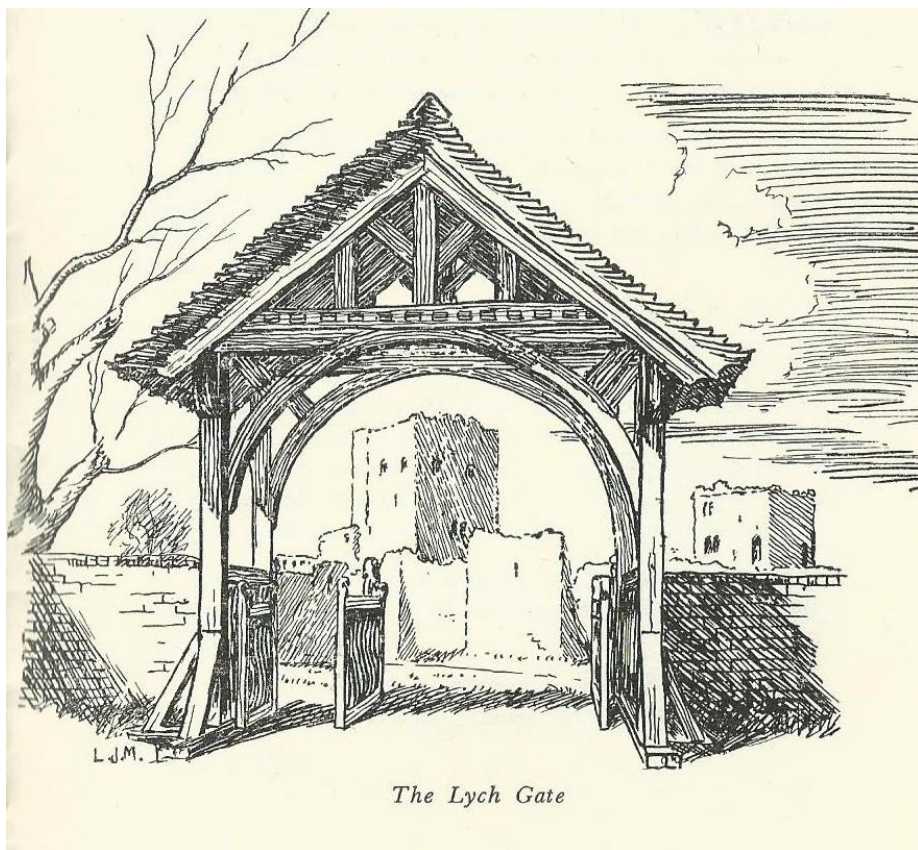


# Keeping in Touch

The Newsletter of St Mary's Church  
Portchester

No. 38 September 2017



*The Lych Gate*

## **FROM THE VICAR .....**

**Facebook.** Facebook has become a very popular means of communication in today's social media. I have a Facebook page which Hazel kindly opened for me, mainly to access St Mary's Facebook and others of interest. Apart from that, those of you who have found it will realise that I don't use it. So to those who have requested to be my Facebook 'friend', please don't get upset if I have 'declined' – everyone has been declined. I have no friends – or at least no Facebook friends! I've never commented on any Facebook, either under my own or any other name or pseudonym. Part of the reason for not using one, is that I know my own weakness –it would be so tempting to fire off some sort of sarcastic comment, and thereby start a 'tit for tat' Facebook war – a war which can never be won.

We have recently seen the enormous good Facebook can do, by bringing the community together, alerting of crime, pleas to help find lost pets and stolen cars, or just for helpful practical information.

However, there is a dark side to Facebook as well. Youngsters especially have been bullied, vilified, had lies told about them, or had inappropriate sexual pictures pasted on to their faces. Some kids have lost confidence in life and some have even taken their own life. No wonder there's bullying at school, when some of the parents bully on Facebook.

We at St Mary's have had our share of attacks from 'keyboard warriors' over the past year or so, particularly in connection with Churchlands land at Seafield Road. Those of you who have got upset over some comments, need to remember that Facebook is not always about facts, simply about opinions. Why confuse with facts, people who have

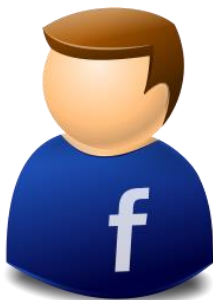
already made up their mind? It has been amusing to read someone asking a question, and another answering it (someone who knows nothing or little about the real situation but responds with an untrue answer) which then brings a whole range of support for that comment. It's just 'shared ignorance'. So just live with it, that's Facebook for you – and another reason why I don't use it.

It was therefore most encouraging when Wendy Callear posted a photo of a packed St Mary's Church (we're full most Sundays) to show that churchgoing is alive and well and even growing in Portchester. This only got two negative comments, one from an anti-religion person and another inevitably, about the land at Seafield Road. However, the great majority were positive with 143 'likes'. This was followed by another two postings about weddings, again greatly positive.

We encourage you to use our own church Facebook more often. Not only is it good to 'like' various events, but let's have a few more comments and to share the item. It would be good to reflect our social media community more. Was there a service or event you enjoyed? Why not tell us – even just a sentence will do. Our grateful thanks to Wendy Pyatt who keeps this up to date, to all our friends and to all our 'likes'.

Your friend (but not Facebook friend) and pastor,

*Ian*



## **Update on building project**

Unfortunately the wheels grind slowly ... we have put in a faculty application for the temporary heating to become permanent. The DAC are having a site visit this month, and hopefully a decision can be made soon. There are no designs back from the architect yet about the porch.

## **SEPTEMBER SERVICES AND EVENTS**

### **Matins**

This service from the *Book of Common Prayer* will normally be held on the first Sunday at 8.00am unless it is a major festival in which case it will be Holy Communion. Therefore, the first Sunday in November, being All Saints will be Communion. The other first Sundays this quarter will be Matins: 3<sup>rd</sup> September (said with hymns) 1<sup>st</sup> October (sung with hymns), 3<sup>rd</sup> December (sung with hymns).

**Our Patronal Festival** – the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, will be on 10<sup>th</sup> September (transferred from 15<sup>th</sup> August). Incense will be used at the 10.00am Parish Eucharist. In the evening there will be Taize Evening Prayer.

The Friends of St Mary's Flower Festival and Songs of Praise which had been planned for this weekend has been cancelled, due to Margaret's health problems, which we are pleased to say, are greatly improving.

### **Autumn series of evening services.**

Our evening services re-commence on 10<sup>th</sup> September at 6.00pm with a four week teaching series on '**Extraordinary ordinary saints – attractive Christian living.**' This will be a study of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the lives of four people in the New Testament: Mary, Zechariah, Dorcas and Barnabas. Not the better known people, but

'ordinary' people like us, who became 'extraordinary.' The emphasis will be on the transforming power of Christ in our lives. There will be different styles of worship each week led by various people, and after the teaching, if you want to stay behind for coffee and discussion, there will be an opportunity to do this. The evening services have a very different feel to the morning ones – why not try one out. The time might even suit you better.

This autumn's **Alpha Course starts on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September.** This time it will be held in the church and on Wednesday evenings. It begins at 6.45pm with a meal, followed by a DVD presentation and discussion. It is a very useful course for those exploring the Christian faith, wanting to go over some foundations again, or preparing for confirmation. It is not too late to book up, so please contact Vicki Powell, Tel: 02392 200314.

### **Cafe Church 17<sup>th</sup> September: 'Renewing the Vision'**

Last year we had a morning service in a 'cafe church' style – which we used to launch the building project. Several enjoyed this and asked if we could do it again, so we are doing it on 17<sup>th</sup> September at 10.00am. Instead of sitting in rows, we will sit round tables and have communion and prayer together in this way. After a shorter service (no sermon) we will have brunch: filled rolls etc as well as a veggie option. Then we will do a presentation – not about the building this time – but about the people, some of our plans to grow the congregation and become more mission focused in the future. Invitations will go out, but the service is open to all and we hope for a good turn-out. This service will be suitable for all ages, so bring the children along.

We are also arranging for a **children's entertainer - 'Kids Bee Happy Sand Art with Suzanne Kirkham**, a lady who has come to the

Christmas Fayre and whose talents are well known for keeping children interested. However, we need a minimum of **10 children** to make this viable. So please bring your children, and let's make this a great family morning together.

### **Talk on the evolution of the English parish church**

Several of you missed our Vicar's talk at the Portchester Society in June, so you will have the opportunity to hear it, this time through the Civic Society who are hosting this talk on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 7.30pm at the Parish Hall. It is about the many changes which have taken place in church buildings as well as worship in the past two thousand years. All are welcome to attend.

### **Concert**

Sir Michael Moore is organising another (not to be missed) concert on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September at 7.30pm. This will be performed by the harpist Elizabeth-Jane Baldry, and tickets will be limited to 150. Elizabeth-Jane Baldry was born in Hampshire. She read music at Exeter University, travelling to the Royal College of Music in London for her harp studies. She now gives around one hundred performances a year from formal recitals in historic houses or on specialist arts cruises to weddings and funerals. This will be a charity concert and tickets can be bought from the parish office.

### **Jan's licensing**

After several years of training, Jan Fuller will be licensed as a Reader and presented with her blue scarf at the cathedral on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 11.00am. You are all invited to this service and we hope there will be good support. She is being licensed to serve in our parish and also at St Luke's, Portsmouth.

## **Harvest Supper & Barn Dance and Festival**

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September will also be our Harvest Supper at the Parish Hall. Ian Parker is organising this, with a two course meal followed by coffee and then a barn dance with a live local band. Tickets will be £12.50, doors open at 7pm, meal served at 7.30pm then everyone can dance the night away. Names are being taken now and tickets will soon be on sale.

The Harvest Festival will be the following Sunday at the 10am service.

## **OCTOBER – REFORMATION MONTH**

This year, there have been many services, celebrations and events to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Martin Luther nailing his Ninety-Five Theses (points for discussion) on the church door at Wittenberg, Germany on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1517. This sparked off the Reformation which birthed the Protestant churches, of which family the Church of England is part. Another link with St Mary's is that Luther was an Augustinian monk – the same order who founded St Mary's Priory here in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Luther's influence on the world was immense, not least on church music, particularly that of JS Bach. We have Luther to thank for Christmas trees in our houses, and some suggest he wrote the carol 'Away in a manger.' We at St Mary's will be joining in commemorating this great event with a whole series of talks, sermons, films and music. A special leaflet has been printed which will be available soon.

- **Film 'Luther'**. We start things off on **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September** 7.30pm at Portchester Methodist Church with the 2003 film starring Joseph Fiennes as Luther and Peter Ustinov, and others. Reviews include, '*It is the powerful true story of one*

*man confronted with the frailty of human faith and his pursuit of spiritual upheaval in the battle against the corrupt might of an empire.'*

- **Series of Thursday night talks on 'The Reformation'** These will also be held at the Methodist Church and will be over seven Thursdays at 7.30pm concluding on 16<sup>th</sup> November. These will be given by our Vicar, Ian Meredith, who also teaches a course on modern church history at the Portsmouth Pathway ministerial training. There is no charge for these, but we will have a retiring collection basket to cover expenses.
- **Sunday evening services.** From 8<sup>th</sup> October our Sunday evening services will be a series on the Five '*Solas*' (Latin for 'alone') of the Reformation. These are the five great pillars of Protestantism and will give an insight into doctrines which the Reformation rediscovered. The worship before the talks will be inspired by the Reformation and will include 17<sup>th</sup> century texts such as Evensong and Holy Communion, as well as modern liturgies from the Lutheran and United Reformed Church.
- **JS Bach's cantata, *Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild*** (God the Lord is sun and shield) on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October at 6.00pm. This was composed in 1725 to celebrate the Reformation, when Bach was organist at St Thomas Church, Leipzig. It will be performed by our choir, augmented with friends, and we hope to have a small orchestra.
- **Guest speaker.** During October we are welcoming the **Rev Tapani Simojoki** who is Pastor of Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Fareham. He will be the speaker at our evening service on 15<sup>th</sup> October when he will preach on one of the five *solas*, 'On



Christ Alone'. Tapani will also speak on the evening of the Bach cantata on 'Martin Luther's influence on church music.'

- **Guild of Servers Mass.** This will be on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October – the Eve of All Hallows (Halloween), the day in which Luther began his protest. Our Vicar has been invited to be the preacher at the service beginning at 7.30pm. He will speak on 'The catholic Luther after the Reformation.' The Guild Chaplain will be the president and all are welcome to attend.
- **Hymns.** During the month we will be singing a few times Luther's great hymn '*A mighty fortress is our God*' which was called 'The battle hymn of the Reformation.' We will also be singing a newer song, '*Speak O Lord*' by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend which again contains all the five '*solas*' of the Reformation.

The month will culminate on 29<sup>th</sup> October with '**Reformation Sunday**' and the whole theme will finish on the evening of Remembrance Sunday with Holy Communion. By the end of this, you will all know Martin Luther better than you know Martin Luther King!

**'This is my body .... this is my blood.'** These words were used by Jesus at the last supper and said at every Communion Service – but what do they mean? Are they to be taken literally, symbolically, or at some other level? The interpretation of these words was one of the major battles at the time of the Reformation, and many were prepared to die for their interpretation of these words. Over the next few months, our **Theological Reflection Group** will be looking at the meaning of these words in the Eucharist and how various Christian traditions interpret them. Our speaker on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 10.30am at the Parish Hall will be Greg More, a former seminarian and a member of the Roman Catholic community here at Portchester. He

will speak on the RC understanding of ‘Transubstantiation.’ This will be followed in the next few months by other speakers on the Anglican, Lutheran and reformed ideas on the Eucharist. This group is open to everyone. We meet on the first Thursday of the month 10.30am – 12noon at the Parish Hall.

**Men’s Breakfast** recommences on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September at 8.00am. This session we have an interesting array of speakers, many newer ones from our own church, as well as some from outside. New members are most welcome to come and try this out. We are grateful to Richard Andrews who has taken over organising the breakfast, but any help would be appreciated.

## **OTHER EVENTS AND NEWS**

### **Children’s ministries**

After many years of leading Junior Church/Sunday School, in September Diana Bolton will be handing the reigns over to Wendy Castle. Wendy will be encouraging some of the younger mums to get more involved and has lots of new ideas. **The Kidz Klub** will continue on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month, but from September will start at 9.00am with a **Breakfast Club** which was the idea of another young mum, Tanya Simpson, who will be co-ordinating this first part. After breakfast the Kidz Klub will then run until 11.00am. It will be held in the church instead of the Castle Street Centre. Not that Diana is disappearing – she will continue to help out at Sunday School and will be responsible for leading the Schools team and the Holiday Club.

### **Parish Pilgrimage Trip to Westminster Abbey**

The Feast of Edward the Confessor (the founder of Westminster Abbey) is over the weekend 14/15 October, and the Rev Anne Boggust is organising a trip to Westminster Abbey on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October.**

There will be a bus leaving St Mary's at 8.00am. We will take part in two services at the abbey: The Eucharist at 11.00am and Sung Evensong at 4.00pm, after which we will head home. The cost of the day is £20 per person, and please bring a packed lunch. We are limiting this to one coach – 52 people and there will be a sign up sheet on the notice board.

### **Christian Resources Exhibition**

This is being held at Sandown Racecourse over three days from 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> October. We are planning on taking a group from St Mary's one of the days and we will get you free tickets for this. The CRE will have a massive array of Christian resources including worship, evangelism, children's ministry, discipleship – everything for a growing church! In addition, there will be seminars throughout the day for you to dip into. We hope that several of you who are responsible for various ministries will come along. Please sign up on the sheet.

**The Friends of St Mary's** will be holding a concert on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October with the Salvation Army band. This will be a great night of praise as well as entertainment. Details will be announced soon, but please book the date now.

### **Running for the Labyrinth**

Our latest project to make the labyrinth area into a fitting garden of remembrance will be to place a memorial stone on it to say what it is for. Many people are unaware of its use, and we have even had children playing hopscotch on it! We are grateful to Leroy Osbourne for all his hard work in getting this stone. It still has to go to the DAC for final permission, and as soon as that is granted we will have it in place.

The cost for this will be in the region of £2,000 which we do not have funds for, so a friend of

Leroy, Liz Smith, is going to raise funds for this by running the Great South Run on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The run which is around Portsmouth starts and ends at Southsea Common. Liz will be wearing a top kindly donated by Andy Rouse of Blue Dot with the words, *'Running for St Mary's, Portchester bereavement care, matched by Barclays.'* Liz, who works for Barclays Bank has been able to get the bank to match fund pound for pound. Her aim is to run 10 miles and to raise £1,000 which will be matched by £1,000 from Barclays.

Liz is looking for sponsorship from St Mary's and friends. We will not be able to be out to physically support her as it is a Sunday morning, but you can support by sponsoring her, and sponsorship forms are available in the church. We are also writing to local funeral directors, and some families whose loved ones are buried there who may also wish to contribute. You can also donate through a 'Just Giving' page If you want to contact Liz directly you may do so at [Liz.a.smith@barclays.com](mailto:Liz.a.smith@barclays.com) Tel: 07717040834.

### **Future Curate and House at Jute Close**

We've just been informed that we will not be getting a Curate next year, which means that we will be without one for at least the next 2 years. In terms of ministry, this is going to mean that others are going to have to help a bit more – not just clergy and readers, but all the Body of Christ. The Vicar is only one man, he can only be in once place at the one time, and only has 24 hours in one day – all of which are not spent working! One benefit is that we can now rent out the house at Jute Close for longer, which will help the income of the church. The letting is being done through an letting agent and not through any officer of the church. We would like to thank most sincerely those of you who worked on getting Jute Close ready for letting: the garden, painting and decorating and internal cleaning.