

Church Alive!

Swanage Parish Magazine

September 2026





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Rev Jo Levasier writes:

Making Jesus Known.

That is our diocesan vision. And it's a good one! It is hard to argue with as a clear, succinct statement of what our churches should be focusing on. And yet sometimes it is harder work out how effective we are in practice. Isn't it easy for life and church to just happen around us, as we muddle through the mixture of chaos and mundanity that makes up everyday life? How can we make our lives and our churches more intentional as we seek to make Jesus known in our corner of Dorset?

Across our country stories are being told of a new spiritual hunger, people appearing at churches unexpectedly, young people getting baptised, numbers growing at cathedral evensongs. Something seems to be stirring, even in Dorset! In towns, villages, and communities across the county, people are asking deeper questions, exploring faith, and showing a growing openness to God. At the same time, our local churches are faithfully loving, serving, and sharing Jesus every day.

Some of you may have heard of Light up Dorset, a group of lay people from all sorts of different churches across Dorset who are seeking to work together to make Jesus known. Not to reinvent the wheel nor create lots of extra work but rather a shared moment for the Church to step forward in unity, strengthening and amplifying what is already happening. ***The question being asked is simple: what might happen if the Church across Dorset stepped out together – now?***

After a year of groundwork, the team is preparing for a county-wide mission in 2027 — partnering with Palau, equipping churches through evangelism training, and stepping into a focused month of mission and invitation [spanning all church traditions] across Dorset. This will lead to a free, family-friendly festival for the whole community in early July 2027 — filled with live music, DJs, extreme sports and a clear message of hope as Andrew Palau shares the good news of Jesus.

Throughout the mission month and at the festival, people will be invited to respond, with a follow-on season helping them explore faith through courses such as Alpha and connect with local churches. This is more than an event; it is a movement — trusting that as we move together, lives will be changed, hope restored, and communities transformed.

This kind of event might not initially sound like your ‘kind of thing’, or you might already be feeling excited, but I think we might be surprised.

Light up Dorset really is trying to reach everyone in as many different ways as possible so why not find out more and see how we can be involved and help people discover the joy of connecting to Jesus for themselves.

Two practical ideas;

Prayer walking. The vision is bold: **Every road. Every street. Every village. Every town. Every person covered in prayer.** Is that something that you could be part of?

If you enjoy technology there's a prayer app that has been launched where you can record your prayer walks. [see below for how to access this.]

If that's not your kind of thing, do still walk and pray. Maybe each of our congregations could record which streets we have prayed for? Wouldn't it be brilliant if we could walk and pray for every single street in Swanage this year? Do you let me know if you might like to be involved in this.

Come to the Vision, Prayer and Worship evening in October.

A chance to gather at the lighthouse in Poole with Christians from all over our county to hear more pray together and prepare ourselves for Light Up Dorset 2027 - an exciting, united season of outreach across the entire county! Please do contact me if you'd like to go as part of a group.

Let's not leave making Jesus known to someone else or miss this opportunity to join with others and see the power of working together in community.

With every blessing, Jo Levasier

VISION, WORSHIP, & PRAYER NIGHT

CHURCHES ACROSS DORSET ARE INVITED TO JOIN TOGETHER
FOR A NIGHT OF VISION, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER.

THE LIGHTHOUSE THEATRE IN POOLE
17 OCTOBER • 7PM

FEATURING VISION
FROM LOCAL LEADERS,
A MESSAGE FROM
GRACE WHEELER, AND
WORSHIP LED BY
ELLE LIMBEAR.

ELLE
LIMBEAR

GRACE
WHEELER

Facebook Instagram @LIGHTUPDORSET

GET TICKETS AND FIND OUT MORE AT [LIGHTUPDORSET.COM](https://lightupdorset.com)

**LIGHT UP
DORSET**

Accessing the free Light Up Dorset Prayer for Dorset App - a simple but powerful way for churches, families, small groups and individuals to pray across every community in Dorset. Using the app, you can track your prayer walks, add prayer requests, celebrate answered prayers, see areas already prayed for and help us work together to cover the whole county in prayer as we prepare for Light Up Dorset 2027.

STEP 1 – Download the App

On your phone:

- iPhone / Apple - Open the App Store and search: PrayerWalk
 - Android - Open the Google Play Store and search: PrayerWalk
- Download and install the app onto your phone. You can also access the Dorset prayer map online:
<https://lightupdorset.prayerwalk.app/map>

STEP 2 – Create Your Account

Once the app opens:

Tap Sign Up

2. Enter:

o Your name

o Email address

o Password

Accept the terms and create your account

Check your email if verification is required

STEP 3 – Join the Light Up Dorset Map

Once logged in:

Search for: LightUpDorset [This is the password]

Select the Dorset prayer map

Allow location permissions when prompted (recommended for walk tracking). This enables your prayer walks to be mapped and counted as part of the county wide prayer movement.

STEP 4 – Start a Prayer Walk

When you are ready to pray:

Open the app

Tap Start Prayer Walk

Walk and pray through your local streets, neighbourhood or village

The app will track the route you cover

You can pray as Individually or inspire church families or friendship groups or home groups to plan a walk.

STEP 5 – Finish & Upload When your walk is complete:

Tap Finish Prayer Walk

Save and upload your route, your walk will now appear on the Dorset prayer map and help us see which communities have been covered in prayer.

Why Bother? God's Word teaches us that prayer prepares the ground for lives to be transformed by Jesus. As churches unite together in prayer across Dorset, we are believing for:

renewed faith

stronger churches

people discovering hope in Jesus

communities transformed by the Gospel

Thank you for being part of this growing movement of prayer across Dorset. Together, let's be part of praying over every corner of Dorset.

St Mary's



September Services

Sunday Services

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

Weekly Services/Events:

Tues	2.30pm	All Things Bright & Beautiful <i>(particularly suitable for those living with dementia or any kind of special need)</i>
Weds	10am-12.30pm	T-Pot in the Rectory Classroom
	11.00am	Holy Communion <i>(every 4th Weds with Healing)</i>
Fri	5.45pm	Junior Choir practice
	6.30pm	Adult choir practice
	6-8pm.	Friday Fun Club in the Rectory Classroom <i>(termtime only)</i>
Sat 5th	1.00pm	Wedding: Robert Maughan & Zoe Johns
Sun 13th	10.30am	Folk Festival Service
6.30pm		'Come & Sing' Choral Evensong with Dr David Hill (Music Director, The Bach Choir)
Weds 16th	2.15-3pm	Visiting bellringers
Sat 19th	2.00pm	Wedding: Stuart Macaulay & Amy Tideswell

St Mary's Notes

Welcoming the Stranger

Step through the heavy church door and the noise of the outside world falls away - replaced by stillness, cool air and a sense of calm that seems to slow everything down. In that moment, a visitor is no longer just passing through; they are welcomed into something different.

The Bible says, *"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers"* (Hebrews 13:2), while Jesus says, *"I was a stranger and you welcomed me"* (Matthew 25:35). Paul adds, *"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you"* (Romans 15:7). Welcome is not simply politeness; it is part of our Christian faith.

As a tourist destination, thousands visit our town each year, and I regularly meet visitors from across the country and around the world who come into the church.

A group from Germany recently shared how moved they were by the peace they found inside. After a busy itinerary, they lit candles, said prayers, and spent time in quiet. It reminded me that we never know what someone may be seeking when they walk through our doors.

Our Sunday 10.30 service often welcomes new people and visitors, while choral Evensong attracts those seeking quiet reflection. Civic services bring together people from across Swanage and beyond, and the recent Year 6 leavers' service filled the church with children from many local schools.

St Mary's is a beautiful and historic church, but what matters most is the welcome offered by its people. The building, its atmosphere, and those who gather here should all say: you are welcome here.

We are developing the children's area to help families feel more at home, and have advanced plans to improve accessibility at the entrance.

But welcome is not only about building, it belongs to all of us. A smile, a kind word, or noticing someone who looks unsure can make all the difference.

"Let all that you do be done in love" (1 Corinthians 16:14).

Ultimately, a welcoming church is one where people experience genuine kindness, care and acceptance.

Cliff Sutton
Church Warden

St Mary's Library

The final reorganisation and upgrade of the library in Saint Mary's is now complete and is in four sections !

Parents of infants and pre-school children will find the special children's area a cool, comfortable space with suitable books and soft toys.

The library itself now has two separate bookshelves – one with sections dedicated to 'Children' and 'Young Adults', where new books include exciting fiction, real-life stories, and explorations of key Bible themes and life issues. If anyone enjoys Minecraft, there's even a book for you

The main shelves contain books divided into categories (Bible, Prayer and Spirituality, Ethics, Theology, life stages, etc.). New books include 'Dementia, God, and the Church' and 'Enabling Spiritual Care', which explores issues for staff in care homes. In a separate stand, you will find our new music library for those who can still play CDs.

Do call in and make use of the wide range of resources. The only thing we ask is that you use the library folder to sign out the items you take and leave a comment to share your thoughts when you return them.

If you want to know more, or have any suggestions for books we should have, please contact Paul Baird (Pauldbaird@aol.com). Cash donations are always welcome to enable the purchase of new volumes. These can be Gift Aided and handed in to the parish office or to Paul Baird

Mothers Union

It was lovely to have a special gathering in July as a parish celebration of the 150th anniversary of The Mothers' Union's founding. Special thanks to Alison and Liz for their vivid descriptions of attending both the national celebration and St Paul's Cathedral and the diocesan celebrations in Salisbury. Thanks also to Eileen, who brought photos and memorabilia from the Swanage Branch from years gone by. While we don't have a Branch any more, we thought it would be nice to have occasional parish meetings on topics of general interest, and those might finish with news of the work of Mothers Union and a prayer. Being social meetings, these would of course include tea/coffee and cake. Please put 8th October (10:30 am) in your diary, and we look forward to sharing some time with you – more details to follow.

Many thanks, and all good wishes

Paul

Weekly Sunday Services at All Saints

8am Holy Communion

10.30am Family Worship (*with Junior Church meets week 1, 3, 4.*)

Communion is shared on 1st Sunday.

Café Church – all age informal worship - on 2nd Sunday

Weekly Church Calendar at All Saints

All Saints Toddler Group Mondays 9:15-11am (*restarts 7th Sept*)

Church Prayer meeting Thursdays 9:30 – 10am (*restarts 3rd Sept*)

Coffee Pot Thursdays 10:30am -1pm (*restarts 3rd Sept*)

Art workshop Fridays 10am (*restarts 4th Sept*)

Special events this month

Sunday 30th August 12noon Church BYO picnic lunch @All Saints

Sun 6th – Sat 13th Sept Global Week of Prayer (*various prayer gatherings across the town and prayer stations @All Saints – see separate notice for details of all the prayer opportunities in Swanage.*)

Sat 5th Sept 8.15am Swanage Christian Men's Group Breakfast @MacAllisters

Sun 6th Sept Worship@6pm @EBC (*linking in with global week of prayer*)

9:30am Thu 10th Sept – 9:30pm Fri 11th Sept 36 hr prayer room
Starting Thu 10th Sept 9:30-10:30am Worship & Prayer
Concluding with Fri 11th Sept 9.00-9.30pm Compline

Sunday 27th Sept Sea Baptism after the 10.30am service

News from All Saints

Since our last contribution to Church Alive much has happened on a town-wide basis through Churches Together, whilst life at All Saints has been rather quieter.

Once again, the service in the marquee during Carnival Week was a joyous celebration. The marquee and surrounding area was packed as we met across the denominations and generations to worship God together. Amongst enthusiastic singing and puppetry, the name of Jesus was lifted high. An especial thanks to Adam for managing to get a PA system from scratch working in just 20 minutes, after the field generator's failure. For me personally, one of the highlights was singing The Blessing over each other at the end of the service.



Members of All Saints then took part in the Churches Together walking carnival procession entry and were delighted with winning first place! It was great to be a team together across the churches and a joy to work with Natalie again - we will miss her.



This was preceded and followed by the Churches Together tent on Sandpit Field. A new location meant we had a steady stream of visitors to chat or take part in the activities available for children. It is good to be able to provide something that is free for families to enjoy during what can be an expensive time, and a listening ear for those who'd like to talk. A big Thank You to all who took part to staff the tent this year.

As in previous years we were delighted to host one of the teams at Studland camp for their pre camp leadership meeting and then to support them during the week with two volunteers. Studland camps are one of our mission partners and a fantastic organisation:

As mentioned last month, our summer series “Pathways to Life” is exploring different spiritual practices that can help draw us nearer to God.

So far the series has encouraged us to get physical in prayer, by using items such as a holding cross, a rosary or prayer beads to aid our concentration and give pattern to our prayer. This was followed by the practice of stillness and silence to become more attentive to the ‘still small voice of God’.

Silence can be a difficult practice in a world full of noise and distraction, yet the benefit of quiet and stillness allows one’s spirit to breathe within the presence of God.

As I write, we have just explored how music can help us go deeper with God. Whether it focuses our hearts and minds in a distracting world or lifts us into God’s presence, music can express emotion and meaning beyond words. It has the power to draw us out of ourselves and turn our hearts and eyes heavenward. It has been a joy to share these explorations with all of the regular summer visitors at our services and I look forward with anticipation to the remaining topics in this series.

John Payne, Churchwarden at All Saints Church, Swanage

Looking forwards, we are joining with other local churches in taking part in the 24-7 Global Week of Prayer: Sunday 6th September to Saturday 13th September.

We will have an extended praise and prayer meeting 9.30am on Thursday 10th September launching a 36 hour prayer room. The prayer room will close at 9:30pm with a service of Compline at 9:00pm.

Why not sign up for an hour online <https://pray.24-7prayer.com/signup/a568c1> on the sheet at the back of All Saints church, or just come along. (prebooking necessary at night).

DIARY DATES SEPTEMBER 2026



Tuesday 1st Sept	7pm Bible Study
Saturday 5th Sept	National Week of Prayer begins
Sunday 6th Sept	10am Holy Communion with Rev John Cooper 6pm EBC Worship @ 6
Monday 7th Sept	6:15pm St Mark's Choir Practice re-starts 7:30pm Church Committee
Tuesday 8th Sept	3:30pm Singing Club re-starts
Wednesday 9th Sept	10am Special Global Week of Prayer Gathering at St Mark's
Saturday 12th Sept	Historic Churches Ride and Stride Day
Sunday 13th Sept	10am Holy Communion
Tuesday 15th Sept	7pm Bible Study
-	7pm PCC Meeting at All Saints
Sunday 20th Sept	10am Holy Communion
Thursday 24th Sept	6pm Herston Village Hall AGM
Sunday 27th Sept	10am Special Pets Celebration – bring your Pet to Church
Tuesday 29th Sept	7pm Bible Study
Every Monday 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal	
Every Wednesday 10am Prayer and Share	

St Marks News

Do you remember the summers when, after rather lack-lustre weather through June July and August, we would get to this point and say "well, September can be very nice - perhaps we'll get our summer then!". This year, it has been rather different, with largely unbroken sunshine throughout most of the summer months. For many of us this has been a wonderful summer, and has certainly brought the crowds into Swanage; but I know that for others, at times, it has been a bit of an ordeal. Add to that the almost total lack of rainfall for much of the summer and the devastating fires in Purbeck, the New Forest and elsewhere, we have all been wondering if this is "the shape of things to come"

At St Mark's we've been so pleased to see summer visitors in our services and they get a very warm welcome and a farewell wish that we might see them again, perhaps next year. It is good to see unfamiliar faces and many stay for coffee and cake after the service and add to our fellowship. A number have also joined us for our traditional summer social events - the Pimm's and Hymns and the barbeque, These (also joined by friends from other churches in Swanage) were especially memorable as we continued to bask in the sunshine. The rather restricted space available in the St Mark's garden managed (just about) to hold all that came and also provided some shade for those who needed it.

We also have had some goodbyes to say. After Natalie had been with us for her last service at our church in July, several of us went to St Mary's on 9th August for her last service in the benefice. It was an emotional occasion. We haven't had Natalie and Joseph with us for as long as we would have liked, but we have cherished their visits to St Mark's and we believe that they loved coming to join in worship and social activities with us.

I'm sure there will be St Mark's representation at her licensing service in Windsor as we wish them all God's blessings in their new context.

As we go ahead into September church events which have been rested for the last month assume their full place in our calendar of activities. Our weekly August prayer walks return to their base in the Church Room for our Prayer and Share meetings and one of them forms part of the National Week of Prayer. This is a great initiative as Christians throughout the country express their dependence on God, especially at the time when churches are starting new activities to increase their fellowship but also to spread the word of God's love to those around them. I don't know which category the Pet Service comes under, but we will see how it goes. Our fortnightly Bible Studies continue as they have done through the summer - the only difference being that on two occasions in the hottest weather, they were held outside!

So, as we look forward to the inevitable changes in the weather as Autumn develops, our life as a church continues, and as we pray for God's blessing on others, we do so also for ourselves as we serve him in this little part of his world.

John Way, Churchwarden.

We now have a convenient QR code available for anyone who would like to make a donation to any of our three parishes. Simply scan the code shown here to give securely and support our parish.



St Nicholas Studland News



September Parish Newsletter 2026

There is quite a paradox in living by the sea (where there is plenty of water) and looking out on parched landscapes that definitely need water. In Coleridge's poem *The Ancient Mariner*, human beings too are caught in that strange bind as their ship is becalmed in equatorial seas:

*Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.*

Of course, the problem is it's the wrong sort of water. Salt water is neither good for land nor good for humans to drink. But water, pure water is an essential for life on Earth. The distant pictures of our planet as a blue dot in the emptiness of space underlines our fragility and dependence on this marvellous compound and the remarkable cycle by which it evaporates from the sea and falls as life-giving water on the earth, to then return to the sea.

As I write this piece in August, the sustained drought is still upon us. I hope that by the time you read this we will have had some rain. But I'll be honest, I'm not holding my breath.

I have checked the long-range weather forecast: it was not that hopeful. I hate to have to admit it, but I'm actually longing for a day or two of drizzle.

This longing for water is deep rooted in many cultures that face extended periods of drought. In the Bible this is especially so.

When King David felt very much alone and abandoned he wrote:

*O God, you are my God; I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
[Psalm 63]*

The prophet Isaiah pictures the overwhelming joy of the exiled and demoralised Hebrew people returning to their home:

*The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.....
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;*

In Jesus' teaching too we find many references to the refreshing, life-giving qualities of water especially for those who turn and follow him. Speaking to a woman that he met at a local well on a hot day he said:

“Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.”

And later on at the festival of booths (a festival that reminded the Jewish people of their dependence on God) he said:

“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’ ”

Yes, we all need water to live.....the right sort of water. We need the ordinary water that comes from our taps, but Jesus invites us to sample another water: water that brings life and joy and peace to the inner person; water that quenches out thirst for forgiveness and closeness to God; water that cleanses us from our wrongdoing and empowers us to live in love with others; water that will never run out.

When we follow Jesus, that water of New Life is all ours and I can confidently say, both the short term and long term forecasts for this water are excellent.

Rev. Tony Edmonds

Quotation

“Get on fire for God and men will come and see you burn.”
— John Wesley



Letter from the Archdeacon for Wilts,

A Time of Turning

September always brings a change of rhythm. Children and young people head back to school or off to college for the first time. Holidays end, routines return, and the light begins, almost imperceptibly, to soften and shorten.

It can be a season of mixed feelings. For some, there is real hope: new classrooms, new opportunities, new beginnings. For others, there is nervousness — a new school, a new job, a step into the unknown. Some of us mourn the passing of long summer evenings and find the turning of the year quietly sorrowful. Others long for the crispness of autumn, the cooler days and fresher nights.

Both responses are honest, and both are welcome. Change can be exciting, full of promise. It can also be disorientating, even painful, carrying its own small grief.

The sixteenth-century saint Ignatius of Loyola encouraged Christians to seek "God in all things" — not just in church or in prayer, but in the ordinary texture of daily life. Noticing God, for Ignatius, was less about looking for the extraordinary and more about paying attention: to what stirs us, what unsettles us, what draws us closer to life and love.

That practice of attention feels well-suited to September. The changing of the seasons, in nature and in our lives, can be a place to notice God. In the dimming evening light and the turning leaves, in anticipation and hope, and equally in anxiety and loss, God is present. The Psalms are full of this same honesty — praise and lament sitting side by side, often in the very same breath.

So perhaps this September, whatever this new season holds for you, it's worth pausing each day to ask, as Ignatius might: where do I see God breaking through today?

Whatever changes around us, we hold to this promise: seasons turn, circumstances shift, but God does not change — and God does not leave us to face the turning alone. This is the heart of the ancient Celtic tradition of prayer, echoed in the ancient breastplate prayer attributed to St Patrick, which speaks of Christ beside us, before us, behind us, beneath us and above us, in every direction and in every moment. Whatever this September holds for you — hope or hesitation, excitement or grief — may you know that same presence: God with you, in all things, every step of the way.

Archdeacon Louise

Quote

“Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences.”

— John Wesley

IS GOD GOOD FOR YOUR (MENTAL) HEALTH?



Any Questions?

Thursday 8th October 2026,
7.00 pm at Swanage Methodist Church
105 High Street, Swanage, BH19 2LZ

**Doors open at 6.30 pm coffee/tea
presentation at 7pm.**

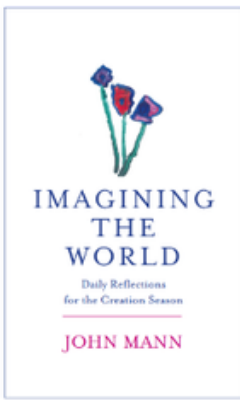
All are Welcome

more information from David Williams: d.stephen.w1@gmail.com

Speaker: Dr. Alan Kerry

Alan was for over 30 years a GP, trainer and Course Organiser in the NHS, with a special interest in mental health. For many years he was administrator and Editor of Faith & Thought, a Christian forum for exploring issues of Science, Faith and Society.
He loves skiing and being a grandad.





Imagining The World

Daily Reflections for the Creation

Season

John Mann

Designed for use during the ecumenical Season of Creation – the newest addition to the Christian liturgical year, spanning 34 days from 1 September – this profound book of devotion offers readers the opportunity to reflect thoughtfully and prayerfully on the wonder of God’s creation across the world

For each day of the season, John Mann – spiritual guide, pilgrimage leader and priest – presents a short passage of biblical scripture alongside a contemplative reflection inspired both by nature (predominantly from the unique landscapes of the British and Irish countrysides) and by the mystical and philosophical writings of Teilhard de Chardin, Simone Weil and Søren Kierkegaard. Each day’s reflection ends with a suggested prayer.

This is a unique resource for Christians seeking inspiration and inner enrichment during the Season of Creation, and will become a much-loved daily companion to be revisited year after year.

All royalties from the sale of this book will be given to the Manx Wildlife Trust.

John Mann is a writer living with his wife on the Isle of Man. His more than forty years as an Anglican priest included service as the Dean of Belfast Cathedral and Team Rector here in Swanage. He continues through the Island Spiritual Network to lead quiet days and retreats. He was awarded the Lambeth Cross for Ecumenism in 2018.

Bodhi, 17, wrote and read this poem at the funeral of Dan Brown. Audrey Pebroke asked if we could include it in this issue of Church Alive! as a thank all those who prayed for the family.

OPENING MUSIC

'English Rose' *by The Jam*

READING

'Never lose your sense of Wonder'

WELCOME WORDS

READING

'Dearest Dad' *written and read by Bodhi*

The steady hands that held my own,
Now gently rest so pale and weak.
The voice I've loved my whole life long,
Has run out of words to speak.

I watch the rise and fall of breath,
The quiet courage in his eyes,
And realise that this slow goodbye,
Is making me so deeply wise

He built a fortress, strong and tall,
He was my harbour, safe and wide,
Now as his strength begins to fade,
I'll hold his legacy inside.

So close your eyes my dearest dad,
And let the heavy shadows part,
You do not have to fight this now,
You'll be forever in my heart.

EULOGY

Written by Linda



WORSHIP@6

Sunday 6th September 6pm
Sunday Evening Worship at EBC Swanage

This will be about an hour of extended worship, a time to wait upon the Lord, to experience the beauty of worship like never before. To help you connect with God, alongside the sung worship, there will be an opportunity to share anything that the Lord lays on your heart, a place where you can pray and an opportunity to be prayed for. Refreshments will be served afterwards, an opportunity to catch up with each other.

Swanage Churches will be partnering with us.

Come along and be blessed by this worship time.

SING SING SING SING

The Belvedere Singers are looking for more members

We are a friendly group of amateur singers, ranging from those who sing in the shower or enjoyed singing in the school choir, to competent musicians who support the less experienced. Do come and try us out for free.

There are no auditions.

We sing a wide range of music. Beautiful sacred pieces alongside popular songs from stage and screen, modern arrangements of familiar folk songs and dramatic opera choruses.

We love a challenge!

THE BELVEDERE SINGERS REHEARSE ON TUESDAY EVENINGS IN TERM TIME
FROM 7.30 – 9.30 IN THE EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH IN SWANAGE.

Find out more at – www.belvederesingers.org.uk or Facebook
or contact thebelvederesingers@gmail.com

The Belvedere Singers Charity No. 1160197

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Global Week of 24-7 Prayer

6 – 13 SEPTEMBER 2026



Timetable of Prayer opportunities in Swanage & Studland

Sun 6 Sept 6-7.15pm Worship & Prayer at Emmanuel Baptist Church

Mon 7 Sept 10am-1pm Drop in for Labyrinth Prayer Journey, at the
Methodist Church

6-7pm Prayer in the Northumbrian Tradition
at St Nicholas, Studland

Tue 8 Sept 8am-8pm 12hr Prayer Room at EBC, *including*
9-10am Churches Together Prayer Meeting

Wed 9 Sept 10am Prayer Meeting at St Mark's Church

Thu 10 9:30am—Fri 11 9:30pm 36hr Prayer room at All Saints *including*
Thu 10 Sept 9:30am 1hr Worship & Prayer
Fri 11 Sept 9pm service of Compline

Fri 11 Sept 10-12noon Space for Quiet Prayer at the URC

Sat 12 Sept 8am Prayer Meeting at St Mary's Church

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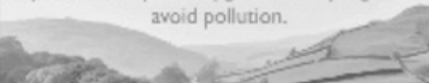
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Contact: **01929 421427**

or email **museumswanage@gmail.com**

Quotation

Not from his head was woman took,
As made her husband to o'erlook;
Not from his feet, as one designed
The footstool of the stronger kind;
But fashioned for himself, a bride;
An equal, taken from his side.

Charles Wesley

Family News

Funerals at St Mark's

Mrs Valerie Jean 'Val' Larrad (74), 17 South Road 14th August

Mr William 'Will' Custance-Dyke (33), Bell Street 19th August

Cover Story

*Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.
The words of Jesus. Matthew 10.29-31*

Jocelynnne

If anyone has got spare knitting wool, I knit scarves for homeless people. Not furry wool, just double knitting wool, bright colours please. lynnechurchserver@hotmail.co.uk. Please leave on the back pew at St Marks church, with my name on it and your email address. Thank You!



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Psalm 23 begins with words that many of us have known for years: *“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”* We read them when we need comfort, we pray them when we are facing difficulties, and we share them with others who need encouragement. But sometimes a Scripture becomes so familiar that we can miss the power of what is actually being said.

In Hebrew, David begins with Adonai Ro'i (יהוה רעי), pronounced: ah-doh-NIGH roh-EE)—*“The LORD is my Shepherd.”* This was not only something David believed about God. It was something he had experienced personally. David knew that the God of Israel was also the God who knew him, watched over him, and faithfully led him through every season of his life.

Before David became a king, he was a shepherd. He knew what it meant to care for sheep that depended completely on him. He led them to places where they could eat and rest, protected them from danger, and went after them when they wandered. Years later, when David looked back over his own journey with God, he understood that this was exactly what the Lord had been doing for him.

David's life was not an easy one. He went from watching sheep in the fields to standing before Goliath, from being welcomed into Saul's house to running for his life. He experienced victory and disappointment, friendship and betrayal, peace and danger. Yet through all of it, David could still declare, "Adonai Ro'i." The LORD had never stopped being his Shepherd.

This is why Psalm 23 does not promise us a life without valleys. David says, *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me."* The valley was real, but so was the presence of God. David's confidence came from knowing that wherever the road took him, his Shepherd would be there.

Centuries later, Jesus stood before the people of Israel and said: *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."* (John 10:11)

For those who knew the Scriptures, these words carried great meaning. Jesus was showing them the heart of the Shepherd David had trusted. He said that the Good Shepherd knows His sheep, calls them by name, and leads them. And He showed us how great His love is by laying down His own life for us.

This is what Adonai Ro'i means for us today. We do not follow a God who watches our lives from a distance. We follow a Shepherd who knows us personally. He knows where you are today. He knows what you are carrying. He knows the questions you have and the road that is still ahead of you. You may not understand everything He is doing, but you can trust the One who is leading you.

Maybe today you are enjoying green pastures, or maybe you are walking through a valley you never expected to enter. In both places, the Shepherd is the same. His faithfulness does not change when our circumstances change. He is with us in the place of rest, and He is with us in the valley.

So let David's words become your own declaration this week: Adonai Ro'i—the LORD is my Shepherd. When you need direction, listen for His voice. When fear comes, remember that He is with you. When you feel forgotten, remember that your Shepherd knows you by name. And when you cannot see where the road is leading, keep following Jesus. The Good Shepherd knows the way.

Prayer

“Adonai Ro'i, You are my Shepherd. Thank You that You know me personally and never leave me alone. Help me to recognize Your voice and follow where You lead. When I am afraid, remind me that You are with me. When I wander, bring me back to You. Thank You for Jesus, the Good Shepherd who loved me enough to lay down His life for me. Amen.”

**Blessings,
Pastor Israel Pochtar**

Letter from the Editor

The song on the back page of this month's Church Alive!. beautifully sung by Maranatha Singers, takes us right to the heart of our Christian faith. So often we see our prayer time as an opportunity to bring our requests to God and expect Him to give us the things we need or want. And of course God delights to meet our needs and be a loving Father to us. But Christianity is not a religion, it is a relationship between us and our Creator, an intimate experience of living with God and knowing His presence in our lives.

Jesus said that God is Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit. Sometimes I find it difficult to make that transition into the realm of the Spirit, and to hear the voice of God. That is where a song like this can be really helpful. I just put on some headphones, turn off my phone and let the song do it for me. Very soon I find myself lifting up my hands to the Lord and singing that I love Him.

I know that Jesus loves it too, because in His love and tenderness He responds. When the pressures of life, which we all experience, seem to overwhelm us, just taking time to be in His presence and letting Him touch us with His love opens the way for us to receive all that He has to give us.

Maranatha also do children's hymns, sung by Psalty, which we used to love singing as a family when driving on holiday. So, I recommend this song and others by them and pray that they will be a blessing to you.

In moments like these, I sing out a song
I sing out a love song to Jesus
In moments like these, I lift up my hands
I lift up my hands to the Lord
Singing, I love You, Lord
Singing, I love You, Lord
Singing, I love You, Lord
I love You

In moments like these, I sing out a song
I sing out a love song to Jesus
In moments like these, I lift up my hands
I lift up my hands to the Lord

Singing, I love You, Lord
Singing, I love You, Lord
Singing, I love You, Lord
I love You

Singing, I love You, Lord
Singing, I love You, Lord
Singing, I love You, Lord
I love You

Beautiful love song to Jesus by Maranatha Singers on YouTube