we remember the Last Supper at St Andrew's, and the Crucifixion at St Mary's on Good Friday, before we rise to the excitement of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday with another St Mary's combined service, this time of a more formal nature. There are the usual traditional services at Pentridge during this time, as well as the Pentridge 'Hour at the Cross' beginning at 2pm on Good Friday. Easter completes the story begun at Christmas, so please come along and share it with us.

With Jesus, we can know who we are – this can ring a bell;

CHRIST'S BELL

I

I know who I am

I am God's child. (John 1:12)

I am God's friend. (John 15:15)

I am united with the Lord. (1 Cor 6:17)

I am bought with a price. (1 Cor 6:19-20)

I am a personal witness of Christ. (Acts 1:8)

I am a saint (I am set apart for God). (Eph 1:1)

I am the salt and light of the earth. (Matt 5:13-14)

I am free forever from condemnation. (Rom 8:1-2)

I am a member of the body of Christ. (1 Cor 12:27)

I am a citizen of heaven. I am significant. (Phil 3:20)

I have access to God through the Holy Spirit. (Eph 2:18)

I am a minister of reconciliation for God. (2 Cor 5:17-21)

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. (Eph 2:6)

I cannot be separated from the love of God. (Rom 8:35-39)

I am established, anointed, sealed by God. (2 Cor 1:21-22)

I am assured all things work together for good. (Rom 8:28)

I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit. (John 15:16)

I may approach God with freedom and confidence. (Eph 3:12)

I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life. (John 15:1-5)

I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. (Phil 4:13)

I am God's temple. (1 Cor 3:16). I am complete in Christ. (Col 2:10)

I am hidden with Christ in God. (Col 3:3). I have been justified. (Rom 5:1)

I am God's co-worker (1 Cor 3:9, 2 Cor 6:1). I am God's workmanship. (Eph 2:10)

I am confident that the good works God has begun in me will be perfected. (Phil 1:5)

I am redeemed and forgiven (1 Cor 1:14). I have been adopted as God's child. (Eph 1:5)

I belong to God

So if we know who we are – what do we actually do?

SEVEN WORDS FROM GOD

1. Wake up! — Wake up and decide to have a good day.

"This is the day that the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it!" Psalm 118:24

2. Dress up! — The best way to dress up is to put on a smile.

A smile is the most inexpensive way to improve your looks!

"The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7

3. Shut up! — If you can't say something good, don't say anything at all!

Remember that God gave us two ears but only one mouth, so perhaps he means us to listen twice as much as talk!

"He who guards his lips guards his soul." Proverbs 13:3

4. Stand up! — Stand up for what you believe. Stand for something – or you might fall for anything.

"Let us not be weary in doing good; for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good." Galatians 6:9-10

5. Look up! — Look up to the Lord and have confidence!

"I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

6. Reach up! — Reach up for something better – something higher.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all you ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." Prov 3:5-6

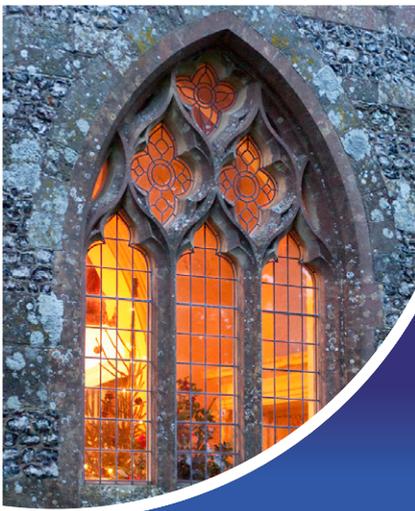
7. Lift up! — Lift up your prayers.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayers and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Philippians 4:6

You may know that linked with the Olympics is a festival of artistic events, of concerts and performances and exhibitions all around the country. One of the (slightly odder) ones is by an artist called Martin Creed. He won the Turner Prize a few years ago (so you know it's going to be odd). His work is called 'Work No 1197. All the bells in a country being rung as loudly and quickly as possible for three minutes.' It is a performance piece, and will be performed once (and once only) beginning at 8am on 27th July 2012. He is thinking, not only of church bells, but doorbells and factory bells and any other bell you can lay your hands on.

It sounds a bit of fun, and a little bit silly, as well as (possibly) a good way of bringing people together. imagine if we were to ring our bell – Christ's Bell - as loudly and quickly as possible. The bell that defines what and who we are and therefore how we interact with the world, what we care about and do. Just think what would happen. What a celebration! What a year!

And imagine what would happen if we rang Christ's Bell for more than three minutes this year... three minutes every day... all the time... think how the world would be blessed, how God's name would be bless us all.



+ Bible Study

As we hope you see from *The Seeker*, the Bible is THE Book! Read it and understand more in good company on a Thursday evening once a month, 7.30pm. Phone Mike (552720) for details.

Midweek Holy Communion

Join us for a gentle service in St Mary's on the second Wednesday of the month at 11.30pm, followed by coffee.

Come and meet friends

▼ Drop into St Mary's!

Saturday afternoons in the church from 2.30pm for a cup of tea and a chat with someone trained to listen. Starts again 31st March

* Drop into the Post Office

Coffee Shop on the first Wednesday of the month from about 11 o'clock for a coffee and chat with the vicar.

◆ Fellowship Group –

Meeting every Tuesday for chat, laughter and biscuits, some talk around serious themes and sometimes a steak supper or a Chinese takeaway! Phone Paul Skinner (552785).

☞ **Men's Group** – A beer and a chat usually on the last Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. Phone David Lockyer (552492) for details.

☘ **Mothers' Union** – Tea, company and a good talk, usually on the second Thursday afternoon of the month, from 2.45pm. Phone Sheila (553133) or Mary (552041) for details.

Join us for February and March

SUNDAY SERVICES	St Mary the Virgin Sixpenny Handley		St Rumbold's Pentridge		Gussage St Andrew	
	9.30am	☕	11.00am	6.00pm	11.15am	
Feb 5 th	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC	#
Feb 12 th	MP	(10.30am)	Informal	HC	#	HC
Feb 19 th	HC		Informal	Evensong	MP	#
Feb 26 th	MP		Inf & HC	HC	#	HC
Mar 4 th	HC		Informal	Evensong	HC	#
Mar 11 th	MP		Informal	HC	#	HC
Mar 18 th	Mothering Sunday		10am	HC	MP	#
Mar 25 th	MP		Inf & HC	HC	#	HC

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

Ash Wednesday (St Mary's) Wed 22nd Feb 7.30pm Holy Communion & Ashing

Mothering Sunday – 18th March

Lent is traditionally broken by the celebrations of Mothering Sunday. This is the time we remember our 'mother church' as well as our human parents, and this year we are having a combined service at St Mary's at 10 o'clock, when we shall be welcoming children from the school and sharing a very special christening.

February 2012

See side panel for key to symbols

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

Tues 7th 7.30pm Pentridge PCC meeting

Thurs 9th 2.45pm Mothers' Union with Anthony Brown on Cranborne Ancient Technology Centre

Wed 29th 7.30pm Sixpenny Handley PCC meeting

LENT

February 22nd
to
April 5th



March 2012

Updated weekly on our website

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

Thurs 8th 2.45pm Mothers' Union – Lenten Meditation by John Cullingford