

Church Alive!

Swanage Parish Magazine

April 2025



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Rev Natalie Davies writes

We are now in the season of Lent which lasts between Ash Wednesday (5th March) and Easter Day (20th April). Now of course this is not 40 days as we might expect from our Biblical narratives. If you count between



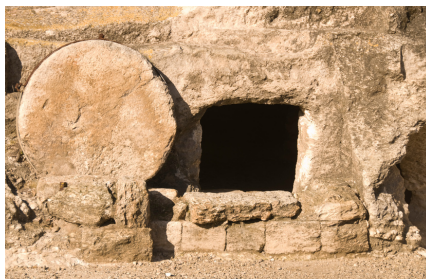
Ash Wednesday and Easter Day you actually come up with 46 days. So why is this? Well Sundays are not included in this calculation as Sundays always celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

When I was at theological college however, one of the biggest debates of the year was whether you kept your Lenten fast throughout the 46 days, or whether you took Sundays off. If this seems like a pretty niche argument to you, well you're right, it is, but I can tell you the annual debate between the two sides got pretty heated!

All of this aside, the main point in all this is that in our fasting, or indeed in our taking up something we new for Lent if that is your preference, we are imitating the 40 days and nights that Jesus spent in the wilderness. We are remembering that he suffered and that he was tempted, revealing his identity as Son of God, and foreshadowing the further temptations he would have to save himself before his death on the cross.

The spiritual process of journeying through Lent is like starting with a wide-angle lens, which focuses down and down over the weeks as we get closer to Easter, ending in sharp focus on the events of Holy Week. In this special week we will walk beside Jesus as he enters Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, as he sits with

his disciples at the Last Supper, is betrayed, nailed to the cross, as he dies, as he is placed in the tomb and as Mary weeps... but then, most wonderfully, we will see the stone being rolled away and his body found to be absent



as he has risen indeed. These are events that we will mark in our services taking place across the Team. Further details on these services are in the church pages and will be available on a handy card to pick up in our churches. Please do join us if you can.

To help you with your Lenten journey you may also be taking part in one of the Lent Groups running across the Team. Or perhaps you are reading a book of Lenten reflections. There are also many resources on the Church of England website such as the Dust and Glory app or you can also sign up to receive the Living Hope daily reflections.

However you mark this season, I pray that Lent will be blessed and fruitful time for you all and a time of drawing closer to God.



Revd Natalie Davies



"Sharing Faith in a Secular Culture"

A presentation by Dr Paul Weston, Fellow at Ridley Hall, Cambridge

Tuesday 13th May, at All Saints' Church
Swanage, BH19 1NA. 6.30pm for 7.00pm.

St Mary's



Sunday Services:

8.00am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Choral Eucharist
6.30pm	Choral Evensong

Weekday Services

Daily	8am	Morning Prayer
Tue	2.30pm.	All Things Bright & Beautiful <i>(particularly suitable for those living with dementia or any kind of special need)</i>
Wed	10am-	
	12.30pm.	T-Pot in the Rectory Classroom
	11am	Holy Communion <i>Every 4th Weds with Healing</i>
Fri	5.30pm	Junior Choir Practice
	6.30pm	Adult Choir Practice
	6-8pm	Friday Fun Club in the Rectory

April Diary

Tues 1st	All Day Lacock Choral Course
7.30pm	Annual Parochial Church Meeting at All Saints Church
Thurs 3rd	All day Lacock Choral Course
Sat 5th	All day Lacock Choral Course

Weds 9th

3.55-5.10pm Visiting bellringers
Purbeck Arts Choir afternoon set-up
6-9.30pm Purbeck Arts Choir rehearsal

Sat 12th

1-5pm PAC rehearsal
6.30-9.30pm Purbeck Arts Choir Concert

Sun 13th

10.30am Choral Eucharist for Palm Sunday

Tues 15th

7.30pm Sung Compline

Thurs 17th

7.30pm Maundy Thursday Eucharist with foot washing

Fri 18th

12-3pm Good Friday 3 Hour Meditation

Sat 19th

8.30pm. Easter Eve Vigil

Sun 20th

10.30am Choral Eucharist for Easter Day
6.30pm Festal Evensong

St Mary's Notes

By the time this magazine is with you, we will have had a Stewardship appeal. I'd just like to add one thing about PGS – the Parish Giving Scheme. For those of us who are in a position to give regularly to the work of the church, PGS is the optimum way for us to make our donations. It might mean cancelling an existing Standing Order, but once that is done, and a new one made out to PGS, the job is done.

Donations can be monthly, quarterly, annually, or “one-offs”. PGS is a church-owned, not for profit company which deals only with churches' giving. The scheme is paid for by PGS receiving interest by holding the money for a few days before passing on to the relevant church account. The advantage for our parish is that PGS deals with all the administration, including Gift Aid

claims, which cuts out a lot of work for our Finance Team. Allo they have to do is to deal with the monthly statement from PGS. **I am pleased to say** that we now have a new Contactless Payment Point in the church; this is the second most efficient method of giving and it has Gift Aid too. The problem with cash is that it has to be counted (twice) and taken to a bank - not in Swanage! But, of course, donations are always welcome in every form. Perhaps if we call Christmas the Big One in Christian terms, then perhaps Easter is the Very Big One? Before that, we have the rest of Lent before Palm Sunday on April 13th – there went Jesus into Jerusalem, met by cheering crowds flinging their coats in front of his – well, not a mighty camel, nor a magnificent horse, but a workaday donkey, turning the expectation of the arrival of a political rebel leader on its head and instead fulfilling another, that of “....your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey”. God is often surprising!

During Holy Week have more services across the Parish and Team than at any other time of the church’s year. Pleased do look at the leaflet which lists all the services across the four Team churches. In Holy Week there are at least two services to choose from each day. Some are said and some are choral, such as Compline at St Mary’s on Tuesday of Holy Week, and Choral Eucharist on Maundy Thursday evening. As usual, on Good Friday at St Mary’s there will be “The Three Hours”, starting at 12 noon. Stay for the whole time or come in or go out when there is music.

On Easter Eve we light the Pascal Candle outside the church at the beginning of the once-a-year Easter Eve liturgy of Bible readings, renewal of baptismal vows, hymns, and singing by the choir. Here’s a challenge – during Holy Week, why not go to a service that you haven’t been to before?

Wishing everyone a joyful Eastertide,

Avril Harris, Churchwarden

All Saints



Regular Sunday Services

8am Holy Communion
10.30am Family Worship with children's groups
1st Sunday Communion
2nd Sunday All-Age Café Church

Weekly Church Calendar

Coffee Pot Thursdays 10:30am
Art Workshop Fridays 10am

Opportunities to pray together

Weekly Thursdays 9:30 – 10am

Holy Week special events

All Saints Prayer Room open – do drop in

7am Monday 14th April – 9pm Tuesday 15th April
Worship band playing 8-8:30pm Monday 14th
7am-9pm Wednesday 16th April
Maundy Thursday 17th April
6-8pm Reflective Meal (booking essential)

Good Friday 18th April

10:30am All Age Worship
Followed by walk of witness down to bandstand for
11:30am Churches Together Service around the Cross

Easter Sunday 20th April

6am Churches Together Sunrise service on the beach

8am Holy Communion

10.30am All Age Communion

6pm Easter Open Worship at All Saints

Wednesday 23rd April:

Worship Night at All Saints

Sunday 27th April

8am Holy Communion

10.30am Morning Worship with Junior Church



EASTER PRAYER ROOM
AT ALL SAINTS CHURCH

PRAYER ROOM OPEN
MONDAY 13 APRIL 7AM–TUESDAY 14 APRIL 9PM
& WEDNESDAY 15 APRIL 7AM–9PM



Follow QR code to sign up for a timed slot or follow the link below:

News from All Saints

Since we last wrote, All Saints has been delighted to welcome back one of our younger members, Jamie Fleming who has returned from a 5-month discipleship training programme with Catch the Fire Ministries in Toronto. It sounds like it was a powerful experience for him, and we are looking forward to his forthcoming tea and presentation sharing some of what he has learnt.

God is always at work in unexpected ways amongst us, and since I wrote last month about “seeing what God is doing and joining in”, we’ve hosted a small group of teenagers who wanted to start knitting group and another teenager looking to start a band at All Saints! So often we have our agendas and then God brings connections in different ways!

We are also looking forward to 2 evenings exploring the Evidence for Easter, as presented by our very own Sam Brooke, who has recently successfully completed his Master’s thesis on a controversy in the early church. At the other end of the age range, we’ve had 2 church members celebrating 80th birthdays recently and one longstanding member of All Saints is just about to celebrate her 70th wedding anniversary at the end of March! Not many have the privilege of enjoying that event! As we celebrated at our church AGM on March 9th, we have been really blessed with the development of our musical worship bands over the last year, and also with the involvement of a couple of young people. We have also been enjoying the new informal bi-monthly worship evenings at Emmanuel Baptist church that several of our musicians are involved in.

As we look ahead to April and Holy Week, we will once again be turning All Saints into a Prayer room – this time for a little longer to allow more people to participate. For those who have never been to a prayer room before, we set the church up with

a series of interactive prayer stations and invite people to come and spend time in the church, either to engage with the prepared activities, or do simply pray in whatever way they like. We will be opening the prayer room at 7am on Monday 15th April and keeping it open through the night until 9pm on Tuesday 16th, then reopening for the day on Wednesday 17th from 7am-9pm.

The night slots will need to be booked – and are often the most incredible times – it is extraordinary how powerfully one encounters God when you do something a little crazy like pray

Here's one person's story from last year's prayer room:

"I don't usually go to public (Church) Prayer days as I feel uncomfortable at them despite doing the prayers at Sunday services and at home on my own. Thus I wasn't going to attend the All Saints prayer event last May. It just wasn't my thing. However, I had a strong feeling that God was prompting me to go, to do something out of my comfort zone and He would be with me. So I went.

I'm so glad I did! It was brilliant. The church felt very relaxed, the prayer stations thoughtful and provoking, and there was something special re praying in the quietness of the church on my own and with others. God was very present, and I never felt forced to do anything I didn't feel happy with. In short, I really enjoyed it.

It also taught me that sometimes God calls us to go out of our comfort zone so that we can learn to trust him more and enjoy our relationship with him in new ways."

So, whatever you may feel, I would encourage you to give it a go - you never know what God may say to you in a new and encouraging way or how he will answer your prayers according to his purposes. "

With every blessing

Rev Jo Levasier

St Mark's Notes for April

Diary



31st March 1:30pm	School KS1 Easter Service
Tuesday 1st April 1:30pm	School KS2 Easter Service
Sunday 6th April 10am	Holy Communion
Tuesday 8th April 7pm	Lent Group
Sunday 13th April 10am	Palm Sunday
Holy Communion	Rev. John Cooper

Services in Holy Week

Monday 6pm	Meditation and Compline Rev. David Richards
Tuesday 6pm	Meditation and Compline Rev. John Cooper
Wednesday 6pm	Meditation and Compline Rev. David Richards
Maundy Thursday No service at St Mark's, but 7.30pm Holy Communion at St Mary's.	

Good Friday

10am	Around the Cross
11:30am	Churches Together Service at the Bandstand
6:30pm	Good Friday Meditation at Studland Church

Easter Sunday

6am	Churches Together Sunrise on the Beach
10am	EASTER Holy Communion

Rest of April

Tuesday 22nd April	7pm Bible Study Group
Sunday 27th April 10am	13 St Marks Day Celebration!
Sunday 27th April 3pm-4:30pm	Teddy Bears' Picnic A FREE

SPRING HAS ARRIVED Isn't it good to know that there are signs of Spring around us! As I write this, daffodils, crocuses and primroses are adorning the roadsides and cheering everyone's spirits. We haven't experienced much warmth yet, unless you have been in the sunshine and out of the wind, but we know that things are moving in the right direction and we can start talking about outdoor events without needing to cover ourselves in layers of clothing for every venture out of the door, So, on our list of diary dates, we are able to include the Good Friday service at the bandstand and our sunrise welcome to Easter Day, I'm not able to promise fine, warm weather but we can hope!

MARCH HAS BROUGHT US OUT OF WINTER. The first event was the church committee on the 3rd of the month with the usual lively discussion of matters concerning the life of our community and a tempting list of forthcoming events to inspire our life together. It was good for some of our members to meet together for the Ash Wednesday service; a good occasion to begin our observance of Lent, a season which has continued with a Bible-based discussion each week in the Lent group and, of course, the Lent lunch for the benefit of Christian Aid, but also to be a good occasion for members of other churches, and of none, to come together and to chat in a relaxed atmosphere. The first of the series was at St Mark's on 14 March and was well attended and much enjoyed, fuelled by home-made soup as well as bread and cheese. As always, the members of St Mark's came up trumps and our church members and visitors were welcomed into a nicely decorated church room with tables set out attractively. Those of us who have coffee and cake after Sunday services and who come for other events have seen changes in the room in recent months with new radiators and lights and many unnecessary items taken away. Many thanks to Dave Richards and Dave Hudson for all they have one

And there are plans for more changes to come. A number of those who visited commented on how cheerful our garden looked. Well done Dave H and Tony!

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD.

On Sunday 16 March we held St Mark's Annual Meeting which was a great opportunity to remind ourselves of our activities through the year, with a collection of photographs assembled by Carol Richards. There were reports from the Resident Priest, the Churchwardens, the Electoral Roll Officer, the Organist and Choir Master and other Officers. All were thanked for their contributions to the life of the church. Anne Roper and I were re-elected as churchwardens and were delighted to accept your trust for another year; we cannot think of a better church of which to be churchwarden. We are very pleased to be joined on the Church Committee by Mike Keats and Anne Johnson. We want to thank Jenny Lazenbury and Jean Bettles, who stand down after three years service. We also welcome Nicky Dolton onto our team of Welcomers and to read lessons from time to time.

COMING UP.

As I write we are looking forward to the "St Mark's Goes Global" evening which looks like a lot of fun, on 22nd March. We then follow the period of Lent and Holy Week to the joy of Easter. Look carefully at the dates above so that you don't miss anything you would like to join us for during April and make the dates known to family and friends, so that they can join us as well!

With all best wishes for the coming month and into the future.

John Way Churchwarden.

St Nicholas Studland



Parish News

Hope springs eternal is a good phrase to describe Easter. As I approach retirement as Resident Priest at St Nicholas I can reflect upon a happy and welcoming time spent over the last 15+ years . Felicity has been my “cornerstone” throughout this period. We would not have had such a happy time, as well as sometimes turbulent times without the love, prayers and support of so many people in the church and wider community. There are so many people to thank, too many to name here so I hope you accept this general thank you to the whole community. I will be saying thank you individually as well.

Your March saw a busy start to Lent.

Both the “Ash Wednesday” and “World Day of Prayer” were well supported, and we had a good number of readers for the “World Day of Prayer” service, which was

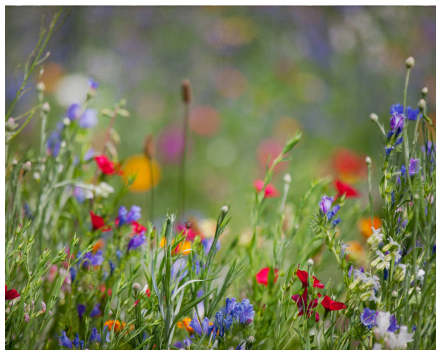


very moving according to many who attended the service. Thank you to all who helped and especially Annie and Doris for the lovely teas.

After the main morning service on the 16th of March a full church attended the baptism of Romi Roo Bridges and Bettie Churchill. This was a happy family occasion with many members of the Churchill family present. On the 17th of March the final PCC for this church year took place. My thanks to Andrew Goodwin who retires as treasurer this year after many years.

Also to Carol Wadley who retires as Secretary. Both jobs have been done with great commitment. Although retiring as PCC Secretary Carol is taking over as Electoral Roll officer. Thank you to Jane Hawksworth for all that she has done setting up and being our Safeguarding officer. I am delighted to say Sara Jayne Smith is taking over this important role. Thanks must include the Church Wardens Eric Stobart and Barbara Matthews along with all who have been part of the PCC. Eric will take over as Treasurer at the Annual Parish meeting on April 8th at 7.00pm. PCC meetings

Barbara Matthews is a person I believe all will agree deserves a special thank you. Barbara has tirelessly carried out or overseen so many different tasks with such good humour, efficiency and love for everything that involves St Nicholas Church. This year has been particularly onerous with the complexities of the Organ restoration, the Meadow and fund raising to go towards costs. She has been so supportive and willing even when her own health and family needed her to slow down a bit. I persuaded Barbara to be Church warden without realising just how much was



involved. She has been a wonderful support and been wonderful to work with.

On the 22nd of March we had a wonderful gentle gathering of family to ask God's blessing on the special friendship of Sue White and Robin Field. Such events remind us how blessings can come along when we least expect them.

As we came to the end of March Mothering Sunday was celebrated. Mothering Sunday is a popular day when Christians choose to use the occasion to think about all things which concern motherhood. We give thanks for the Church as Mother,

the Virgin Mary as the mother of Jesus, we remember that God cares for us like a mother and last but not least we give thanks for our own mothers. Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday in Lent and it is a time of special thanksgiving. It is a day in Lent when people are encouraged to share a time for refreshment in the penitential season. In so many ways this sums up St Nicholas approach to Christian faith, looking outwards to the whole community.



As April begins and a new chapter in the history of St Nicholas begins, Hope springs eternal. The church has stood a thousand years as a beacon of hope, not just a vague idea but a certainty. We live in challenging times but history tells us that though life may be messy at times our hope is justified and Easter Sunday is the proof we often seek. “Hope springs eternal” We send our love and prayers to everyone in Studland.

God Bless

Rev Tony Higgins (Resident Priest)

From the Registers

Baptisms

16th March

Bettie Lou Churchill

Romi Roo Bridges

Weddings

1st March

Mark Stuart Barry and Amy Joanne Tucker

A copy of the talk given by Kevin Burke to the Swanage Christian Men's Breakfast Group 1st Feb 25 on the subject of 'Change'

It is ironic that today, when we mourn the passing of our brother Stephen Williams, we are continuing with our theme of change. It represents a huge change for this group to carry on without him at the helm, yet he would have wanted nothing more than we continue on, and embrace this enforced change as a way of rejoicing in his legacy to us.

All transitions are hard ... yet life is peppered with them. We leave the warmth and protection of our home to go to school; we move on to a bigger school, and a bigger; we move onto university, perhaps; we get a job... we fall in love, perhaps we get married... we get the first home of our own, some of us will have children, and grandchildren... then we retire. This is the flow of life, and if we are lucky, that flow is dictated by the choices we make... sometimes good, positive choices, sometimes not.

For we are blessed indeed if our lives run exactly as planned, and even then, there will inevitably be times of great stress and anxiety along the way. But enforced change, change not of our choosing, but that which is forced upon us, is surely the hardest to bear, and such changes are more often than not related to loss. Loss of a job, loss of a relationship, loss of a home, the death of a loved one... all are events that send us into a downward spiral which can result in depression, loss of self-esteem, and despair.

And yes, this applies to Christians too. In some ways it can be doubly difficult when we have faith, because we are supposed to feel the love and support of the Holy Spirit at all times, and it seems like a betrayal of our God to admit that we are struggling, that we are suffering, and that we can't see a way out. Sometimes, such awful, life-changing events happen because we have taken a wrong turn in our lives and become the proverbial lost sheep, but more often it is because

circumstances force us onto a path that we don't want to be on and certainly wouldn't have chosen.

Sometimes when we look back on these changes, we can see the hand of God moulding us and guiding us, bringing out of the experience valuable life lessons... but all too often it is difficult to discern His hand in such events, and we cry out in our distress for the Good Shepherd to come and rescue us. At such times we can take comfort in the words of *Jeremiah 29:11* *'For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.'*

Christianity is above all a joyful religion, and so much of what we lay claim to revolves around giving praise and glory to our heavenly Father for his great goodness towards us. Yet at times of great stress, anxiety or loss it can be hard to feel very joyful. But the promise of our Lord is that he IS with us, always, even when we cannot feel him. As he says in Matthew 28:20 'Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world' And in our Christian family we have a support network second to none, if only we have the courage to reach out for help.

Many of us have experienced the shock of the sudden, unexpected death of a loved one, just as Margaret has with the loss of Stephen. Most people would say that that's how they would want to go... suddenly with no warning... but for those left behind it is devastating, having no time to prepare for such a cataclysmic life change. So our prayers must be with all those who are bereft, all those who feel like the rug has been pulled out from beneath their feet, and all those who feel utterly lost, abandoned and alone.

In his book 'A Grief Observed' CS Lewis speaks of Christ's cry from the cross 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me' – drawing comfort from the fact that in His time of greatest anguish, even our Lord felt abandoned by God. And we should all take comfort from that.

Certainly in my deepest, darkest moments I am reminded of Joshua 1:9 'Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.'

And as difficult as it may sometimes be to hold fast to that promise, we must cling to it like a shipwrecked man on a storm-tossed sea... for God's word is not an empty promise, but a pillar of fire to lead us through the darkness into calmer waters... the only reliable guide through the trials and tribulations of life until we reach the shores of the promised land. And I say Amen to that!

Kevin Burke



**Available on Amazon or
kevin@kevinburke.co.uk**

Well-written, evocative and emotive, this is a grief book that will help many people who are struggling to process the sudden loss of someone whom they deeply love, and will also be useful to those who are supporting them. It's unusual format, with voice note transcriptions prefacing the chapters, brings added poignancy. Kevin's narration as he records, then expands on his emotions following the heartbreaking loss of his dear wife Shirley to suicide, is impactful. Many will find themselves in tune with his feelings around grief, especially his depiction of the first year, which is inevitably so hard to bear.

Andrea Corrie BEM

United Prayer

Every Tuesday morning there is a "Churches Together" prayer meeting at Emanuel Baptist Church from 9 am to 10 am.

Songs for Spring

This spring, the Belvedere Singers are delighted to welcome a very special soloist to their concert on 17th May.

Miro Treharne (previously Miro Vosper) is a mezzo-soprano who has been involved since her early school days with musical groups in Swanage. The connection to the Belvedere Singers is strong. She was a singing pupil with the Belvedere's former Music



Director, Helen Attfield, and has been performing at the choir's concerts since she was a very young singer. This May, Miro will perform three songs from Schumann's 12 Gedichte von Justinus Kerner; Le Temps des Lilas from Chausson's Poème de l'Amour et de la Mer; and the UK premier of the song cycle 'Crossings', written by the choir's Music Director Clive Watkiss, and his daughter, Arabella Watkiss.

Miro is currently studying at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, and this September she will further her musical studies at The Royal Academy of Music. She has performed as a soloist with established organisations on numerous occasions, including in 'Music For A While' with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and regularly performs song recitals at the Old Naval College, St James Piccadilly and the Polish Hearth Club.

Miro has a particular interest in English Song. Along with collaborative pianist Pietro Iacopini, she was winner of the English Song Duo Competition in 2023 and the Elisabeth Schumann Lieder Competition in 2024.

The choir will perform its usual eclectic mixture of choral works, including Ubi Caritas by Ole Gjeilo; As Torrents in Summer by Edward Elgar; some beautiful madrigals; and lighter pieces inspired by Flanders and Swann, and Gilbert and Sullivan. There will be something for everyone.

The concert will be held at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church, Church Hill, Swanage BH19 1HU. Tickets are £9 on the door or from choir members. Under 18s free.

There will be a retiring collection for Swanage Dementia Friendly Group.



Follow the choir on Facebook, The Belvedere Singers, or go to their website www.belvederesingers.org.uk

To advertise in

CHURCH ALIVE!

*please contact
the Parish Secretary*

Mrs. Karon Quirey
Parish Office, St. Mary's Rooms
(421117)
email: swanage.team@btconnect.com

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NEW HOPE FOR PEOPLE WITH DEPRESSION

One in six people in the UK suffer with depression, so if you are one of us you are not unique! Neither need you be alone, because Swanage Depression Support is re-opening its doors in April. We are a group of local people who experience depression, either ourselves or in our

families and friends, who aim to support each other. We shall be meeting fortnightly to share issues and engage in an activity together. If you can't come that evening, or would like to know more, please contact Alan on 07871 799479 or **swanagedepression@outlook.com**.

Swanage Depression Support



invite you to an

OPEN MEETING

to explain our plans to reopen the Group

Wednesday 2nd April 2025
7.30 pm (tea/coffee from 7)
The Focus Centre, Swanage High Street
(next to Methodist Church)

Please come if you are affected by depression—either yourself, a family member or friend
More details from swanagedepression@outlook.com
07871 799479

THE LEPROSY MISSION

Swanage Parish Statement of Accounts 1st March 2024 – 28th February 2025 Boxes £283.48 (£117.24 Gift Aided)

Donations £51.52 (£50.00 Gift Aided) Special Donations from St Mary's £222.00 on 22/09/24 _£557.00

My grateful thanks once again to all those of you who support the work of the Mission – either by your collecting boxes, cheques or direct payment to their Head Office.

Gabby North, Community Partnership Manager, visited St Mary's again on 22nd September 2024 – being the 150th Anniversary of the Mission. The weather that Sunday morning was terrible, resulting in a smaller congregation than usual, but still the sum of £222 plus gift aid was donated. Thank you.

Gabby is hoping to visit again later this year. All money raised is well received and it provides hope and care to those suffering from this awful debilitating and curable disease. If treated in time the medical staff are able to reduce the amount of damage caused. I wish to give special thanks to the Revd Paul Baird and his wife Joanna for organising the Coffee Morning on 1st March. Also to Janet Davis and Kevin Burke for their time and help. It was well supported and, I believe, enjoyed by all with the help of an interesting little quiz. The grand sum of £250 was raised. **Rosemary Carpenter**

Swanage Medical Practice

Patient Participation Group



Swanage Medical Practice Patient Participation Group (PPG) works with the Practice Manager and the GPs at Swanage Medical Practice to help improve and shape local services. The PPG is made up of patients registered with the Practice who have volunteered to get involved. We meet every two months – and we are always looking for new members! We last met on 11 March 2025, when we welcomed two new PPG members. We were joined by David Sale, the Volunteering and Community Services Officer for Dorset at the South Western Ambulance Service, who explained the important role Community First Responders play in helping patients receive immediate life-saving care within Swanage and the surrounding area. You can find out more about Community First Responders at: www.swast.nhs.uk/community-first-responders. Maggie Hardy also joined us to explain how the Swanage Community Defibrillator Project interfaces with the Ambulance Service.

Natasha Ritchie, Practice Manager, also attended our meeting and explained that the Practice is now inviting some patients to book appointments via a personalised link sent by text. Please do not ignore any such texts sent to you by the Practice.

We also received updates from Purbeck Parky's and Dementia Friendly Purbeck.

Our next meeting will be held at the Surgery on Tuesday 13 May 2025 at 6:00pm, when we will be agreeing our priorities for the next year.

You can find more information about the PPG, including Minutes of our meetings and our current Priorities, at

www.swanagemedical.org.uk/pages/Patient-Participation-Group.

If you are interested in joining the PPG, please contact Natasha Ritchie, the Practice Manager, or email the PPG directly at ppgswanage@gmail.com.

New 10 Year Health Plan for England

Please may I also draw your attention to a new survey on the Change NHS website (www.change.nhs.uk), which seeks people's views on their priorities for change in the NHS. The survey focuses on the ideas that have emerged from the engagement process, which has been taking place since the Autumn, and will help finalise the new 10 Year Health Plan for England. The Survey will close on Friday 14 April 2025.

Mrs Margaret Broadhurst (Dr Margaret Guy)

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On the cross Jesus opened wide his arms for us.
Jesus put an end to death by dying for us,
and showed us the resurrection to
come by His raising to new life!



Mouse Makes

Jesus is risen!

The angel said:
"Jesus ...is not here, for He
has risen, just as He said."
Matthew 28:6

Jesus is here

Jesus said:
"Where two or three
come together
in my name I am
there with them."
Matthew 18:20



READ the story of
the resurrection in:
Matthew 28:1-10
Mark 16:1-19
Luke 24:1-49
John 20:1-29
and 21:1-14



R E D E E M E R
E A S T E R P I
S A V I O U R S
U L T I M J A E
R I E D E L I N
R V J E S U S S
E E W B S P E P
C C L O I S S N
T H O S A N N A
I R R O H Y E U
O I D N P P W S
N S G O T E L L
K T A F O A I O
I Y O G J C F R
N U J O Y E E B
G O O D N E W S

Jesus will come again!

Jesus said:
"I will come back
and take you to
myself so that you
will be where I am."
John 14:3



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RESURRECTION
PEACE • NEW LIFE • JOY • GOOD NEWS • GO TELL • EASTER



MESSIAH • REDEEMER
CHRIST • SON OF GOD
HOSANNA • PRAISE



Crossword

Across

1 Relating to the whole universe (6)

4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)

8 'Unless I see the nail marks — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)

9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)

10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)

11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)

12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)

17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)

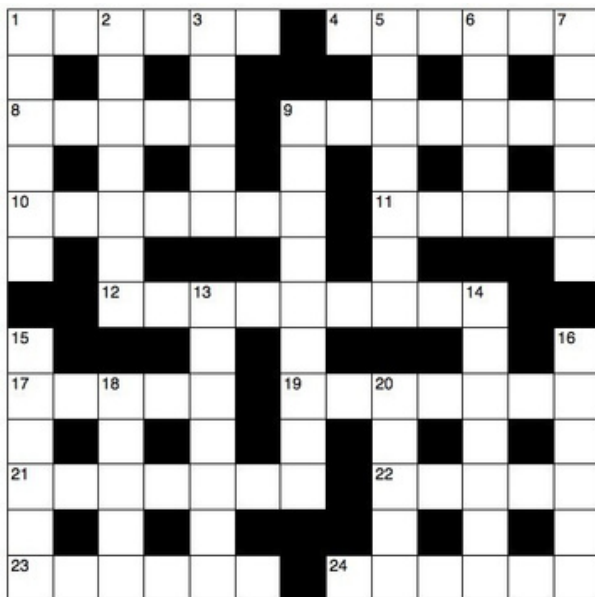
19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)

21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)

22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)

23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)

24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)



Down

1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)

2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)

3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)

5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)

6 11 Across is certainly this (5)

7 He reps (anag.) (6)

9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)

13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)

14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)

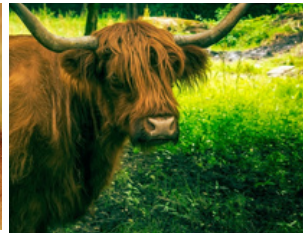
15 The human mind or soul (6)

16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)

18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)

20 Bared (anag.) (5)

Church Alive Cover Pages



*He satisfies your Weep no more; You have given me
desires with good behold, the Lion of the strength of a
things so that your the tribe of Judah, wild ox, and you
youth is renewed the Root of David, have chosen me to
like the eagle's has triumphed be your very own
Psalm 103.5 Revelation 5.5 Psalm 92.10*

You may have noticed that there is a Bible theme to the front cover pages of the February, March and April editions of Church Alive? There will be a box of chocolates for the first reader to email me with a description of the image for the cover page of the May edition.



swanagechurchalive@gmail.com

Solution to March Crossword



	C	O	R	I	N	T	H	I	A	N	S	
H		F		S		E		D		U		E
A	B	A	N	D	O	N		E	G	L	O	N
R		G		N		S	P	A		L		L
D	E	E	M		V		R		H	I	F	I
W			A	B	I	J	A	H		F		G
O	H	A	D		G		I		M	Y	T	H
R		B		N	O	W	S	E	E			T
K	N	I	T		U		E		T	I	D	E
I		S		A	R	M		S		S		N
N	A	H	O	R		A	L	L	D	O	N	E
G		A		I		L		U		N		D
	K	I	N	D	H	E	A	R	T	E	D	

Prison Visit

In the March edition of Church Alive there was an article from “The Bible Society” called “The Book That Transforms Lives.” This month we bring you a testimony that was referred to in that article.

“Last year I visited prisoners at HMP Bristol, taking two Sunday services. I shared my own story and a powerful testimony from Ukraine. I talked about the work of George Müller (who read the Bible through 200 times), changing the lives of orphans in Bristol, and the impact of the Bible among Iranians in Britain.

Because my story involved meeting God through a Bible verse discovered at random – *“God knows every step I take.” Job 23.10, GNB,* I asked everyone to open the Bible and read the first verse they saw. I didn’t know how this would go, and obviously I warned them beforehand that there are some odd verses in the Bible. But it was so powerful!

You could really feel the presence of the Spirit move as people shared some wonderful verses that spoke directly to them. Amazingly, folk stumbled across passages like Psalm 69, *an agonising cry for salvation,* Romans 12.1–4 *“be transformed by the renewal of your mind,”* and John 3.16, *“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

Those three came in the first service. In the second service I led it was even better. The very first verse someone shared was *Isaiah 51.14. ‘Those who are prisoners will soon be set free; they will live a long life and have all the food they need.’*

Everyone in the room just said ‘Wow!’ when they heard that. What’s more, the person who read that verse was released the following week. There’s so much to pray about with prison ministry, but this is a wonderful example of the light of Christ shining in the darkness.

After the service, six people took Bibles with them back to their cells. That was such a powerful picture of the need for God’s word in prison, the enormous hunger to know God. In my own experience of ministry, I’ve seen the Bible play a key role in the recovery journey of so many people.”

Harry Fenner Crawley

Hebrew Word of the Month

Your Shekinah: More Than Just Glory

Shekinah (שְׁכִינָה) is a profound Hebrew word that signifies the divine presence of God dwelling among His people. While often associated with God's glory, Shekinah represents so much more—it is the tangible manifestation of His nearness, His power, and His abiding presence.

Biblical Context:

"Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." – Exodus 40:34

Hebrew Meaning:

The word "Shekinah" comes from the root shakan (שָׁכַן), meaning "to dwell" or "to abide." It speaks of God's desire to be present with His people—not as a distant deity, but as an intimate and personal presence. When the Shekinah filled the Tabernacle, it was a visible sign that God was with Israel, leading, protecting, and guiding them.

Application:

God's Shekinah presence is not limited to the past. Through Yeshua, Jesus, we have access to His abiding presence in our lives today. When we seek Him, we can experience the warmth of His nearness, the assurance of His guidance, and the overwhelming reality of His love. His Shekinah is our comfort, our strength, and our source of life.

A Prayer for You:

May the Shekinah of God fill your heart and home today. May His glorious presence bring you comfort, direction, and deep assurance that He is always with you. May you walk in the light of His divine presence every day.

Letter from the Bishop

Hope in Springtime

‘Hope is the bird that waits for dawn and sings while it is still dark.’

This is one of my favourite quotations, which particularly comes to mind this month as the birds start to sing melodiously and signs of colour start to appear in our gardens. The long dark months of winter are over, and we can imagine once again those hazy lazy days of summer. And as the light of the days lengthens, we enter the celebration of the Son, Easter. April is certainly the month of hope.

Yet looking at our news headlines, hope feels in short supply. It is hard to remain hopeful for our planet, as world leaders vie for power, and our extreme weather systems indicate all is not well. Sitting in our crowded cathedral at the beginning of Lent speaking to Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and hearing her story of imprisonment as a hostage in Iran and injustice, I was reminded of a religious painting in the Methodist Art Collection. The painting is of the inside of the tomb on Easter morning. It shows the stone rolled away, not allowing us in, but allowing us to step out. Nazanin recalled her experience of re-adjusting to the light of freedom. Stepping out into a life of hope means adjusting to a long-term view, believing that there is more goodness to come. It means enjoying the colour now and living in the hope of all eternity.

As Christians Easter strengthens our belief that hope triumphs over despair, that light overcomes the darkness, and love wins. That is our song, which together we are called to sing. Despite everything, including the differences we live with every day, Jesus is Lord, the stone was rolled away so we can walk free and know eternal life.

Bishop Karen

Letter from the Editor

I am really enjoying the excellent “Living Hope” Lent Course which is being run in the parish. I have been attending the one at St Marks, led by Rev Dave Richards. One of the questions, on the first session, asked us to describe what *“justification by faith”* means. Rev Dave gave us a challenge: *“You are standing in a bus queue; your bus is due to arrive in one minute. Opposite the bus stop is a church with a sign that includes the phrase “justification by faith.” Someone in the queue asks what that means, you have one minute to explain.”* It certainly concentrated our minds! Since the meeting I have tried it, timing myself on my iPhone.

Here is my version: *“Jesus left the glory of heaven to come to earth as a child. He lived a perfect life, was rejected and nailed to the cross where he bore the sins and diseases of the whole world. He died, was buried and rose again on the third day. After appearing to over four hundred people during a period of forty days, He returned to His Father in Heaven. By believing and trusting that he died for us, we are born of His Spirit who comes to live in us, and we are able to enjoy the presence of God at all times, just as if we had never committed a single sin in our whole life. That is what “justified by faith” means. Here comes the bus.”* Maybe you would like to try? I would love to hear your version – swanagechurchalive@gmail.com

This Easter we remember that awesome sacrifice which He made for us all, and we are able to receive all the benefits of His love for us by simply believing in Him and telling others how much He means to us. Last month we shared a powerful testimony from Liz Fielder. At the end of it Liz quoted Psalm 103, which lists all the benefits we receive when we put our trust in Jesus. They are: *“He forgives all our sins, He heals all our diseases, He redeems our lives from the pit (He gives us eternal life with Him), He surrounds us with loving kindness, He satisfies our desires with good things so that our youth is renewed like the eagles.”*

Happy Easter to you all!



***You have given me the
strength of a wild ox,
and you have chosen
me to be your very own
Psalm 92.10***

*I'm fighting a battle
You've already won
No matter what comes my way
I will overcome
I don't know what You're doing
But I know what You've done
I'm fighting a battle
You've already won*

There's peace that outlasts darkness
Hope that's in the blood
There's future grace that's mine today
That Jesus Christ has won
So I can face tomorrow
For tomorrow's in Your hands
All I need You will provide
Just like You always have

There's mercy in the waiting
Mana for today
And when it's gone I know you're not
You are my hope and stay
When the sea is raging
Your Spirit is my help
He'll fix my eyes on Jesus Christ
And I'll say that is well
Oh I know that it is well

Shane and Shane on YouTube