



St Mary's Parish Church, Portchester

St Mary's News

No 128 July / August 2026



From the Vicar

If you didn't already know it, we are in the season (not the liturgical season!) of the FIFA World Cup. Whether or not we are into football, we can "rejoice with those who rejoice" when their team wins and "weep with those who weep" when their team loses (Scotland vs Brazil!). I'm not that big into football (or sadly, any sport) but I do like to see how Glasgow Rangers are doing (plenty of weeping there), and unlike many of my fellows Scots, I support England and not whoever they are playing! (Let the reader understand.)



We welcome a brief distraction from the pain of the world, the example of teamwork, and the enthusiasm and hope of supporters, especially those who hope against hope.

There is now an increasing number of professional footballers who are committed Christians and not ashamed to let this be known. Recently, at an 11.30am service, we watched a short video clip of the team from Curacao, a small Caribbean island, where prior to the game they prayed and sang, "The goodness of God."

A wise soul once said that sport matters because ultimately it doesn't matter, or not so much as some people think.

The Apostle Paul used a sporting analogy in *1 Corinthians 9:24-27* when he likened the discipline and commitment of athletes to Christian discipleship. His point was that, if they were prepared to make such sacrifices and put in so much discipline to receive what was ultimately a short-lived accolade, how much more should we as disciples of Jesus exercise discipline and perseverance in order to enjoy an 'imperishable' reward. If all this sounds a bit unattractive and even painful, you need to realise that even when athletes train and compete, the rush of adrenalin can bring with it a feeling of euphoria, a creative energy, and a real sense of wellbeing. Christians who take their faith seriously, engage with it at an intellectual or spiritual level, find a similar joy.

What makes a woman like Mary Slessor give up marriage and the comforts of home to go to the hostile mission field of Nigeria? What made the young woman Jackie Pullinger give up the safety of career in Britain to work along drug addicts and prostitutes in China's walled city? What made young aristocrats give up title and wealth to become ministers of the gospel?

There is also the tremendous sense of satisfaction in visiting someone or doing them a good deed; there is a tremendous joy in seeing lives changed as the gospel works its transforming power in people. There is a tremendous sense in doing what you know you were placed on this planet for: be it a small deed done to an obscure person, or a lifetime of public work.

Homes where money is now spent on food and clothes instead of on drink; where mum and dad love instead of fight; where praises are heard in place of blasphemy; where people no longer just live for themselves but for others. All this, and heaven too!

I've heard a football stadium being described as 22 men who need a rest and 40,000 people in need of exercise! You'll not see much of me during July and August, as I'll be on holiday from 29th June – 17th July and again from 1st – 18th August, so look after each other. It won't be all rest. During August, I'll not be entirely static, I'll be climbing the Brecon Beacons.

Your friend and Vicar, Ian

Feeling and Doing

Article by Sharon Pearse

It's good to be in touch with our feelings, your emotions - to acknowledge how we are actually feeling at a given time. And then maybe to work out why? Is it because I slept badly the previous night? Or it's sunny today? Or I had an extra 10-minute lie-in, skipped breakfast, had to run for the bus, and now I am 'Hangry' (hungry and angry because of it) and snapping at everyone?

Is "I just don't **feel** like it doing it" reason enough to not do whatever 'it' is?

What if God decided that He was Fed Up with people's ingratitude, blasphemy, pride, and refusal to acknowledge Him? What if He decided that He just "didn't feel like it"?

He "upholds all things by the word of His power" (*Hebrews 1:3*). What if He decided that He didn't Feel like doing it anymore? That He deserved some time off, that He'd earned it even, and it was LONG overdue?

Would the electrons cease to spin and orbit the nuclei of the atoms they make up? Would the sun not rise one morning? Might gravity itself not work because the world had stopped spinning? What else might not, or might, happen if Almighty Father God decided that this morning, He just didn't feel like bothering?

One of the 'joys' of life is learning to do things regardless of whether you feel like doing them or not. Doing them because they need doing, and preferably soon or things will only get worse - like washing up, or running maintenance on your home so that you don't have to go to the Vast Expense of getting things repaired when they finally fall apart from the lack. Or even doing things whether you "feel like it" or not because you *said* that you would, you *promised*? Being Responsible.

I'm of a generation that was taught to do what was Right, was Necessary, and to get on with it regardless. To 'keep your word' whether it was convenient for you or not, whether you 'felt like it' or not. It can be tough sometimes, being Grown Up!

But if we are truly to be children of Our Father - who always "upholds all things by the word of His power"; who promised Noah and his family that as long as the earth remained, the seasons would follow each other, that the sun would continue to rise and set at times He appointed (*Genesis 8:22*); then we also will keep our promises, and not promise rashly in consequence. We too will do the things that have to be done at the right times, and not merely when "we Feel like it". Whether it's homework, revision, the washing up, getting up on time, having Quiet Times, reading the Bible and thinking about what we've read, doing a full day's work, being loyal to friends and faithful to our spouses, eating a well-balanced diet, telling and showing other people that God Loves them, or whatever.

Motivation gets you going, discipline keeps you going.

Lord God thank You that You uphold All Things by the word of Your power - that summer and winter, and seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and day and night continue just as You promised to Noah and his family when they came out of the Ark.

Lord, we ask that You will make us more like You; more reliable, more loyal, faithful, trustworthy, and real blessings to all around us. For Your glory. Amen.



Recent News

Day Veterans honoured at special service



On 31st May, St Mary's Church was honoured to host our annual D-Day Remembrance Service, 82 years after the D-Day landing on 6th June 1944.

We were privileged to welcome local veterans, Aldermen from Fareham Borough Council, local councillors, and the Mayor of Gosport, as we gathered to remember and give thanks. Together, in a deeply moving service, we paid tribute to all who served on D-Day and in the days that followed.

Before the service, we were delighted to witness the Portchester Voluntary Marching Band begin their procession in

the historic grounds of the castle, setting a fitting tone for the afternoon.

Following the service, guests shared in fellowship over a lovely afternoon tea, kindly prepared by St Mary's Tea Room.

Recently the Royal British Legion presented us with a framed certificate in recognition of the money we collect each year in the Poppy Appeal, and for our support of the armed forces, particularly the veterans.

We remember with gratitude. We honour with respect. Lest we forget.

Friday Friends' Cream Tea

Friday Friends held a Cream Tea at the church on 15th May. As well as a good turnout of friends, Rev Ian and Marilyn were invited as special guests, along with Ray our Verger and Sue our Anna Chaplain.

Many thanks to the Tea Room and Hilda for the lovely baking.

We remembered our much-lamented founder Felicity Mellows, whose birthday was on Monday, and also Janet Osler who also passed away last year. The Friends are considered donating a new Communion chalice in memory of Felicity and Janet.

Birthday wishes were given to Hilda and Diane.

Friday Friends is an open group, and new members are always welcome. They meet every Friday at 2pm in the church, and on occasions when the church is being used, they decamp to Darcy's Coffee Shop.



The Annual Church Meeting



The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) was held on 26th May, which was literally the coolest place to be on a hot Tuesday evening in Portchester! Over 70 members attended, the best-attended meeting for many years.

It was a wonderful evening filled with reflection, gratitude, and hope as we looked back on all that God has been doing in our church over the past year and looked ahead to the exciting journey before us.

Denise Simmons reported that the Electoral Roll membership had increased from 250 to 267

members with an additional 80+ adults on the supplementary roll of those who attend but are not on the ER giving an adult congregation of around 350.

The Treasurer Steve Oliver reported that the income had exceeded the expenditure by £14,575 but only made possible by a donation of £30,000 from the Churchlands Trust.

Ian Parker and Denise Simmons were re-elected as Churchwardens. Two new and younger members of the PCC were elected: Ashley Cowan and Scott Brodrick.

From inspiring reports and shared stories to moments of laughter and fellowship, it truly showed the strength and warmth of our church community.

Thank you to everyone who came along, contributed, and continues to support the life of St Mary's in so many ways. Here's to another year of growing together in faith, serving our community, and sharing God's love.



Ashley Cowan



Scott Brodrick

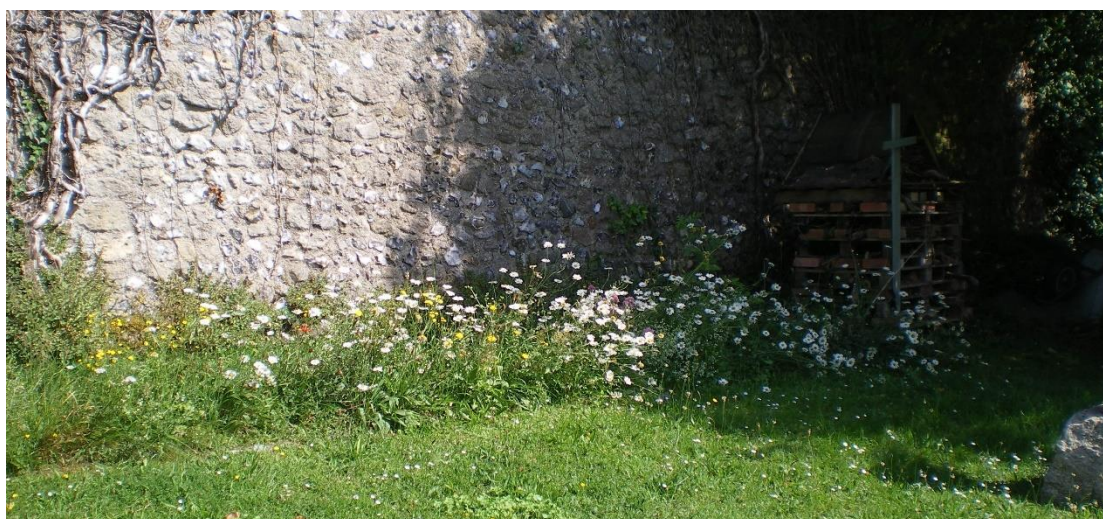
Farewell to Cathy Richardson

Cathy, a much-loved member of our congregation has now moved to Bristol to live with her son. She has another son there, as well as five sisters, all of whom will care for her in her illness, which she bears with dignity and faith, never forgetting that lovely smile for which she is famous. Rev Ian was able to visit her on the day before she left, and with a prayer to commend her to God, with the blessing of the church.

Cathy was raised in a Christian home: her father, Samuel Owen Roberts, was a Baptist minister and latterly chaplain of the British Sailors' Society in the Bristol area.

We wanted to give a farewell gift to Cathy, and asked what she would like. In true form she said nothing for herself, but to give a donation to A-Rocha, the Christian environmental charity caring for God's earth.

A-Rocha also runs a project called **Eco Church**. 'Care for creation' is one of the Anglican Church's 'Five Marks of Mission'. Each church is encouraged to appoint a champion who will complete a survey and encourage the church to become more eco-friendly, and aware of our stewardship of creation. If anyone is interested in taking on this role, and helping St Mary's achieve an eco-award, of either a gold, silver or even gold, please see Rev Ian or contact the office.



One of Cathy's projects a few years ago was the creation of a small wildflower garden at the back of the churchyard, which are pleased to say is thriving. Go and have a look at that sometime, along with the bug hotel which the youngsters created.

Diana Bolton says "hello"

Another much-loved and respected member of St Mary's who moved away a couple of years ago was Diana Bolton, who still keeps in touch. Diana is now living at the College of St Barnabas in Lingfield, Surrey, and writes, "Sorry if you have not heard from me for a while. I am still fit and enjoying living at The College of St Barnabas, but have recently moved from Morley House to make room for a married couple. Although it was a matter of yards, the process was just as traumatic as moving house always is.

"I am now in W1 (West One), a very convenient ground floor flat, next door to the main building, with a marvellous view of our woods. The Chaplain helped me to get set up again today, so I am now able to send and receive emails, at last.

"Fiona will know what I mean when I say that I have swapped Fr John for Trevor, the running enthusiast – an old layman who has lived nearly all his life in the village. He is in the Care Wing at present, following a fall. Of course, I don't wish him any harm, but I do hope that they keep him! God Bless. D."

Look who we bumped into!

Dave and Sharon Pearse attended an evening of Ukrainian arts and culture and Fareham Live recently and among the performers was Lydumylla who was singing and dancing as part of the Two Colours Choir in 'Courage of Two Colours' - a celebration of Ukrainian song, dance, music (bandura and various Ukrainian flutes*), poetry and culture generally, and was also a fundraiser.

Sharon writes: "It was a really good show, lots of ex-pat Ukrainians in the audience, including one little lass who sat next to us with her mum. The girl looked as if she'd probably been born in exile, and thereby hangs a lot of questions. I kept my nose out of it, and continue praying.

"Apparently Lydumylla's garden is starting to flourish, but the house is still full of BOXES. Aaaarrggh! Empathy! We've only just repelled the second wave of BOXES from rearranging the kitchen.

"Think we'll go visit her new garden - with the Forest at the bottom!

"As recorder players ourselves, we were particularly interested here - specially the flute that didn't seem to have any holes, apart from the longitudinal one down the centre, and seemed to be played by sticking a finger over the bottom end, and mouth shape (think brass instrument playing) at the top."



Silence - God's First Language

Kevin Gallagher writes about our Contemplative Prayer Group



The world is full of noise. From 24-hour TV channels, through Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok, YouTube and so on, the digital world is filling our space with noise. Now of course, it's not all bad, who would want to return to a pre-internet age, but have we lost that ability to just sit in silence and hear what it has to teach us? Where is our ability to just be still, to enjoy silent moments and let things emerge from within. How much of this incessant noise crowded out that 'still small voice inside' and how much anxiety has it generated in our lives? And what can we do about it?

Well, every Thursday morning at 9:30am, a small ecumenical group of us meet in St Marys for 30 minutes of silent contemplation. After we share a short saying, a bell rings and we just sit in silence, a simple presence to each other and to God. If you are tempted to give it a try, to begin listening and giving room for that 'still small voice inside', just come along any Thursday at 9:30am. There is no sign-up, no compulsion to attend every week; just come as you are and let the silence speak to you.

All are welcome. Feel free to contact me if you would like to know more apprenticeboy@gmail.com

Unsung Heroes:

This month – Bryan Jerrard

At the age of 93, most people in church (let alone anywhere else) would be hanging up their aprons, coming off rota lists, feeling that they had done their part over the years as it is now time for a rest and letting the younger generation take on these roles – not so Bryan Jerrard!

An inspiration to the young and surely a challenge to the old, Bryan maintains his commitment to Christ through enthusiastic service. Bryan is very much a ‘people person’ and enjoys welcoming newcomers to the church, asking about their lives and remembering their names.

Having been in education all his life, both as a teacher and as a trainer of teachers, he is particularly interested in how our young people are doing academically, celebrating their achievements and spurring them on to greater things.



subsidised cream tea, with other members of the church offering transport.

Saturday mornings see Bryan volunteering at our Tea Room, where he is a great favourite among the regulars. Several who now attend St Mary’s had been impressed by Bryan’s welcome and friendly manner.

In the Sunday services, he reads the lessons and occasionally leads the prayers of intercessions, both of which he does with obvious feeling and passion, often getting emotional at the words of scripture or the sadness of the world’s situations where we are asked to pray.

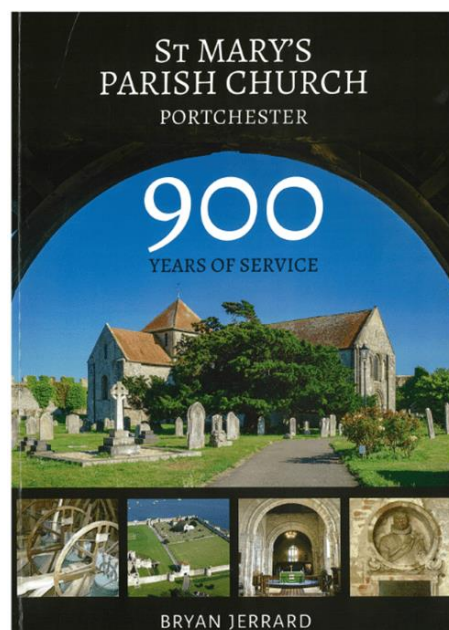
A graduate of Bristol University, he has put his great learning to the service of various historical societies. On moving to Portchester 24 years ago he immersed himself in our local history, contributing to and then writing himself various books on Portchester, including one on the history of St Mary’s, *900 Years of Service*. (On sale for £10.)

Bryan is a regular contributor to the Men’s Breakfast, entertaining the men with his many anecdotes, particularly about the origin of words, which he loves.

Bryan, we salute you and give thanks to God for the way He has preserved your life, and for the many gifts you continue to share with us.

Believing that networking and friendships strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship, especially among men, over the past few years he has organised Thursday evening meals at the Delme Arms Pub. He often spreads his invitations over all three of our morning services so that men from different ones get to meet each other; at other times he organises men to meet who he thinks might have things in common.

Not forgetting our elderly members (most of whom are younger than himself!), each year he organises a day out to Stansted Park Garden Centre where members enjoy a



Spiritus Contra Spiritum - Alcoholics Anonymous

Article by a member of the Thursday evening 'road to recovery' group at St Mary's



"My name is Steve and I'm an alcoholic": Those were (almost) the very first words I said at the very first Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting I attended, just over three years ago, in St Mary's Tearoom. Many sober AA members speak those words with a great sense of liberty and gratitude when we introduce ourselves at the start of meetings.

A little about the history of AA

AA is actually linked to the Christian Church, because our 'pre-foundation' period was based around a Christian 'Oxford Group' in the USA from the mid-1920s until AA was 'born' (I'm conscious of the fact I'm writing this on the 91st anniversary of what is generally regarded as the first day of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous - aka 'Founders' Day'); the 12-Step programme which is suggested as a course of recovery can be at least partly attributed to the Oxford Group.

In AA, what's key to recovery from alcoholism is a belief in a Power greater than ourselves (this may be, but does not have

to be, God) and a profound spiritual change/connection or 'awakening'. Doctor Carl Jung guided early members towards a spiritual solution to their chronic alcoholism and he also wrote, in a letter to AA Co-founder Bill W, of his "belief that a destructive addiction can only be defeated by a higher, transcendent spiritual awakening... *Spiritus contra spiritum*".

Back to the here-and-now!

St Mary's Tearoom really is a wonderful venue for AA meetings, and we regularly have attendees who state that it's special because of its location in Portchester Castle - the strong walls around us, the fact that it's been a prison (think about it..!), the unique aesthetic, and so on. In fact, we had meetings on Christmas Day 2025 and New Year's Day 2026, and the spiritual energy was amazing! Steve Oliver was present and he very kindly unlocked and locked up the Castle and the Rooms for us. He was very appreciative and could himself feel how special that spirit was!

Finally, as mentioned in the Parish Weekly Notices, AA meetings are held every Thursday from 7:30pm until around 8:50pm. They are always 'open' meetings, which basically means they're open to non-alcoholics too, such as family and friends supporting a loved one. There's also a poster which was put up in the Tearoom recently with details including the local AA Helpline phone number and a QR code.



Prison Ministry – Is it for you?

For many years, Tim McIlroy, our Reader (Lay Minister), had been involved in prison ministry, latterly being on the chaplaincy team at Winchester Prison. When Tim moved to Wales, there was no one to replace him, and so this ministry has been temporarily suspended.

However, a couple of our members have expressed interest in taking on this role. It is a challenging one and not suited to everyone. Sadly, there are many who feign conversion in order to get early parole, but there are a few for whom prison has been a wake-up call resulting in a genuine and lifelong change of direction. Some have emerged from prison to become good role models in youth work, social work, recovery ministry and even the ordained ministry.

The Prison Fellowship is an international ministry called to represent Christ in prisons. Prison Fellowship was founded in the United States in 1976 by Charles W Colson, following his release from prison after serving a sentence for a ‘Watergate’ related crime. Prior to his imprisonment, Colson had served as chief counsel for President Richard Nixon.

His time in prison showed him the importance of a Christian witness in prisons and on the basis of his experiences he founded Prison Fellowship in the USA. He wrote in his memoir, *Born Again*, “I found myself increasingly drawn to the idea that God had put me in prison for a purpose and that I should do something for those I had left behind.”

Prison Fellowship organises Prayer Groups local to each Prison in the UK. The ‘local’ group here meets on Zoom, and covers HMP Winchester, and occasionally HMP Ford.

Opportunities for Ministry include:

- Prayer - monthly as part of the Local and National Prayer Zooms,
- A monthly Prayer Diary with suggested items for prayer
- Letter Writing - to prisoners who might otherwise not receive anything but ‘Official’ Letters. Training and Support is given.
- Listening - there is a Prayer Line that prisoners can ring with prayer requests. It’s an answerphone service, so naturally people are needed to listen to and record the calls. Training and Support is given.
- Visiting - usually as part of a group. Training and Support is given.

Try looking at the Prison Fellowship website

www.prisonfellowship.org.uk

On Wednesday 8th July, Prison Fellowship are putting on a Zoom meeting for anyone interested. We know that at least one member has registered their interest. Let us know how you get on and we will do all we can to support.



Find out how you can support people in prison and their families through the work of Prison Fellowship.

Date: Wednesday 8th July

Time: 7.00pm - 8.00pm

Cost: FREE

Where: Online via Zoom



WWW.PRISONFELLOWSHIP.ORG.UK/JOINUS
info@prisonfellowship.org.uk | Charity No.1102254

To protect identities, this image has been generated from a first-hand volunteer description using AI.



“The kindness you showed to others – you did to me” (Jesus)

A Reflection from Sue Oliver on *Matthew Chapter 25 v 40*

‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

This verse teaches us that whatever we do to help the most vulnerable amongst us – whether they be part of our church community, hungry, sick or marginalised, we are directly doing for Jesus. These individuals could be known to us in several ways. They could be friends, neighbours or even family.

This verse is profound and indeed redefines service, turning everyday acts of compassion into tangible expressions of worship and love for Christ himself.



The passage calls us all to look past the surface of those that are struggling around us, when we serve the ‘least of these’.

There are moments in the Bible when Jesus speaks in a way that feels personal and clear that his words echo in our hearts long after we read them. Matthew 25 v 40 is one of those moments. Many Christians cherish it because it means so much about the heart of God. It shows us how much he values compassion, and how much he identifies with all those that are suffering; and how deeply he treasures even the smallest acts of love done in his name.

Reflecting on our Christian lives, many of us have supported and encouraged someone we know and cared for them in difficult times.

We are all made in the image of God. Seeing Jesus in the marginalised or those with mental health issues transforms the way we treat people.

True kindness, as Jesus describes flows from genuine love for the Lord rather than a desire for recognition. As disciples, we are called to love, serve and present the Gospel to others throughout our own communities and maybe the world.

Finally, my last thoughts are these: all of us can be Pastoral in our approach to individuals especially in dealings with our neighbours, friends or family. I pray that we will make the most of the opportunities that come our way, as we meet people every day. Those opportunities could present themselves at any time, I have had many conversations with people while being at a bus stop. We never know how much of what we say about our faith can make a difference to someone’s life. Let us be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Pastoral/Anna Chaplaincy in St Mary’s

We currently have 12 people in Care/Nursing homes and 28 people on our visiting list who are living alone and can no longer come to church. This making a total of 40 people that need visiting. We currently have eight Pastoral visitors, who do a wonderful job. Thank you to you all.

Services continue in the Care homes.

Portchester Wellbeing Fayre will be held on Saturday 19th September from 10am to 3pm at the Parish Hall. The Mayor has agreed to come and open the event. All proceeds on the day will be going to the Church building fund. This will be a first for Portchester, so come along if you can. More details will follow soon.

If anyone can give help on this day, please see Sue Oliver.

Ladies' Breakfasts

Our Ladies' Breakfasts continue with between 16 and 20 ladies attending. Keep coming ladies, and a warm welcome awaits those who wish to join us.

Our next Breakfast will be on 5th September, when we welcome Karen Klaichan who is the Social Prescriber for Portchester Health Centre. She will be coming to talk to us about her work. Please try and attend this, it promises to be interesting.

A further date for your Diaries:



Children's Work at St Mary's

Amy Sparks our Children's Worker writes ...



St Mary's Lambs have been having lots of fun as always with singing, playing and stories each week. From our *God and Me* book, we read about caring for plants and trees. The Lambs then planted seeds to take home and really enjoyed playing with all the soil. We listened to the story about Daniel and the lions, then the children made their own lion masks – with lots of roaring, of course.

The children also decorated Father's Day cards last week, and we read a new book *God Kows All about Me*. We are now looking forward to our leavers' party at the end of term. One of our Lambs has been with us since 2022, when Jennie started the group up again. They were 7 weeks old then, and now we are getting ready to wish them every blessing for starting school!

One of our decorated Lambs was one of 250 sheep to go to Parliament at the beginning of June for the National month of prayer for toddler groups. This was led by Jo Gordon, who is a founding member of '1277 make them count'. Each sheep was taken home by someone for their group to be prayed for. During the event, along with guest speakers and MPs, stories were shared of the difference that toddler groups make to individuals and their communities. Attendees were encouraged to 'keep doing what you are doing!'

Thank you to our amazing St Mary's Lambs' team who help us to keep doing what we are doing!



St Mary's School's Team had a visit from Year 2 at Wicor Primary to support their curriculum learning about 'Special Places.' We had two groups who took it in turns to have a fantastic tour of the church with Jennifer, take part in table activities, and then sketching the building from the outside. The children were learning why the church is a special place for Christians.



Junior Church has been varied and busy as it always seems to be. We've had sessions from Terry, Valerie, Leigh and myself. The children have enjoyed games, crafts, Lego, videos, music and stories. We had a session on 'Try Praying' where we used Lego bricks to pray for different things, we swapped bricks and prayed for each other, then the children put all their bricks together to build a big structure. We talked about 'teaspoon' prayers and the children decorated their own teaspoons to take home. During a session about David and Goliath, we talked about facing our own 'giants' and how we can do that through prayer and talking with parents. We measured out the size of David's giant and then drew around one of the children to compare the size! We wrote down some of our 'giants' on our paper giant and the children enjoyed praying about these things then tearing all the paper up!

Third Sunday Special in May was led by Ian on Try Praying. The children had junior church on the same theme and then we extended this after lunch with families to complete some workbook questions and puzzles, and enjoyed some music together. In June, we had a session on Football and the World Cup. In our junior church session, we spoke about Jesus being like a manager that leads and guides us and we watched a video about the great commission. We know our job and the job of the disciples is even more important than winning the World Cup! We looked at different footballers representing Jesus in the World Cup and how they openly rely on and thank God for their success. We then had a football prayer activity after lunch where the children could write across their football, prayers of thanks, prayers for those in the community, their families and anyone in need.

Young Disciples began in May and it has so far been enjoyed by the children attending. We are using a discipleship programme called 'Living together with Jesus' which is varied and well-structured for our age group. The children have engaged well with the material and the activities.



We've spoken about how much Jesus loves us, belonging to our own families and a wider Christian family, the Kingdom of God, Growing in Faith and things that help us (and don't help us!) to do that. We've had bible verses to look at, hands-on activities linked to the subject, things to build, things to decorate, and snacks! The thing the children have really enjoyed is taking turns to 'be Jesus' and read out the verse to each other.



We have booked the hall **to continue from September to December** and I will be confirming the dates to parents shortly. No booking is needed for any children who wish to join, but we do need a registration to be completed, please. Thank you to the team who help make this all happen!

Looking Ahead

We are blessed to have people committed to children's work at St Mary's. The current need is to have a junior church for our age 11+ children at the 11.30am service. We aren't easily able to split out age groups due to space, but we are able to use the vestry for this group, we just need more people to form a team to make this happen. It will likely run once a month, so if you would like to be involved, the more people we have, the more we can share the work. Please speak to me if you would like to be part of children's work in some way.

Exam Season

We have had several children from St Mary's taking exams over the last couple of months – some Year 6 SATS and others Year

11 GCSEs. Well done to you all for getting through it, whether it was with a smile or some clenched teeth moments. It's done! We pray that you will have a restful and safe summer time ready for the next chapter.



Other news

Leroy and Liz ran a stall at the gala with a fantastic tombola and other games. They raised £174 towards the youth residential!

Dillon and Ben led their first sports session in June and the children (and grown-ups) really

enjoyed it!



St Mary's
Portchester

YEAR R -
YEAR 6

**SUMMER
HOLIDAY CLUB**

NO CHARGE

ACTIVITIES
FUN SPORT,
ADVENTURES,
OUTDOOR GAMES
CRAFT, LEGO AND
MORE...

18-20 AUGUST
1 PM - 4 PM

ADURNI HALL SCOUT HUT,
CHALKY WALK,
PORTCHESTER, PO16 9DS

CONTACT ANY: CHILDREN@WORKER@STMARY-
PORTCHESTER.ORG.UK



St Mary's Church
Portchester

ALL TOGETHER SERVICE

Special Guest Speaker:

Canon J. John



J. John is an evangelist, minister, speaker, broadcaster and writer. He has been in ministry for four decades. He has spoken in towns, cities and universities in 69 countries.

SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER
10.30AM

Portchester Community School
White Hart Lane, Portchester PO16 9BD

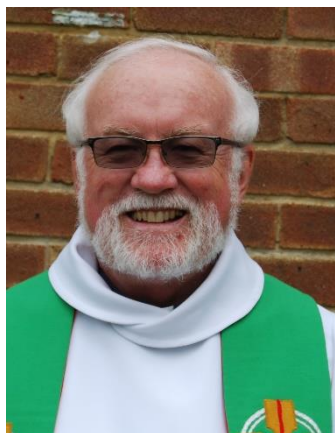
**Bring your family and friends
for this joyful occasion!**

Services and events this summer

July

Sunday 5th 9.30am

Rev Trevor's 50th anniversary of Ordination



Rev Trevor (or to be correct, Canon Trevor) will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination which took place at Southwark Cathedral in 1976. He then became a missionary with the USPG serving in Lesotho and South Africa. On returning to the UK he became Training Officer for the Diocese of Durham and then Warden of the Lee Abbey International Centre in London. During his time in South Africa and was an Archdeacon then made an Honorary Canon. Trevor, with his wife Samia, continue to serve us at St Mary's in so many ways.



Friday 10th 6.30pm High Tide at Portchester

The monthly gathering of youth groups from across the diocese meets at Portchester in July. Leroy, one of the organisers is asking for any of our members who could help with safety and security.

Saturday 18th 5.45pm Confirmation

One of our members, Amy Yates is being confirmed at the cathedral tonight and a warm welcome is extended to anyone who wishes to go. Amy and Will with the twins are currently attending GOGS (Church of the Good Shepherd) in Crookhorn, but continue to enjoy engagement with St Mary's on occasion. The next service of confirmation will be on **14th November**. So far we have three interested. Any others please see Rev Ian as we will start a group in September.

Saturday 18th 6.30pm Italian Night;

Our last social event, the evening of music provided by Kathy Snowden was a great success, but in typically (and frustratingly!) St Mary's style, people left it until the last minute to get tickets (we were almost cancelling it). In the end it was full. The Italian night is limited to 60 so please book up soon.

St Mary's
Portchester

ITALIAN EVENING WITH MEAL & QUIZ

with Raffle

Saturday 18 July
6.00pm for 6.30pm start
St Mary's Church, Portchester

Spaghetti Bolognese followed by Ice Cream
(Please bring your own drinks)

Tickets £7.00
available from Tea Room,
Parish Office & QR code
(Max of 6 in each quiz team)

Thursday 18th Children's Holiday Club

(see poster in article on children's work for details)

Thursday 23rd 1.00pm Recital by Wendy Callear



"An immersive experience" relieving songs you thought you'd forgotten.

Wendy is one of our own members here at St Mary's. A former music teacher, she is a talents pianist, guitarist, singer and general raconteur. She is bringing a really good programme of summer entertainment which you will enjoy, and we hope you will support.

Admission s free with a retiring collection towards church funds.

August

Sunday 30th 12.30pm Cake Sale

Organised by Scott and Holly Brodrick

..... and in September

Make a note of these dates and details will appear in the next (September) magazine.

Thursday 3rd 1.00pm **Concert with Fumi**

Friday 4th 6.30pm **Newcomers' Meal**

Saturday 5th **Ladies' Breakfast**

Sunday 6th **Patronal Festival**

Saturday 12th 8.00am – 9.45am **Men's Breakfast**

Sunday 13th 6.00pm **Evening Services** start

Saturday 19th 6.00pm **Folk Concert**

Sunday 20th 11.30am **Harvest Festival**

Tuesday 22nd 7.30pm **Mission Guatemala**

Saturday 26th 6.30pm **Harvest Supper**

Sunday 27th 10.30am **All Together Service**
Speaker: J John

Tuesday 29th 7.00pm **Alpha Course** starts

March for Life UK

Coffee Morning

Date : 30th August
Time : 12:30pm

St. Mary's
Church
Portchester
PO16 9QW

Coffee, cake & conversation!
Come along to raise money for March for Life UK! Enjoy
homemade bakes, sweet treats, children activities, handmade
Jewellery and learn more about the Pro Life mission! All
Welcome!

Not many churches around here are able to put on such a varied programme of worship, teaching and social events.

Please don't ever take this for granted, and support all those who work so hard to put these on.

Let's build a community who want to:

- **Be with Jesus**
- **Become like Jesus**
- **Do what Jesus did**

Church members celebrate

During the summer, some of our church members are celebrating various family events at St Mary's:



- **Charlie Vince and Lyn Wilson** are getting married on Saturday 11th July
- **Shane Holder and Samantha Fincken** are getting married on 18th July
- **Robert and Jackie Mitchell** are celebrating their baptism of their first grandchild, **Samuel William Mitchell** on 18th July.



Mike and Jane Baker

are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on 21st August

We wish all these couples and their families God's richest blessing on the day and for the future.

New Youth Group at St Mary's thriving!

Carol Gay writes

The youth group started at the beginning of May, as a follow on discipleship group from the Youth Alpha. The teenagers who attend are from those who attended the Alpha Course, regular members of St Mary's congregation and one from the old Momentum group.

We've had ten members, although one has moved away.

We meet on 1st and 3rd Friday of each month, mainly in the Parish Hall, we begin with Pizza, funded by a donation.

We've had one meeting in the church which was a real hit with the group. Chocolate bars to start with this time 😊.

They liked the setting of the church and being able to have activities outside. Our final assessment of the term will be at the church again.

As the group is new, we are working with the young people to get the format right and have already made changes based on their feedback.

They have come up with ideas for extra activities which they could invite friends to. Hopefully this would spark interest in the regular meetings.

The majority of the group have signed up for the High Tide Summer Special holiday at Fairthorne Manor. Funded by the church.

It's a blessing to be able to lead the group. We are praying that the young people grow in their faith and that the group will grow in numbers.

We are very grateful for the continued support of St Mary's Church.

Please pray for the young people and for the leaders that we will be all be guided by the Holy Spirit.

From the team

Ashley, Lyn, Rob and Carol

Photo bombed ...

A few of us from St Mary's turned up at the cathedral last night for Choral Evensong. Among those in the congregation were organists and musical directors from various parish churches, invited as a "thank you" for their services.

At the group photo at the end, Ted Nash and his dad Steve decided that if there was a group photo happening, they would be in it. So here among all these musicians and singers is Steve and Ted (back row 5th and 6th from the left).

Rev Ian took part in the service as an Honorary Canon; Ben Hanley's singing was drowned out by the choir and organ! While there we caught up with a few friends: David Cain was there as was Tony Froggett (back row 7th from left) who has often been a guest organist at St Mary's.

Esther Lombardi turned up as a member of the congregation – she will be preaching at St Mary's 11.30 service on 19th July, and that same evening Canon Ian will be preaching at the cathedral.

At the close of the service, the cathedral's Director of Music, Dr David Price reminded us that the diocese is sponsoring "choir church", a project aimed at encouraging young people to take an interest in choral music and perhaps starting a children's choir at their church. Is that something we could think of at St Mary's?

The Dean also reminded us that the Anglican service of Evensong is one of the oldest continuing English traditions, being compiled by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in the 16th century, it was being said in churches 50 years before Shakespeare's first play was performed.

We will be having a service of Evensong in September for our Patronal Festival on 6th September – perhaps not quite cathedral standard, but keeping the tradition alive in Portchester.



St Mary's Church

Not just a building to visit or a service to attend,
but a community of disciples who want to

- Be with Jesus
- Become like Jesus
- Do what Jesus did.



During the summer a team of us will be meeting to revitalise the outreach, follow up, teaching and discipling ministry of the church.

9.30 Sermons; 11.30 Sermons; Alpha Course +
Follow up courses, for example:

- 3-2-1
- Christianity/Discipleship Explored
- Two ways to live
- Practicing the Way
- The Bible Course

House Groups; Hub courses; Gateway Sessions

J. John (27th Sept); Steps to Recovery (*John Ortberg*)

One to one mentoring; Younger men's meals;
Younger women's meals; Confirmation/Baptism
preparation; The teaching of C.S. Lewis



We can only do this with the support of the congregation
including those who will:

- Prayer regularly for us
- Volunteer for ministry opportunities
- Offer themselves as small group leaders
- Give money regularly
- Turn up at services and events
- Encourage those who are working hard.
- Don't moan about things – be constructive. What can you do?

**Sunday Services: 8.00am; 9.30am & 11.30am (church in the castle)
& 6.00pm (Parish Hall)**

Wednesdays 6.30pm at the church and Fridays 10am at the Parish Hall.

Parish Office: Portchester Parish Hall, Assheton Court, Portchester, PO16 9PY

Tel: 02392 321380; E-mail: office@stmary-portchester.org.uk

Office hours: Tuesday – Thursday 9am – 4pm; Friday 9am – 1.00pm

Website: www.stmary-portchester.org.uk

Vicar: Rev Canon Dr Ian Meredith, Tel: 02392 375422; E-mail: irev@ymail.com