

Keeping in Touch

The Newsletter of St Mary's Church
Portchester

No. 42 April/May 2018

He is
RISEN



Rev Ian writes

The day most of you will receive this newsletter, Sunday 18th March will be my 5th anniversary at Portchester. The last five years have flown by incredibly quickly, and they say that the older you get, the quicker time flies by, so the next five years are going to be gone very soon! It has been a real joy to be your Vicar, and I am constantly moved by the support we have from our local community, and the affection in which St Mary's is held by most of Portchester (although not by all!)

I am so encouraged at the large army of volunteers we have, the amazingly talented and creative people in our church; the generosity given in time and money; and the warm welcome you give to visitors. In the main you also get on well with each other, and are a loving congregation.

Not that it's all plain sailing. We are a church made up of very human people, with all the failings and foibles which are part of being 'a work in progress.'

What sort of things discourage me? Actually very little, and these are the challenges that all clergy face. But they include, good people I like, falling out with each other and not easily forgiving; our many members who hardly ever attend St Mary's, or stay on the fringe, and miss out on so much we have to offer; talented people with time on their hands who don't offer to do much; those who boast about how little money they give to the church; and those who criticise and discourage those who are trying their best.

We are incredibly blessed that we can put on so many activities: spiritual, teaching, worship, outreach, social occasions, musical feasts. Writing this newsletter, I realise that there is so much happening in the next few months.

I am looking forward to sharing in the Easter Festival with you, which is my favourite time in the Church Year (even more than Christmas!)

Every blessing,

Ian

Holy Week & Easter Services

Reflections & Compline

Holy Week begins with our Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 7.30pm Reflections by Rev Emmanuel Nazir on the themes of 'Wilderness' (Monday) 'Repentance' (Tuesday) and 'Reconciliation' (Wednesday). This will be followed by a short service of Compline led by the Readers.

Maundy Thursday Eucharist of the Last Supper at 7.30pm will be followed by an hour's Vigil at the 'Garden of Repose'(Chancel). This is the evening when we remember 'the night he was betrayed.'

Good Friday. A march of witness of the churches in Portchester Together around the precinct will be held at 9.45am – 10.15am.

The three hour meditation 'Around the Cross' will be held from 12noon until 3.00pm and will be led this year by one of our Readers, Derek Johnston. This will be divided into 6 thirty-minute slots each half hour beginning and ending with a hymn. To avoid disruption, we would ask that people leave and arrive during the hymn rather than during the reflection.

Holy Saturday.

4.00pm we will be holding a special **Children's Easter Egg Service**. We did this a few years ago, but it's probably time to try again. It would be great if we could establish an Easter children's service similar to the Christmas Christingle. The service will begin with a time of crafts (similar to Messy Church) and then followed by a short

service. We are asking our families to support this to see if it is viable or not for the future.

8.00pm Confirmation. This will be part of the Easter Vigil and will be held at Portsmouth Cathedral when four members of St Mary's are being confirmed: Sophie Carnaghan, Claire Colley, Ursula Sturgess and Douglas Cole. Please come along and support our friends.

Easter Sunday

6.00am The Sunrise Service begins with 'stories and songs around the fire'; the Easter Fire and Renewal of Baptismal vows followed by a short Communion Service. This will be followed by a breakfast in the New Room.

8.00am. Our regular Prayer Book service of **Holy Communion** will have the addition of well-known Easter hymns.

10.00am Easter Parish Eucharist. This service is usually very full, so you would be advised to come early and get parked. In place of the usual Sunday School there will be a special craft workshop on the Easter theme. This will be run by Louise Richardson of the 'Creation Station.' We would encourage you to bring along your children to this service.

There will be **no evening service** on Easter Sunday.

Vicar's post-Easter break. Please note that the Rev Ian will be on holiday the week after Easter and will be back at work on Tuesday 10th April.

Other events in April

Bible Book Club, following on from last month's look at the Book of Esther, the second meeting in this series will be held on Thursday 5th April 7.30pm and led by Jan Fuller at her home – 25 Kilmiston Drive. All are welcome to this.

Healing Service. In March we began our series of healing services on the 2nd Sunday of each month. Around 30 people attended and several went out for prayer and found it helpful. We are seeking to develop the healing ministry of St Mary's, and are always open to growing our team. Have a word with Derek or Vicki if interested. Our next service will be on **Sunday 8th April at 6.00pm** and will be led by Derek Johnston.

Prayer for the Persecuted Church. One of our newer members, Sally Nguyen who has recently moved to Portchester from Stubbington, has a real burden to pray for the persecuted church. We spent a day in prayer for persecuted Christians in 2016 when the Islamic State was at its most violent. As a church we also support the Barnabas Fund. Sally has kindly opened her house (10 Portchester Heights, off Hill Road, PO16 8JU) for this on **Friday 13th April at 2.30pm**. If there is support we could begin a monthly prayer group.

Men's Breakfast on Saturday 15th April at 8.00am. Our speaker this month is Tim McIlroy. If you've noticed that Tim has not been at St Mary's every Sunday – don't worry, he hasn't gone cold on us – on the contrary! He has found a real ministry working in lay chaplaincy at Winchester Prison among some really hardened criminals. Come and hear Tim speak about his work.

Evening Services. These will recommence on **Sunday 15th April** at 6.00pm and run for 10 Sundays until 17th June. We haven't decided on the style or topic yet, but hope to advertise these soon.

APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting).

This will be held immediately after the 10.00am service at around 11.30/11.45am. It will commence with the annual Vestry Meeting to receive the Parish Hall accounts and to elect two Churchwardens for the coming year.

After this, those not on the Electoral Roll will leave, and the Annual Meeting of the Church will be held which will also include the election of PCC members, Deanery Reps and Sidespeople (Welcome team). The annual report will be published soon and you can collect your copy from the church or office. There are nomination forms available for all the above posts, and these must be returned to the Vestry Secretary (Denise Simmons) via the Sunday services, handed in at the office or posted through the Vicarage door. The final date for nominations is a week before – **Sunday 8th April.**

External Auditor. We are grateful to Sheila Stringer for the many years she has audited our accounts. However, Sheila now feels it is time for her to have a break from this, and so we thank her very much. It is good practice to have some from outside the church audit our accounts. We are pleased to say that we have identified such a person who is willing to do this for our 2018 accounts, but the PCC will need to make this decision at its next meeting.

“A Different Day”

Several churches in Portsmouth have been holding a special one day event in their churches for those who are elderly, in nursing homes, don't get out much, etc. It will be held at the church on Tuesday 17th April from 10.00am – 4.00pm. The day will be very relaxed and will include crafts, games, a film, a short devotional service, lots of company and a fish and chip lunch. Transport can also be arranged if required. There will be a cost of £3.50 for the day, and it will be by ticket only for catering purposes. Please let us know if you, or a friend or neighbours would like to attend. So far there has been a lot of interest!

Tea & Company.

We are now extending this to include the third Sunday of each month as well as the first Sunday. There will, however, be no meeting on 1st April as it is Easter Sunday. We commence again on 15th April. We will

be producing new publicity materials and invitations. Please invite someone who has been bereaved, and who might be feeling a bit lonely on a Sunday afternoon. This group meets at the Parish Hall. We are grateful to Jane Baker's initiative and help in extending this to the third Sunday.

St George's Day Dinner

On Friday 20th April at 6.30pm in the church, Richard and Margaret Andrews and friends are organising a roast beef dinner in honour of St George's Day. Places are limited to 60, so please book up soon. Come along dressed in patriotic attire.

Guest Preacher on Sunday 22nd April at the 10.00am Eucharist, our special guest preacher will be the Rev Bernard Dinklater a Lutheran pastor from Studgart, Germany. Bernard is a friend of Rev Trevor Hubble. Do you have any German friends you could invite? This is a good follow up to last year's Martin Luther commemorations.

April's All Age service. On Sunday 29th April there will be a special event held in the castle grounds on the theme of 'Super Heroes'. We thought it would be good fun to use this as the theme of our all age service! So, why not encourage the children to come along dressed as their favourite 'super hero' (Batman, Superman, Spider Man – and their female equivalents: Wonder woman, Super girl, Storm, etc). And there's nothing to stop the adults too! Because of the castle event, this will be a shorter service, and will not be a Eucharist. Communion will be held in the evening at 6.00pm.

Events in May

Theology Group. Meets on the first Thursday of the month 10.30am – 12noon at the Parish Hall. Our speaker this month on **3rd May** is Hilary Dawson who will speak on 'The messianic secret in Mark's

Gospel.' Have you ever wondered why after a healing, Jesus sometimes told the person not to tell anyone about it? Come and think about why Jesus might have said this? Why did he want to keep some things a secret?

Concert with the Royal Marines Band on Friday 4th May is fully booked. However, you may put yourself down on a reserve list at the parish hall, in case any tickets are returned.

Rogationtide Prayer Walk. For the past four years we have been walking and 'beating the bounds' of the parish, and praying and blessing Portchester as we go along. This year on **Saturday 5th May** we complete the circuit by covering the remainder of the western boundary, but mainly the northern boundary along Portsdown Hill. There are various 'stations' where you can join us, and details will be given nearer the time.

Ascension Day Eucharist. On **Thursday 10th May at 7.30pm** we will be hosting the Fareham Deanery Ascension Day Eucharist. Please come and help us to make this a great celebration of Jesus' returning to heaven. The celebrant will be our Vicar, and the preacher will be our Area Dean, Rev Susan Allman.

'Thy Kingdom Come' Archbishops' Prayer Initiative. The prayer initiative from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York which began in 2016 has become a national event and is growing in enthusiasm. There is now a special web site just for this, and Bishop Christopher has written to each church with an ideas resource pack and asking what we will all be doing. Basically it means that there will be a strong focus on prayer between Ascension and Pentecost. This will include a Day of Prayer at St Mary's on Thursday 17th May, but other prayer occasions as well.

“The Bible and the British Museum”

Sometimes when we read the Bible, we may wonder if these events happened, and if these places and people even existed. Over the past century archaeology has uncovered a wealth of biblical sites including many artefacts with dates and inscriptions which are just exactly as reported in the Bible. A trip to the British Museum in London is a tremendous experience in helping the Bible come to life. However, it could take a whole day, and could be expensive. Instead, the British Museum is coming to Portchester well, not quite, but almost.

On Friday 11th May Mark Hendley, a church leader and committed Christian as well as theology graduate who gives tours of the British Museum is coming to the church to put on an illustrated talk. This will be in two parts with refreshments in between, so we are starting at the earlier time of 7.00pm. Normally there would be a cost of £5 to hear Mark’s talk, but instead of charging, we will have an offering basket and invite you to contribute whatever you can. Our grateful thanks to Bryan Jerrard for organising this, and from whom you can get more information.

Fashion Show. Last year’s show by the Edinburgh Woollen Mill was a great success and so it will be repeated again this year on 16th May at 2.00pm in the church. This year’s special attraction ... some male models! Tickets, which will include a cream tea, are £5 each.

Pentecost Sunday this year is 20th May. As on previous occasions, could we encourage you to wear the colour red at the 10.00am service. Red is the liturgical colour for the day, symbolising the red flame of the Holy Spirit. Churches Together will be holding a picnic at 1.00pm followed by an open air service from 1.45pm – 2.15pm (Please note there is a wedding at 2.30pm)

Other events, news and updates.

As you know, the main aim of this publication is to keep you in touch with what is happening at St Mary's. So here are some updates:

Building Project/Building Fund.

Although fund-raising has gone a bit quiet of late, we are still collecting money for our ongoing building project. By 'building project' we mean Phase I which is the new heating system and the new porch. As you may know, the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) were not too happy with our temporary **heating system**, and have asked us to go back to the drawing board. We realise that the present temporary system is adequate and has the support of the congregation and wider community. However, in order to comply, we are seeking to co-operate and a revised faculty application has gone in. We will keep you posted, but there is no more information at this stage, and so no action is required.

Quotes for a **new porch** were astronomical, and again we are having to look again at this. We are meeting with the architect soon to explore less expensive options, so these projects are ongoing.

Some of you have been asking what's happening about the **new bells**. These will also be included as part of our discussion and we will update you soon.

Phase II is the possible extension to the south of the church. This has come to a standstill until Phase I is complete. However, we will be including this in our discussion with the architect. We will seriously look at this as a possibility again, but there may be some modifications to the previous plans. Again, we will keep you informed, but there is nothing happening at this stage.

Alternative service. Discussions and consultations are still taking place. We have identified potential musicians, and we still need further discussion with those responsible for the music, as well as the Ministry Team as to when to start these and what would be the best time. We know this slowness is frustrating for some (its speed is making others anxious!) but we need to get this right and to bring as much of the congregation and ministry team on board for this.

Tea Room. The Annual report will show you that once again the Tea Room's income has increased on all previous years, and this despite the fact that most Sundays and on other occasions we were not able to open because of lack of volunteers. It has been really good to see new people volunteering to help, but we still need more – particularly over the Easter holidays, and very much over the summer holidays. Can you even spare a couple of hours each week? As well as raising money for the church, it is a great way to use our talents for the Lord, and to engage in interesting conversations with our many visitors. If you can help, please contact Judy Sherry on 02392 324772 E-mail: sootyone@live.co.uk

We are open again on Sundays thanks to some volunteers, but often there are only two, so can you help on Sundays? Please see Hazel Powlesland on Sunday.

'Absent Friends'. We are very fortunate that at St Mary's almost every Sunday we have visitors at our service, some of who decide to join our church. As a result, our congregation continues to grow. However, we are also aware of some who used to come but no longer do so. Recently our Vicar wrote to all those, and has been encouraged with the response. So far, no one has indicated that they have left the church over any issues or fall-outs. Nor has it even been over a loss of faith. In most cases, it has been family commitments which has meant that church is no longer a priority. Only one person has asked to be

taken off the Electoral Roll, and all the others said they intend coming back. All seem to retain a positive attitude towards St Mary's. If you have not yet returned your form, please do so, as your feedback is important.

There have, however, been comments about the services, and perhaps as well as thinking about our alternative service, we should review our general structure of services, particularly the times, and the All Age Service. More details later.

Special Focus this year: 'War and Peace'

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I and the start of what became known as Armistice Day. As the year progresses, the community of Portchester will be marking this with several events. We will not give too many details yet (because of space), but these are some of the ideas we are currently working on:

- A new War Memorial to remember those killed in forces during World War I. There is a group representing the church and community working on this, and we hope that a member of the Royal Family will unveil in later in the year.
- A commemorative booklet to go along with this, which will contain all the names on this new memorial, plus short biographies of those whose names are on the World War I memorial. There will also be poems written by local people.
- A special service on Sunday 11th November at 5.00pm with contributions from Portchester Community School and various other community groups, ending with a beacon lighting ceremony followed by a peal of bells as part of a national initiative.

Meanwhile, can you help at Fort Nelson?

Between 13th April and 24th June Fort Nelson will be hosting the **Poppies Wave**. The sculpture WAVE is made of 11,000 ceramic poppies from the Tower of London's Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red display. Volunteers will form a key part of the on-site team, with roles primarily based outdoors, welcoming visitors to the car park, ensuring they walk safely along the designated walkway to the visitors centre where volunteers will be strategically placed to guide, inform and help visitors to ensure an enjoyable and memorable visit.

The Poppies have captured the public imagination on a national and international scale and the presentation at Fort Nelson offers volunteers a once in a lifetime chance to be part of this project in a place of special resonance with the First World War.

To register an interest in volunteering email

volunteering@armouries.org.uk or call Caroline on 01329848516

Caroline Oswald Poppies Volunteer Coordinator

Kate Tame who is on the local committee for war commemorations and is also editing our commemorative booklet has asked for some help.

1. For any of the readers to come forward with **WW1 pictures of relatives** and Portchester, relative stories, Portchester stories for the WW1 display in the church. Pictures would be scanned and returned to owner.

2. Any information at all about **George E. Willsted** who is on the WW1 memorial. Struggling to find anything about him or his relatives. If you have any information, you can contact Kate via the parish office or Portchester Community Association (The Hub) in the Precinct.

Christian ministry outside St Mary's

As we discovered at our January cafe church, several members of St Mary's have found their ministry, outside St Mary's, and as part of the wider Christian community offering ministry wherever they have the opportunity. Recently three of our members, Vicki Powell, Carolyn Bullock and Kay Walker were part of the recent project where several churches in Portsmouth opened their buildings to accommodate the homeless during the particularly cold months. They had a great experience, and will be happy to talk to you about it. Other St Mary's members are involved with the Food Bank, Lunch Club, and Prison ministry, ministry to the Kurds, visiting in nursing homes, the Stroke Club, the Volunteer drivers, and many others. A new ministry opportunity has also arisen, and St Mary's members are invited to help **Could you be a college pastor?** This ministry is being initiated by Rev Bruce Deans, the Vicar of St John's Church, Fareham. He writes, "Christians working with Fareham College to complement its pastoral care for students!

- Are you a committed Christian, over 18,
- available on Wed afternoons 1pm to 3pm?
- Are you a good listener?
- Do you have a heart for offering non-judgemental Christian love and care to 16 to 18 year old students?
- Are you able to work in a team and under the authority of others?

If you can say 'Yes!' to the above – then we'd love to hear from you and consider whether you could become a College Pastor helping with this vital new ministry at Fareham College!

Please contact Rev Bruce Deans at bruceatstjohns@btinternet.com to apply for this role and find out more!

Finally.....

This might be **the last newsletter we deliver** to your house; in fact **you may never hear from us again** unless you are **prepared to sign a form** which will go out with this newsletter and will be available at the church or from the office.

From May, new legislation comes into force known as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation). This is in order to protect your privacy. It means

- that we are not allowed to hold any personal information about you without your consent;
- You are entitled at any stage to know what information we hold about you
- You can have that information deleted at any time.
- To know what purpose we keep the information and for how long we intend to keep it.
- Who in the church holds this information, and where is it kept.

In reality, the most information we hold is your name, address, phone number and e-mail address. (For those being married we hold additional information which we are required by law to keep on record). This is held to communicate with you about what's happening at St Mary's, and also to be able to offer you and your family pastoral care.

We cannot emphasise enough that you really do need to fill this form in, or we will have to delete all your details from our records, which is going to make it very difficult to keep in touch and to maintain any future relationship with you.

**St Mary's Parish Church
Portchester Castle**

**Sunday services: 8.00am; 10.00am and 6.00pm
(Baptisms 12.30pm)**

Weekdays: Morning Prayer, Monday – Friday 9.00am – 9.20am

Wednesdays – Holy Communion 6.30pm – 7.00pm

Fridays (Parish Hall) 10.00am – 10.40am

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