

WELCOME TO ST MARK'S CHURCH

Bell Street, Swanage, BH19 2SA



THIS SUNDAY: 3rd May 2026 – 5th Sunday of Easter

10am Holy Communion *Rev Dave Richards*

Bible Theme: Genesis 8:1-19 Acts 7:55-60 John 14:1-14

Followed by Drinks & Cake in the Church Room

Gluten Free – please talk to the Welcomer if you'd like a gluten-free Communion Wafer. We also have gluten-free refreshments afterwards

DIARY FOR THIS WEEK

- **CHURCH & GARDEN OPEN** 10am - 4pm, Tuesday - Saturday
- Mon 4th: **The 2026 Herston Community Picnic**, from 11am - 3pm at the Herston Community Field and Village Hall. This free, family-friendly event, brings the community together for activities including a nature trail, face painting, and arts and crafts. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own picnic.
- Mon 4th: **No St Mark's Choir Practice – Bank Holiday**
- Tue 5th: **Junior Singing Club meets as normal** - 3:30pm - 4:20pm in the Church, for children in School Years 3 and over.
- Tue 5th: **Fortnightly Bible Study** - 7pm in the Church Room (refreshments from 6:45pm). This is a change to the Diary Dates listed in Church Alive! this month, due to people being away on holiday, and there will be no Bible Study on 12th May.
- Wed 6th: **Prayer & Share** 10am - 10:45am in the Church Room

NEXT SUNDAY: 10th May 2026 – 6th Sunday of Easter

10am Holy Communion *Rev Tony Higgins*

Bible Theme: Genesis 8:20 - 9:17 Acts 17:22-31 John 14:15-21

Followed by Drinks & Cake in the Church Room

Please take a copy of the May “Church Alive!” Magazine.

Christian Aid Week 10th- 17th May: There will be some envelopes in Church during this week if people want to make a donation to this cause, and special refreshments after the Service on 17th May, with donations for Christian Aid. Thanks to Anne Roper for organizing everything.

Ascension Day Holy Communion: Thursday 14th May. The Service is at 7:30pm at St Mary’s Church.

Any Questions – Science and God, Friends or Foes? Thursday 21st May at 7pm (refreshments from 6:30pm) at All Saints Church, Ulwell. The speaker is Professor Andrew Halestrap, Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry, Bristol, and Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

The next Celebration Service with St Mark’s Band is on Sunday 24th May at 10am. Everyone is welcome. This is the 4th Sunday rather than the 5th – a change from the original schedule.

Herston Prayer Cycle (2nd Edition): Please take a copy, if you didn’t get one last week, and pray for our local community each day of the month

COLLECT (Special Prayer) for the 5th Sunday of Easter: Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION: Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

St Mark’s Church, Herston, is part of the Swanage & Studland Team
www.swanageteam.com

St Mark’s Website: www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Mark-Herston



For the latest St Mark's News check out our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/StMarksHerston

Disciples of Christ, sharing the compassionate and caring love of God with the School and Community of which we are a part.

TEAM NOTES

'Come & Sing' Choral Evensong next Sunday, 10th May at 6.30pm in St Mary's Church. Our guest this month is Prof Stephen Darlington, formerly of Christ Church, Oxford. *Come and Sing* event is open to all singers. Arrival at St Mary's is for a 4.00pm rehearsal start. Cups of tea are provided between the rehearsal end and the service start at 6.30pm. All Welcome. Music provided. Just come and sing!

Christian Aid Week 10th - 16th May. There will be a coffee morning and cake sale (in the Rectory Classroom) on 16th May between 10 - 12 noon. This is supported by churches in Swanage so we do hope you will find time to come and meet people. On 10th May at 10:30 there will be a service at the Methodist Church highlighting the work of Christian Aid.

Ascension Day services will be held on Thursday 14th May at St Nicholas, Studland, 6.30am, followed by breakfast in the Church Hall and at St Mary's. 7.30pm.

Message from Rev Dr Ian Bird: Our Curate, Natalie, will be leaving Swanage in August to be licensed as Succentor at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, and Chaplain at St George's School there. She will also be completing her curacy at St George's. The Succentor is a priest who leads and sings worship, supports liturgical planning and administration, and contributes to the pastoral and teaching life of St George's. Natalie is extremely sad to leave Swanage and Studland and the Diocese of Salisbury. She has met and worked with some wonderful people who have become dear friends. She is grateful to be here for one more Summer, and excited to see what God has in store for this next chapter of her ministry. Please do hold Natalie and Joseph in your prayers, along with the people of Swanage, Studland, Windsor and the College of St George.

Studland's Community Coffee Morning - Down on the Farm. Thursdays at 10am, the Manor Farm Tea Rooms. The Community Coffee group has moved to Manor Farm for the summer season. Same fun. Same great conversation. Lovely coffee and excellent scones! See you there!

Date for your diary 17th May at 6.30pm, St Nicholas Church, Studland. A special service From Soil to Sky, a Celtic Service of Worship. Everyone is welcome!



All Things Bright and Beautiful takes place in St Mary's Church each Tuesday from 2.30pm – 3.30pm. A short service, which includes well known hymns, is followed by tea and cake. All are welcome..

T-Pot is held every Wednesday from 10.00am to 12.30pm in the Rectory Classroom. Come along for a cuppa and a chat.



Friday Fun Club – meets on Friday evenings 6.30-8pm, during term time, in the Rectory Classroom for school years 4-9 to enjoy food, games and chat.

REFLECTION

John 14:1-14

Who is Jesus, and why is he so special? We find the answer in John 14:6, when Jesus tells us that he is: *“The Way, the Truth and the Life”*. It’s a great soundbite, but Jesus intended this to be more than self-promotion.

The context of John 14 is complicated. It is part of Jesus’ last discourse. He knows that his disciples are about to face a devastating loss; he wants to offer them comfort. He also wants to prepare them for the task of witnessing to his death and resurrection, so his words are a mixture of teaching and reassurance. He begins with words of assurance: *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me”* He speaks of going away and *“preparing a place for them”*. We are indebted to Thomas – questioning, doubting Thomas - for speaking up and saying: *‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’* This prompts the wonderful response: *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”*.

These words sum up so much about Jesus.

- He doesn’t just show us the Way – he is **the Way**. Through him we meet God.
- He doesn’t just tell us the truth – he embodies **the Truth**. Truth is a major theme in John’s Gospel; at the very beginning of the Gospel we hear that: *“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us..... full of grace and truth”*. Jesus lives out God’s truth in his earthly life, and lets us see God in himself.
- Jesus tops all this off by saying he is **the Life**. Life is another key theme of this Gospel – also mentioned the opening words of the Gospel and expanded in John 10:10, where Jesus promises his followers *“Life in all its fullness”*.

These words are more than a soundbite; they are a commission to share Jesus, his way, his truth and his new life, in all its fullness, with the world.

Revd Dave Richards

Team Contact details

Team Rector

Revd Dr Ian Bird Tel: 01929 422916 (normal day off Friday)

Team Vicar

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Parish Office

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Visit our Team website swanageteam.com