

Church Alive!

Swanage Parish Magazine

July 2025



Team Rector - Revd Dr Ian Bird

The Rectory, 12 Church Hill
Swanage BH19 1HU
01929 422916 ian@swanageteam.com

**Team Vicar - Revd Jo Levasier**

The Vicarage, 5 Redcliffe Road,
Swanage BH19 1LZ
01929 208217 emailjo@swanageteam.com

Resident Priest - Revd David Richards

(Responsible for St Mark's Church Herston)
Tel: 01929 424271 / 07779079844
Email: rev.dave456@gmail.com
1 Marsh Way, Swanage, BH19 2TE

Assistant Curate - Revd Natalie Davies

Email: natalie@swanageteam.com
Tel: 07516 786944

Director of Music (St Mary's) - Simon Lole

Email: simon@simonlole.com Mobile: 07888 653529

Parish Secretary – Mrs. Karon Quirey

Parish Office, St. Mary's Rooms (421117)
email: swanage.team@btconnect.com
Tuesdays and Wednesdays: 9.00 am - 5.00 pm
Fridays: 9.00 am - 4.00 pm; Lunch: 1.00 pm - 2.00 pm

'Church Alive!' Parish Magazine Editor – Anthony Malpas

swanagechurcalive@gmail.com

'Church Alive!' Distribution Manager – Mrs. Karon Quirey

Parish Office, St. Mary's Rooms (421117)

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Rev Ian Baird writes:

Pursuing our Vocations

‘Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heaven; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds.’ (Psalm 36: 5)

On 28th June in a wonderful service in Salisbury Cathedral a group of us from across the Swanage and Studland Team witnessed our curate Natalie’s ordination as Priest by Stephen, Bishop of Salisbury. It was a memorable day as we celebrated with her this profound step in her ministry. Please pray for her that God will bless richly her Priestly ministry among us and the wider church now and in the years to come. Natalie has pursued her vocation and knows both the joys and the challenges of responding to God’s calling. She will testify that it has not been an easy path to travel, but God has been faithful.

As we celebrate with Natalie, I want to ask you a question. Do you believe you have a vocation? Or do you think such a thing is just for ‘keener’ Christians? I believe that all disciples of Jesus have a vocation, a spiritual career if you like, in which we can pursue things that God calls us to in our service to him and those around us. It will be different for different people, will take many forms and change over time. Even if we feel frail, we still have a vocation, as there is no retirement or redundancy in God’s Kingdom. By faithfully pursuing our vocations throughout our lives we respond to God’s love and his call to us to be a part of his mission, of ‘Making Jesus Known’ as our diocesan vision states.

St Paul wrote about vocation to the members of the church in Corinth: *‘However that may be, let each of you lead the life that the Lord has assigned, to which God called you’* (1Corinthians 7: 17).

Vocation is about us as disciples responding to God's call and using our gifts and skills to his glory.

Sometimes I have the privilege of encouraging people in their vocations and then seeing the amazing ways that God uses them in his service. In my experience sometimes people have a desire to serve in a particular way or to start a particular initiative and may value talking with someone about it. If you feel that way, please do not hesitate to talk to me, Jo, Natalie or one of our wonderful retired ministers. One of the good things about being in our diocese is that there are all sorts of resources and courses available that also might be helpful too.

So for the Swanage and Studland Team to continue to thrive, let us all take our vocations seriously. May we see more of God's Kingdom come among us, as with the rest of our diocese, we pursue the joy of 'Making Jesus Known'.

Every Blessing
Rev Ian Bird

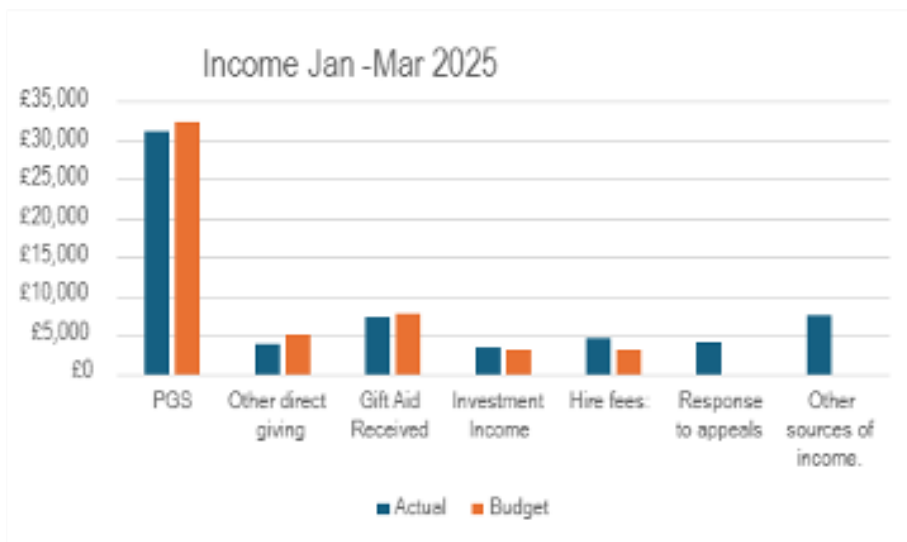
Swanage Parish Finances

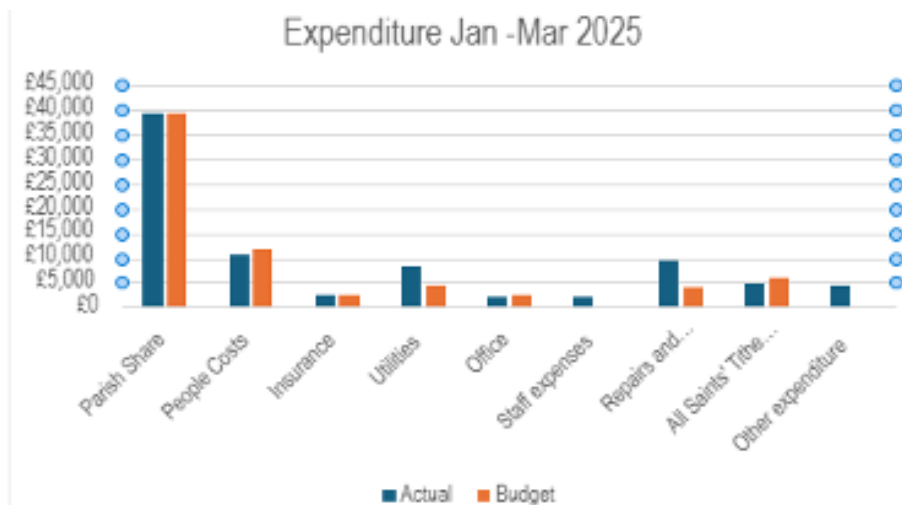
January – March 2025

The PCC have felt that it would be helpful to keep the members of the congregations (and others who read "Church Alive!") informed periodically of the situation with our finances. It takes a while for the figures to be processed, so unfortunately the information for the first three months of the year is only ready now. On future occasions, it is hoped to have a shorter time delay!

The bar charts show the principal sources of our income and our main expenditure for those months, along with the amounts we budgeted before the end of 2024. It will be seen that the generosity of those who give directly to the church has been considerable but did not quite come up to the budgeted figure. Most of the expenditure is close to the budgeted figure but the utilities expenditure (higher because we are in winter months) and repairs and maintenance (difficult to predict on a monthly basis) are above budget.

The total income for these three months was £61,825 and the expenditure £78,147. In recent years we have had to use income from legacies and our historic reserve funds to “plug the gap” at the end of the year. These funds will not last for ever and, where possible, additional income (as well as continued greater care over expenditure) will result in taking less from these sources.





Direct Giving includes donation stations, QR code, open plate giving and other giving by members of the church and visitors. Other sources of income include wedding and funeral fees, payments made for services provided to Studland Parish, profit from All Saints' solar panels, fundraising for external causes, social and musical events.

Other expenditure includes Church/Office cleaning, fees paid to the diocese, refurbishment of the Rectory Classroom and miscellaneous expenses for each church.

Any member of our church community is welcome to ask me about aspects of the church finances. Please email johnway2@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01929 422951.

John Way (PCC Treasurer)

St Mary's

July 2025



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. 11am	T-Pot in the Rectory Classroom Holy Communion <i>Every 4th Weds with Healing</i>
Fri	5.30pm 6.30pm 6-8pm	Junior Choir Practice Adult Choir Practice Friday Fun Club in the Rectory Classroom

Thurs 3rd	6.30pm	Concert: The Gesualdo Six
Sat 5 th	4.30-5.30pm	Visiting bellringers from Cheltenham
Mon 7th	11.00am	Training session for Purbeck Leavers Service
Sun 13th	6.30pm	Come & Sing Evensong with Jonathan Hope, Gloucester Cathedral
Mon 14th	8am-1pm	Purbeck Leavers Service
Sun 27th	10.30am	Carnival Service and Parade

Saint Mary's Church Library.

Many thanks to those who have been supporting this fresh effort. We have several new books, dedicated sections for children and young adults, and a new feed-back system so that interesting comments on books can be shared.

We still have a vision for a fresh new range of books but lack the funding – if you can help by donating a book or making a donation to 'the pot', that would be appreciated by so many.

The easiest way is to put your donation into one of the standard church gift aid envelopes, mark it 'Church Library', and drop it into the office.

Alternatively, contact me directly and we can plan things together.

Paul. (Paul Baird – Pauldbaird@aol.com)

Christian Aid

A huge thank you to the teams from the Swanage churches who delivered envelopes during Christian Aid Week. People were given the option of returning the envelope to designated places or donating directly to the charity online. Consequently, we can no longer give a definitive total of the donations to the charity. However, this year, so far, a total of £3,460.55 (with potential Gift Aid of £376.50) has been received locally, and donations are still being handed in, thanks to Christian Aid Week activities, including a sponsored walk and the "Global Event", in addition to the Lent lunches and the Myanmar Emergency Appeal.

The Christian Aid Committee in Swanage is immensely grateful to all who have given their support.

Joanna Baird



Regular Sunday Services

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

On July 27th there will be no 10:30am service at All Saints as we join with other Swanage Churches in the Carnival Praise service 10:30am in the main Carnival Tent on Sandpit field.]

Weekly Church Calendar

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

Opportunities to pray together

Weekly Thursdays 9:30 – 10am

July News from All Saints

May and June have been difficult months for the All Saints' congregation when with a mixture of sadness and joy we have seen several members pass away to be with the Lord. With older members this has been an opportunity to celebrate their lives of faithful service while for others the celebration is tinged with the knowledge they have left us much earlier than we or their families would have hoped, making our grief more poignant.

It has been a time of overwhelming love and support for those nearing the end of their lives and for their families who have been comforted by the peaceful passing of their loved ones as they were released to the Lord. Those at bedsides offering the support have in turn been blessed by the tangible presence of God at this sad time.

On the 1st June we were delighted to have Jonathan Triffit as our speaker. Jonathan was appointed Director of Mission and Ministry, Deputy Diocesan Secretary in 2020 and Bishop's Missioner in 2024. He has been a frequent visitor to All Saints over the years. He leads a team to support, serve, and resource local churches in three key areas: discipleship, leadership and community transformation, across all levels (Benefice, Deanery and our Diocesan Board of Education schools).

He spoke about the waiting period for the apostles between Ascension and Pentecost and asked the question, 'What were they waiting for?' He elaborated on the apostle's holy expectations; for a promise to be fulfilled, to receive power from on high and to be sent into the world. To conclude, Jonathan spoke of three foundations underpinning the lives of the apostles and those in the early church; obedience, unity and prayer – So important for us still us today in our 21st century church and a timely reminder for us here in Swanage.

In June we were pleased to welcome of a crowd of fluorescent clad little children age 5 and 6 who were taking part in a pilgrimage from St Mary's RC Primary School. Different classes were visiting various "special" places (as identified by the children) including churches and the town hall. For many children this would have been their first visit to All Saints Church and consequently this was a privilege for us.

We are always keen to make connections with the local schools and vicar Jo will soon be heading into the Swanage School to engage with Year 8 pupils (12-13 year olds) on a Careers Day. Jo is also helping a talented year 10 pupil from Purbeck School, Martha Harwood, as Martha shadows her for Work Experience week starting at the end of this month. Martha is part of our worship group at All Saints and turns her hand to anything else asked of her at church (like wearing a silly headdress to take part in drama or bleating like a sheep in a puppet sketch!) She has chosen to use her Work Experience time to find out what church does during the week. We look forward to her observations at the end of her experience!

As the summer term draws to a close in July, we will again be hosting an interactive year 6 leavers' event at St Mary's Church, the Methodist church and the URC. This year we hope to host 8 or 9 primary schools from across the Purbeck area. It is a wonderful opportunity to bless this cohort of children as they transition from being the oldest, wisest (in their opinion!) in their primary schools to being small fish in a big sea of much larger, unfamiliar schools seething with children, some of whom are taller than their parents!

We thank God for this privilege of hosting them and pray that God will guide them smoothly on their tricky path whether they acknowledge His presence or not.

At the time of writing this, we anticipate our Fun Afternoon on Saturday and you will no doubt hear more about this in the next Church Alive edition.

Heather Lightowler
Church Warden

St Mark's Notes for July



Diary

Tuesday 1st July	7pm Bible Study Group
Sunday 6th July	10am Holy Communion
Thursday 10th July	7:30pm Open Deanery Synod Eucharist at Worth
Sunday 13th July	10am Holy Communion
Monday 14th July	7pm PCC
Tuesday 15th July	7pm Bible Study Group
Sunday 20th July	10am Holy Communion 3:30pm Pimm's and Hymns
Sunday 27th July	10:30am Churches Together Carnival Service at Sandpit Field No Service at St Mark's
Choir Rehearsal	Mondays 6:15 - 7pm
Prayer and Share	Wednesdays 10am - 10:45am

At our St Mark's Committee meeting on 5 June we were pleased to report that the numbers in church on a Sunday morning are on the increase. On every Sunday since 23 March there had been more than 30 in the congregation (which had only been recorded on some Sundays, rather than every Sunday, before that) and that is in spite of some of our "regulars" being away on holiday. We have been pleased to welcome family members, visitors to the area and others, some of whom have been on several occasions and have become new regular members of the congregation.

This is in line with national statistics which speak of a slow but genuine increase in church attenders over recent months and is very welcome. It is good to have the feeling that, perhaps, people have become aware of what membership of a church, and faith in God through Jesus, can offer. As well as that, we've had several of our regular congregation and visitors who have brought their dogs (always impeccably behaved!) and we've been pleased to make them welcome.

At the committee meeting we covered a lot of topics and discussed them profitably. As always, we reviewed past social events and looked ahead to those to come. We particularly said that we want to arrange more activities for the younger children, following the very successful Teddy Bears' Picnic held at the end of April, so watch this space! We welcomed the two new members of the committee – Anne Johnson and Mike Keats. For at least one of them, it was not their first time on the committee! We received a report from Dave Richards, our Resident Priest, outlining the things that had happened in St Mark's since the last Committee meeting and it emphasised to us how much Dave and Carol do for the life of St Mark's. We were pleased to hear that Carol has been recognised as LLM (Licensed Lay Minister) to work within our parish, as she was in her former life in St John's, Stratford. In her role of Governor at St Mark's School, Carol outlined the significant changes in organisation that will happen in the school in September. We continue to pray for the school as these changes take place and we wish the Year 6 pupils well as they move to their secondary school, each in possession of a Bible given by St Mark's.

Sunday 8th June was Pentecost and we celebrated the birth of the Christian Church, both in our service and afterwards. On Tuesday 10th June, Anne and I went on an expedition to Hamworthy church, along with many others, to be officially confirmed as churchwardens.

As Anne said last month, we are very grateful to the

congregation of St Mark's for electing us again to this position and we hope that we will continue to justify your trust in us. In the life of a churchwarden there are many happy moments, but also some sad ones, as we think back to the funeral of Barbara Rose at the end of May.

One of the joys is to recognise what our members give to the community and it will be a delight on for Dave, Carol and me (and of course John) to attend an awards ceremony at Lyme Regis on 26th June where Jenny Lazenbury will receive a Diocesan award recognising her many years' devoted service to the work of Communicare in Swanage. Well done, Jenny – you deserve it and we appreciate all you do for our community, both in the church and outside.

Our musicians never fail to delight us and we thank them all they did for the concert on 29 June. We can only imagine how much planning and rehearsal goes into preparation for such a polished performance! As we move into July, we look forward to the Pimms and Hymns event on 20th and participating in the Carnival Service on 27th as well as the joy of meeting together Sunday by Sunday to worship God. I wonder if in the next few weeks we will reach a congregation of 40 on one or more Sunday. We got close several times in May!

Wishing you all God's blessings,

John Way
Churchwarden.

Pray like it all depends on God, then when you are done, go work like it all depends on you.

Martin Luther

St Nicholas Studland



Parish News

At the beginning of June we celebrated Pentecost, the momentous event of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, transforming them from frightened individuals to fearless proclaimers of the Good News of Jesus Christ. For obvious reasons Pentecost is often called the birthday of the church and an opportunity to celebrate God's love and faithfulness.

The Rev Tony Edmonds led the celebration, with an inspirational sermon and joyful hymns. Members of the congregation were encouraged to pick up a book marker from a bunch that Tony had brought along and the service finished with bubbles blowing out from the pulpit and down from the gallery. One person there described the service as 'Wonderful!'. The following Sunday, Trinity Sunday, the Rev Natalie Davies led Morning Prayer and gave the congregation an excellent sermon on the Trinity and the centrality of the Trinity to our faith.

Last month the popular monthly Men's Breakfast at St Nicholas Church Hall was opened up to everyone in the village. It was great to see and speak to people over breakfast. I want to extend huge thanks to Tony Edmonds and Peter Hawksworth who have organised the Breakfasts and faithfully cooked for us all. They are having a well earned rest and Men's Breakfast will return on Saturday 4th October, after the summer break.

Those attending Studland's Community Coffee Morning (Thursdays 10am-11am) are continuing to enjoy their summer location at the great Manor Farm Tea Rooms chatting over coffee and scones. Do come along and join this very friendly group. In a truly memorable and joyous service, The Rev Natalie Davies, our Swanage and Studland Team Curate, was ordained Priest at Salisbury Cathedral by Stephen, Bishop of Salisbury on 28th June. Please pray for Natalie as she starts her ministry among us as a Priest.

As you are probably aware, The Rev Tony Edmonds will be starting as Associate Minister at St Nicholas Church next month. Bishop Karen, who is Bishop of Sherborne, will be with us on Sunday 10th August at 3pm for a short service to commission Tony and mark the beginning of his ministry and we will have refreshments afterwards to celebrate.

Everyone is invited, so please put the date and time in your diary – we hope to see you there! More details will follow in next month's Studland Parish News. Please continue to pray for him as he prepares for this new role. It will be a great pleasure to minister with Tony and I am really looking forward to seeing his new ministry unfurl in Studland. As St Nicholas prepares for a new chapter in its long history, may God continue to bless us and lead us forward.

Every Blessing Ian, Team Rector, Swanage and Studland

Churches Together Weekly Prayer Group

This group meets every Tuesday at 9 am at Emmanuel Baptist except for the fourth Tuesday in each month when we meet at the Albert Memorial Statue to pray over Swanage, weather permitting. However during July, Carnival month, we will be meeting in Sandpits Field to pray for the Churches Together Carnival activities. All are welcome to join.



Swanage Carnival

July 26th to August 2nd 2025

Carnival Praise 10:30am Sunday 27th July
In main Carnival marquee Sandpit field.

Entry in the Carnival Procession
Sunday 27th July



Churches Together Tent
Sat 26th July—Sat 2nd August
In Sandpit field.

More details administrator@emmanuelbc.org.uk



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This isn't just a gathering.

It's a kingdom declaration.

A prophetic act of faith.

A moment for the Church to rise together in unity, believing for transformation across the South West.

💬 “If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray...” — let’s answer that call.

📍 Choose a section of the path.

👥 Bring your church, your friends, your family.

🙏 Come ready to pray, worship, and declare His promises.

Sign up today and invite your friends.



Swanage Medical Practice Patient Participation Group

During PPG Awareness Week, which took place during the first week of June, PPG members carried out a Patient Survey on behalf of the Practice. We would like to say a big thank you to the 400 people who completed our questionnaire. We are now analysing the results, which we will be sharing soon.

PPG members also piloted a survey on behalf of Healthwatch Dorset about people's experiences of communication and administration processes within the wider NHS. We would also like to thank the 159 people who completed this questionnaire. The results of this survey have been shared with Healthwatch Dorset. The plan now is to widen out this survey to everyone in Dorset.

PPG members also talked to people about their experiences of local services - and promoted the use of the NHS App. We also took this opportunity to raised awareness of the PPG.

The 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!

Our next meeting will be held at the Surgery on Tuesday 8 July 2025 at 6:00pm, when we will be joined by Natalie Bartlett, Purbeck Primary Care Network's Digital and Care Coordinator, who will be talking to us about BP@Home, a service which helps people to have their blood pressure monitored more accurately at home.

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

The PPG is supported by the Patient Email Group (Virtual PPG), which is made up of patients registered with the Practice who have agreed to receive information by email about the Practice and the PPG. Members of the Patient Email Group are also invited to attend talks organised by the PPG and to participate in other events organised by the PPG.

All patients registered with the Practice aged 16 and over are actively encouraged to join the Patient Email Group – please ask at Reception if you would like to join.

Mrs Margaret Broadhurst (Dr Margaret Guy), Chair
Swanage Medical Practice PPG, July 2005

SWANAGE TOWN BAND

PLAYING IN THE BANDSTAND THIS SUMMER

WEATHER PERMITTING

Saturday 5th July 2.30pm

Wednesday 16th July 7.00pm *

Wednesday 30th July 7.00pm

Wednesday 20th August 7.00pm

Saturday 13th September 2.30 pm

*** In Methodist Church at 7.30pm if wet**

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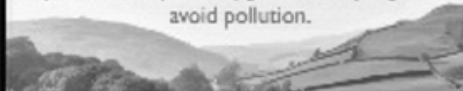
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Across

1 'I pray that out of his glorious — he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being' (Ephesians 3:16) (6)

4 'Saul's father Kish and — father Ner were sons of Abiel' (1 Samuel 14:51) (6)

7 'Praise the Lord, O my — ' (Psalm 103:1) (4)

8 See 5 Down

9 Laws (1 Kings 11:33) (8)

13 'Who of you by worrying can — a single hour to his life?' (Luke 12:25) (3)

16 Artistry (Exodus 31:5) (13)

17 'Your young men will see visions, your — men will dream dreams' (Acts 2:17) (3)

19 How David described his Lord (Psalm 19:14) (8)

24 'If this city is built and its — — restored, you will be left with nothing in Trans-Euphrates' (Ezra 4:16) (5,3)

25 'The holy Scriptures, which are able to make you — for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3:15) (4)

26 Intended destination of arrows (Lamentations 3:12) (6)

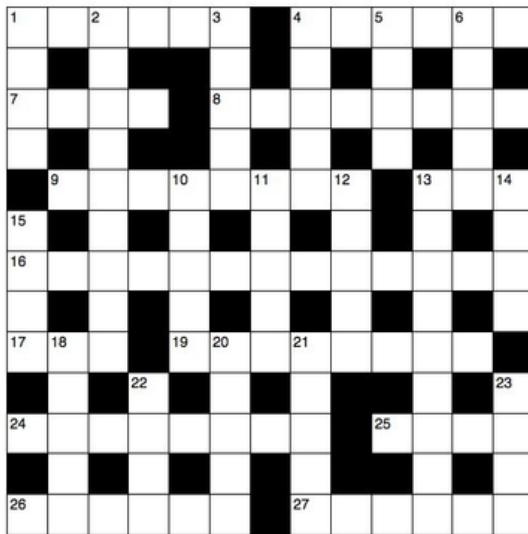
27 Eve hit (anag.) (6)

Down

1 'For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find — for your souls' (Matthew 11:29) (4)

2 Where Peter was when he denied Christ three times (Luke 22:55) (9)

3 Remarkable early 20th-century Indian evangelist, a convert from Hinduism, — Sundar Singh (5)



4 'Now the king had put the officer on whose — — leaned in charge of the gate' (2 Kings 7:17) (3,2)

5 and 8 Across The Lover describes this facial feature of the Beloved thus: 'Your — is like the tower of Lebanon looking towards — ' (Song of Songs 7:4) (4,8)

6 'Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled — your waist' (Ephesians 6:14) (5)

10 Trout (anag.) (5)

11 Easily frightened (1 Thessalonians 5:14) (5)

12 The ability to perceive (Ecclesiastes 10:3) (5)

13 One of the clans descended from Benjamin (Numbers 26:38) (9)

14 "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who — bread into the bowl with me" (Mark 14:20) (4)

15 Resound (Zephaniah 2:14) (4)

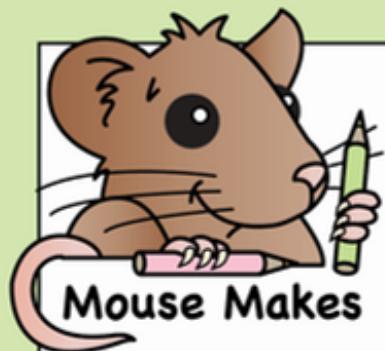
18 Traditional seat of the Dalai Lama (5)

20 Precise (John 4:53) (5)

21 Build (Ezekiel 4:2) (5)

22 Beat harshly (Acts 22:25) (4)

23 Darius, who succeeded Belshazzar as king of the Babylonians, was one (Daniel 5:31) (4)



"Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray...' And He said to them, 'When you pray, say....'"



Our _____
in _____,
hallowed be your
_____, your
_____ come,
your _____ be done,
on _____ as it is in
_____.

Give us today our daily _____.

_____ us our
S _____ as we forgive
those who sin against us.
Lead us not into

_____ but _____
us from _____.

For the kingdom,
the _____ and
the _____ are
yours now and forever.
Amen

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



Fill in the missing words of the Lord's Prayer then find them and these extra words in the word search:
LORD'S PRAYER
DISCIPLES
JESUS
GOD
WORLD
NEEDS
FORGIVENESS
TRESPASSES
PROTECTION
REPENTANCE



The versions of **The Lord's Prayer** we say today come from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.
Which version do you use in your church?



Read
Matthew 6:9-15
and
Luke 11:1-4



Walking with the Shepherd of Israel



Harmons Cross Village Hall, Thursday 10th July, 7 to 9 pm, Julie Vivienne will speak on “*Walking with the Shepherd of Israel*” from the twenty third psalm.

In Memoriam

Eva Westerman who was 107
18 August 1917 - 18 May 2025
Of Bay Crescent, Swanage

June Crossword answers

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

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Thoughts from Pope Francis

We were sad to hear of the sudden death of His Holiness, Pope Francis on Easter Monday.

We can celebrate, along with our Catholic brothers and sisters, the appointment of Cardinal Robert Prevost, as Pope Leo XIV, to lead the Catholic Church.

I would like to leave you with this thought, from Pope Francis, who wrote this in hospital during his illness.

“The walls of hospitals have heard more honest prayers than churches...

They have witnessed far more sincere kisses than those in airports...

It is in hospitals that you see a privileged doctor saving the life of a beggar...

In intensive care, you see a Jew taking care of a racist...

A police officer and a prisoner in the same room receiving the same care...

A wealthy patient waiting for a liver transplant, ready to receive the organ from a poor donor...

It is in these moments, when the hospital touches the wounds of people, that different worlds intersect according to a divine design.

And in this communion of destinies, we realise that alone, we are nothing.

The absolute truth of people, most of the time, only reveals itself in moments of pain or in the real threat of an irreversible loss.

A hospital is a place where human beings remove their masks and show themselves as they truly are, in their purest essence.

This life will pass quickly, so do not waste it fighting with people.
Do not criticise your body too much.
Do not complain excessively.
Do not lose sleep over bills.
Make sure to hug your loved ones.
Do not worry too much about keeping the house spotless.
Material goods must be earned by each person—do not dedicate yourself to accumulating an inheritance.
You are waiting for too much: Christmas, Friday, next year, when you have money, when love arrives, when everything is perfect...
Listen, perfection does not exist.
A human being cannot attain it because we are simply not made to be fulfilled here.
Here, we are given an opportunity to learn.
So, make the most of this trial of life—and do it now.
Respect yourself, respect others. Walk your own path, and let go of the path others have chosen for you.
Respect: do not comment, do not judge, do not interfere.
Love more, forgive more, embrace more, live more intensely!
And leave the rest in the hands of the Creator.”

Pope Francis

Apologies to Anne Roper, Church Warden at St Marks, that we were not able to print this in Church Alive! last month.

Quotation

“The Holy Spirit is Jesus multiplied”

Benny Hinn

Hebrew Word of the Month

Brit (בְּרִית) God's Promise That Never Breaks

Brit (בְּרִית) is a Hebrew word that means covenant, but it's much more than just a deal or agreement. In the Bible, a brit is a sacred promise—a deep, lasting commitment between God and His people. It's about relationship, not just rules.

Biblical Context:

One of the first times we see this word is when God makes a covenant with Abraham. *“I will establish my covenant (brit) between me and you and your descendants after you... to be your God.” Genesis 17:7*

God didn't just say, “Let's make a deal.” He promised to be with Abraham and his family forever. That's the heart of brit—God saying, *“I'm not going anywhere. I'm yours, and you're Mine.”*

Later, at Mount Sinai, God made a brit with the whole nation of Israel, giving them the Torah to help them walk in His ways. Even when the people messed up, God stayed faithful. His love never gave up.

The Depth of the Word:

God's brit often came with a sign—something to remember the promise by:

A rainbow for Noah
Circumcision for Abraham's family
The Sabbath for Israel

These signs weren't just religious symbols. They were reminders that God is a promise-keeper.

Brit Chadasha – The New Covenant

Hundreds of years later, God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah about a new kind of brit—one that would be even more

personal: *“I will make a new covenant (brit chadasha)... I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.”*
Jeremiah 31:31–33

This was fulfilled through Yeshua (Jesus). At His last Passover meal, He lifted the cup and said:

“This cup is the new covenant in My blood.” Luke 22:20

Through Jesus, God made a way for everyone, Jews and Gentiles alike, to enter into a forever brit. It’s not based on how good we are, but on what He has done for us. Forgiveness, new life, and a relationship with God are all part of this amazing promise.

Application: What Does This Mean for Us Today?

God’s covenant isn’t just ancient history. It’s personal and present. It means you’re not alone. God is with you. It means you’re loved—not for what you do, but because He chose you. It means you can trust Him, even when life feels shaky.

Just like in any relationship, we are called to respond with love, loyalty, and faithfulness. We do this not because we have to, but because we want to.

A Prayer for You:

“Lord, thank You for Your covenant—Your promise that You’ll never leave or give up on me. Help me to live like someone who belongs to You. Thank You for being a faithful God. I trust You. In Jesus’ blessed name, Amen.”

Devotional by Pastor Joseph Prince

*The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD.
Psalm 97:5*

Your Fears and Anxieties Dissipate in God's Presence

No matter where you are, the Lord is with you. Even in the midst of your fears, while you are alone in your room, He is there with you.

The moment you begin to be aware of His presence and cultivate His presence, all your fears, anxieties, and worries will melt like butter on a hot day, or as the psalmist David puts it, *"The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD."*

You cannot psych yourself out of fear nor can you psych yourself out of worry. You can't just tell yourself, "Come on, stop worrying. There is nothing to worry about." It just doesn't work. The debt will still be staring you in your face and your problems will still be as insurmountable as ever no matter how hard you try to psych yourself up. That is what the world is trying to do, but it does not work. It takes the presence of the Lord to keep you free from worry.

Jesus is not asking you to psych yourself up and live in a state of denial. No way! He is saying to you, *"In the midst of your affliction, I am your shield. I am your defender. I am your fortress. I am your refuge. I am your supply. I am your healing. I am your provider. I am your peace. I am your joy. I am your wisdom. I am your strength. I am the glory and the lifter of your head!"* (Psalm 3:3). Amen! He is not asking you to pretend that the facts are not there. He wants you to realise that HE IS THERE WITH YOU!

When you know that He is with you and for you, and you put your problems in His mighty hands, you will begin to get a more accurate evaluation of just how “big” your problems are. When they were in your hands, the weight and burden of your problems may have crushed you.

But when you involve Jesus, the once-monumental problems become microscopic against the largeness of His love and goodness toward you!

Today, as you consider all that you need to do and the expectations placed on you, see Jesus there with you. He is your supply, wisdom, peace, and strength.

This devotional is taken from the book 100 Days of Favour—Daily Readings from Unmerited Favor.

“Living with faith and courage is
something that life requires of
each of us.
Never, absolutely
never, give up! Never give in no
matter what!
Fight it through!
And I promise you something with
all of my heart -
God will help you”

Kathryn Kuhlman



Letter from the Bishop of Sherborne

Some of the joys of a bishop's ministry are Confirmation Services, we have had a good number so far this year and many more in the diary. The service is both corporate, as the congregation prays for each candidate, and personal, as each candidate makes promises, is prayed for and is anointed with oil. The words of the anointing remind all of us who have been confirmed that God calls us by name.

This Pentecost we launched across the diocese a simple 'Rule of Life' as part of our discipleship and vocation work. Being called by God means being called to discipleship. Simply put a 'rule of life' is our response to what God has done for us. It takes some the teachings of Christ into our own lives. Therefore, we continue a life of inner transformation through prayer, Bible reading, and regular worship; and we contribute to the transformation of the world through generous giving, seeking justice and using our time and talents in the service of God.

This all gives us the opportunity to consider our response to God's love, to the one who calls us. It may be that the Holy Spirit is nudging us to serve in particular ways in the life of the local church, or to live out our Christian life more courageously in the world. Do pick up a postcard from your local church if you have not already been given one and be part of our diocesan vision, not only Making Jesus known but being called so all may flourish and grow.

Bishop Karen

Letter from the Editor

July is a very active month for Churches Together. As you will see on pages 17 and 18, there will be a combined service in Sandpit Field on Sunday 27th of July. During the whole week the Churches Together tent will be open for visitors, and also on Sunday the 27th the churches will be represented in the Carnival Procession. Every Tuesday during July the group that normally meets in Emmanuel Baptist Church, to pray at 9 am every Tuesday, will meet in the Sandpit Field to pray for all these activities, that people who do not normally come to church services will see the church in action, and see that the love of God, as revealed by the Lord Jesus, is relevant, meaningful and significant today.

At some point in our lives we all go through times of stress, difficulties and face situations that often seem insurmountable. David, the shepherd boy who was anointed to become the greatest King of Israel and the ancestor of Jesus Himself, was no exception. He faced challenges and situations in his life which drove him to the very edge of despair. The song from Psalm 40 that is on the back cover page, by Shane and Shane, expresses the deep feelings that David experienced as he was being hunted down by Saul, and then later attacked by His son Absalom;

“All my tears have been my fodder

Day and night my only food”

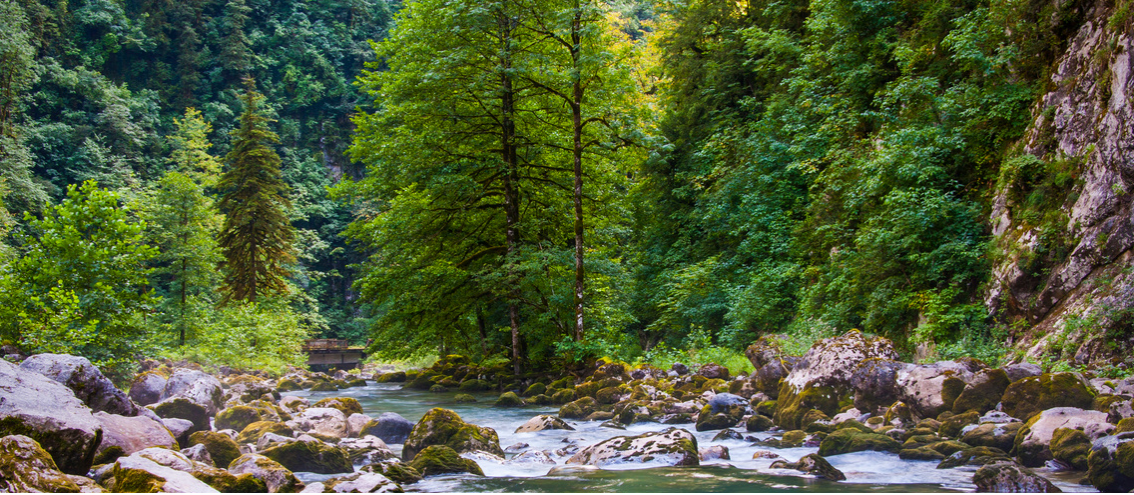
“Oh my soul, you feel forgotten”

“Where is my God?”

Maybe sometimes we feel like David, at our wits end. This song shows us David's answer in these desperate times, when “*deep calls to deep*” and “*breakers crash and bring me falling to my knees.*”

“Put your hope in Christ alone” “Streams of trouble never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.”

It is this message of love, hope and comfort that Churches Together will be bringing during Carnival Week.



As the deer pants for the water
So my soul pants for You
All my tears have been my fodder
Day and night my only food

Come thou fount of living water
Tune my heart to bless your name
Streams of trouble never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise

Oh, my soul you feel forgotten
Put your hope in Christ alone
As the deer longs for the water
So my soul longs to be home

Deep calls to deep
Waves of unbelief
Breakers crash and bring me falling to my knees
It goes on and on and on

Come thou fount of living water
Tune my heart to bless your name
Streams of trouble never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise

Where is my God?
My salvation is in You and You alone
Deep calls to deep
Waves of unbelief

As the deep cries out for answers
As Your waves crash over me
Let Your goodness, like a fetter
Bind my broken heart to Thee

Breakers crash and bring me falling to my knees
It goes on and on and on
Where is my God?
My salvation is in You and You alone

In the night Your song is with me
Day by day You hold me fast
Oh, my soul, hope in Jesus
You shall praise Your God at last

Come thou fount of living water
Ooh, tune my heart to bless your name
Streams of trouble never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise

From Psalm 40 by Shane and Shane on YouTube