

Church Alive!

Swanage Parish Magazine

September 2025





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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Leading Article	4
St Mary's	6
All Saints	9
St Marks	12
St Nicholas	16
Tools with a Mission	17
Swanage Parish Finances	19
National Week of Prayer	20
Any Questions	21
Patient Participation Group	22
Purbeck Arts Choir, Messiah, and Swanage Band	23
Children's Page	27
September Crossword	28
Cover Page and August Crossword Answer	29
Greatest Story Ever Told	30
Letter from the Bishop of Salisbury	32
Hebrew Word of the Month	33
Letter from the Editor	35

Rev Dave Richards writes:

What a great summer! We have already celebrated:

- Natalie's ordination as a Priest
- All Saints' Family Fun Day
- Pimm's and Hymns at St Mark's
- The Year 6 Leavers' event for Purbeck schools
- The Churches Together Carnival Praise, the outreach tent on the Carnival field, and 2nd place in the walking section of the Carnival procession
- Tony Edmonds' commissioning as Associate Minister in Studland

As I write, we are still looking forward to the Lifeboat Service, the Studland Pet Service and the Folk Festival service. Yes, the Church is alive and well and working in a community near you.

Despite these good news stories, we need to recognise that we are no longer in a world where people come looking for us – even weddings and funerals are, increasingly, non-religious occasions. While our buildings are often important for heritage, fewer people want to worship in them.

It's easy for churches to become ground down and preoccupied with internal church things, finances, roof leaks, coffee rotas, music rehearsals, and so on..... These are all important, but they are not the reason we are here. We are here to fulfil Jesus' command: *"go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* (Matthew 28:19-20)

So, what do we do to fulfil this command to mission? I don't have all the answers, but I have some suggestions:

Pray. Before Jesus sent his disciples out, he said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me". (Matthew 28:18). We need the guidance and power of Jesus before we do anything else. Why not join in one of the National Week of Prayer events?

Look outward. The command was “Go”, not “Wait for people to come”. Our present situation emphasises the fact that we are called to mission. (A bit like the Church in Acts, and look how well they did!)

Trust the Gospel message. The Good News of Jesus has the power to change lives. We need to offer people Jesus, not church. We don’t need a hard sell, just a good introduction.

Tell your story. People love stories, hence the success of The Archers and East Enders! Your story, of how Jesus works in your life, is much more interesting than a sermon.

Expect things to change. The church is either renewed, (and renewal means change), or it dies. The message never changes – Jesus is always the crucified, risen and ascended Lord; *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever”*, (Hebrews 13:8), and God’s Word never changes, but our liturgies, our hymnbooks and our church meetings have changed over the centuries, and will continue to change.

This is not a complete plan for mission, just some basic thoughts. What are your thoughts about mission, and how best to share the Good News? The most important thing in any conversation about mission is not answers, but the fact that we are willing to ask some questions. Do share your questions, (and maybe answers), with any of the Clergy Team; I look forward to being swamped by your emails!

Rev. David Richards

"God wants us so badly that he has made the condition as simple as he possibly could: Only believe." ~ Smith Wigglesworth

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 (particularly suitable for those living with dementia or any kind of special need)
Weds	10am-12.30pm	T-Pot in the Rectory Classroom
	11.00am	Holy Communion (every 4 th Weds with Healing)
Fri	5.45pm	Junior Choir practice
	6.30pm	Adult choir practice
	6-8pm	Friday Fun Club in the Rectory Classroom (term time only)

Sun 7th 10.30am Folk Festival Service

Tues 9th 7.30pm PCC Meeting at All Saints Church, Ulwell

Sun 14th 10.30am RNLI 150th Anniversary Service
6.30pm 'Come & Sing' Choral Evensong with
Dr Andrew Lumsden

Mon 22nd 2.00pm Thanksgiving Service for Margaret Davis

Weds 24th 9.30am Visiting Bellringers

St Mary's Notes

Like most people, over the past months I have been increasingly horrified by the terrible situation in Gaza, with a two-million population being starved, despite food and water being ready and waiting to be transported to them but being denied to them through decisions made by the Israeli government and army. Now there seems to be a plan to direct a million Gazans, weak through starvation and unable to walk far, to a supposedly safe area while their present area is bombarded.

I questioned how many Christians seem to support Israeli government policy which seems to be the antithesis of Christian principles like mercy and compassion. To understand more, I read books which outline biblical interpretations supporting Christian Zionism and biblically-based views which do not.

I found a sermon entitled The Place of Israel by the renowned Anglican evangelical theologian and leader, Revd John Stott (1921 – 2011), neatly draws together the scriptural evidence against Christian Zionism. This sermon is included in Zion's Christian Soldiers (author Stephen Sizer) and can also be found on the internet at <https://stephensizer.com/2023/05/john-stott-the-place-of-israel/>

On a domestic note: St Mary's Lending Library has been moved across the North Aisle to new, slightly bigger, shelving. Thank you to Ray Davis (churchwarden) and Bob Davis (no relation!) for sourcing and constructing the shelves.

Paul Baird is our fairly new librarian and is due our thanks for sorting out and displaying the wide choice of books on offer. Feel free to browse!

September brings us two special services to host at St Mary's. The annual Folk Festival Service is at 10.30am on 7th September, and there will be a service at 10.30am on 14th September to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Swanage Lifeboat.

Looking ahead, as well as our annual All Souls-tide A Service in which to Remember, St Mary's will be hosting the Lewis-Manning Hospice Candles by the Sea event on Saturday, 15th November from 5.30 to 7pm. So, we have a busy autumn before the Christmas rush!

Please pray for the people of Gaza and all those suffering from the effects of war at this time.

Avril Harris, Churchwarden
Your paragraph text

We now have a convenient QR code available for anyone who would like to make a donation to St Mary's Church. Simply scan the code below to give securely and support our parish.



ADVANCE NOTICE – Sunday 5th October 2025

Gabby North, Community Partnerships Manager, South Central England, will be with us at St Mary's for our 10.30am Choral Eucharist and Harvest Thanksgiving Service.

Gabby will be speaking about the work that is being done to help people suffering from this curable and debilitating disease.

You are very welcome to join us.

Rosemary Carpenter
Hon Sec Swanage Parish TLM



SEPTEMBER 2025

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 (starting 15th
Sept)

Church Prayer meeting Thursdays 9:30 – 10am (restarts 4th
Sept)

Coffee Pot Thursdays 10:30am -1pm

Art workshop Fridays 10am

Special events this month

Sunday 31st August 12pm. Church BYO picnic lunch @All Saints

Sat 6th – Sun 14th Sept *National Week of Prayer (various
prayer gatherings across the town and
prayer stations @All Saints
– see separate notice for details.)*

Sat 6th Sept 8.15am Swanage Christian Men's Group Breakfast
@MacAllisters

Sun 7th Sept Open Worship, 6-7pm @EBC (linking with NWoP)

Thu 11th Sept 9:30-10:30. Worship & Prayer @All Saints, (linking with NWoP)

Sat 20th Sept Fabulous Free Family Funday 2-5pm @All Saints

Sunday 28th Sept 12:30pm Share lunch together BYO @All Saints

News from All Saints

Looking back over the summer so far (it's now heading towards the middle of August as I write) many of us up at All Saints have had the privilege of being involved in some great events involving people from many different congregations both in Swanage and wider afield. Back on July 14th, we were excited to host once again the **Purbeck year 6 Leavers' Event** across St Mary's Church, the Methodist church & URC. It was a joy to host 7 schools and some 150 year 6 young people for a reflective morning at the end of their time at Primary school; and also a great blessing to have a team comprised of members of virtually every church in Swanage, as well as clergy from across the wider Purbeck area.

A couple of weeks later many of us were back down in town to be involved in the Churches Together presence at **Swanage Carnival**: whether staffing the church tent, in the procession or at the Carnival Praise service. Lots of moments of joy! It is such a privilege to be part of the Christian community together here and we pray that lasting spiritual fruit will come from all these different endeavours. It was good to see some of the children we had met at other recent events, and in September we are planning another free family funday (well afternoon technically, but that doesn't start with "f"!) up at All Saints.

This summer, All Saints has been involved in supporting several Christian youth camps happening nearby. Our regular Mission Partners Studland Camps have been busy hosting young people, children and families from across the country. All Saints building hosts one of the leaders' training events and a couple of our members are over at Studland on the team as I write. Later on in August, Wed 24th, we plan to support them with people-power striking the camp at the end of the season.

This year we have also been able to support Hants & Dorset Christian Youth Camps for the second year, hosting their social action day in July – but also providing a safe physical haven at 1am one Saturday night when the camp was evacuated because of Heath Fires. Once again, we are grateful for the provision of a building that can help others in a time of need. Back in our church services at All Saints this summer, we are dipping into the book of Psalms. It has been good to open up this unique part of God's word where we hear the voices of God's people responding to all manner of circumstances and bringing their sometimes raw emotions to God.

At this week's Café church, we had a go at writing a psalm of thanksgiving and praise ourselves, using a template that mirrors much of the devices used by psalm writers. It you would like to have a go, here's the template we used:

And here is one person's that they shared with us all:

Dad, Father

Hallelujah!

Thank you God, that your love for me reaches the deepest part when all else fails

Your kindness is the comfort to my soul

As the blanket that covers me when I sleep.

You provide us with the love and safe place to dwell in, and with all your heart that softens ours.

You are the everlasting Lord.

So thank you for everything. Amen

Start with your favourite way of addressing God

Write an exclamation of praise

Thank you God that your love for me reaches *(think of somewhere a long way away)*

Your kindness is as *(choose a measuring word such as long, high, wide deep)*

as the *(choose something that fits with your measuring word.*

You provide us with *(choose something that we need to live)*

and with *(choose something that you enjoy)*

You are..... *(use a word to describe God)*

End with a word to praise God

Looking forward to the coming month we are planning to connect into the National Week of Prayer for the UK Sat 6th – Sun 14th Sept which is being supporting by the Evangelical Alliance and a host of other UK organisations.

The strap line is Gather. Remember, Return: “As the body of Christ, we are gathering across the UK and beyond; to humble ourselves, repent and pray for lives to be transformed by Jesus, as a spiritual awakening continues in the nations.”

Let's be honest, most of us know the theory that prayer can change everything and yet we constantly need to support each other in actually doing it! Why not join others in taking this opportunity to pray for our nation and cry out to our Loving Heavenly Father for this land.

With every blessing

Jo



DIARY DATES - September 2025

Tuesday 2nd September -	7pm Bible Study
Thursday 4th September -	7:30pm Church Committee
Saturday 6th September -	National Week of Prayer begins
Sunday 7th September -	10am Holy Communion
Tuesday 9th September -	PCC meeting
Wednesday 10th September -	10am Special National Week of Prayer Gathering at St Mark's
Saturday 13th September -	10:30am Ride and Stride Historic Churches Walk
Sunday 14th September -	10am Holy Communion
Tuesday 16th September -	7pm Bible Study
Sunday 21st September -	10am Holy Communion with Rev Natalie Davies
Sunday 28th September -	10am Celebration! Service
Tuesday 30th September -	7pm Bible Study
Choir Rehearsal -	Mondays 6:15 - 7pm
Junior Singing Club -	Tuesdays 3:30pm – 4:25pm (during term-time)
Prayer and Share -	Wednesdays 10am - 10:45am

St Marks Notes

Well, what a wonderful fun packed summer we all had here at St Marks with so many social events and local events happening in church and in the town. We have had a wonderful concert, our annual Pimms and Hymns afternoon tea in the garden and, this year, we had a lovely BBQ lunch in the garden with plenty of wonderful refreshments.

A lovely event likely to become another St Marks tradition! We are really blessed in St Marks with so many amazing people who have such an array of talents which makes St Marks such a special place to worship and be a part of.



My thanks to everyone who has planned, organised, and supported all our events. Just like the human body, each and every part has a special role to play in keeping us alive and well, so at St Marks, we all have an important part to play, whatever our talent or role may be. We come together in our worship, prayer, and social gatherings to make St Marks so special and welcoming. Our doors are open to everyone.

The weather has been exceptional this summer, although a little rain overnight would be very welcome for the gardens and fields. My allotment has been good this year producing lots of lovely vegetables and fruit. I have walked many miles, back and forth to the nearby water trough, with watering cans trying to keep everything alive. Plus all the extra courgettes I had left in church, by the font, found new homes!

Carnival Week saw hundreds of people arrive in Swanage, starting with the wonderful air display by the Red Arrows on the Saturday. On Sunday morning we joined the Churches Together Worship Service in the Carnival Tent, which was a joyful occasion and was well attended and enjoyed.

In the afternoon was the fantastic Carnival Parade, with several local organisations and groups, including ‘Churches Together in Swanage,’ joining in with the Circus theme, and enjoying seeing the crowds along the route. This year we were thrilled to be awarded the 2nd Prize for a walking entry. No pressure for next year!!!!

Several of us, from St Marks, volunteered in the Churches Together Carnival Tent, with information about all our churches and several free fun activities for the children. We also had water and treats for visiting dogs and their owners!! The tent was extremely popular, and we received lots of positive smiles and comments from visitors and local people.

As I write, (mid-August) we are in the middle of Swanage Lifeboat Week, with many events happening in town and on the Prince Albert Gardens. On Sunday 17th August the crew and lifeboat will be blessed, by Bishop Stephen, at a special ceremony marking 150 years of Swanage Lifeboat.

On Sunday 24th August we will be welcoming Rev. Natalie Davies, when she will be celebrating her first Communion Service with us. We will be sure to give Natalie a very warm welcome on this special Sunday morning.

Looking ahead.....

Ride + Stride: Saturday 13th September. Meet at St Mark's Church at 10:30am. Option of walk to Worth, back to Acton (4 miles) and bus to Swanage, or walk on from Worth to Kingston (total six miles) and bus back, or walk on to Corfe (total eight miles) and bus back. See poster for full details. Donations for Dorset Historic Churches Trust.

A chance to come together, as a Parish, as we share a lovely walk in the beautiful Isle of Purbeck countryside.

We look forward to the future and building on our reputation as ‘the Party Church’

The Living Faith prayer – by Martyn Payne

“Word of God, help us to speak and to write words of encouragement for each other. And help us to hear and to read words of inspiration from each other; drawing on the Bible notes we study, the Christian books on which we reflect, and the Bible truths we explore, so that each of these words might shape and direct our lives to your glory.” Amen

May God Bless and Keep You

Anne Roper

Church Warden

**Swanage
& Studland
Team Ministry**



Raising money for Dorset Historic Churches Trust

Saturday 13th September 2025

**Meet at St Mark's Church, Bell Street, Herston BH19 2SA
at 10:30am**

Walk 1: Walk to Worth Matravers for lunch (bring a packed lunch or buy locally). Walk back to Acton (a total of about 4 miles) and catch a bus back to Swanage. **Walk 2:** Continue on steep paths to Kingston (just over 6 miles), and catch a bus back to Swanage. **Walk 3:** Walk on to Corfe (just over 8 miles). Celebrate with a drink if you wish, and then get a bus to Swanage.

Please wear suitable footwear, bring water and sun cream/waterproof clothing as appropriate – we will go ahead in light rain, but cancel if it's very wet. Dogs welcome on a lead. No need to book, just turn up.

Please make a cash donation on the day, or contact
Anne Roper 01929 427890 / anne.roper@outlook.com
for information about raising sponsorship.

St Nicholas Studland News



Dear Friends,

Just a few days ago Diana and I sat out on Studland beach with some friends. We'd brought the table out of our old beach hut and as the evening light faded sat and ate some fish and chips. It had been a busy day for all of us and a hot summer's day too, but now all was hushed and a gentle breeze cooled us down. In the distance we could see the lights of Poole and Bournemouth and in the bay the riding lights of the various yachts and dinghies twinkled softly. We were glad of each other's company and the conversation and laughter flowed. It was a lovely end to the day.

Such moments always remind me of the great creation narratives in the book of Genesis. These verses are a profound and beautiful meditation on the nature of God as an ordered creator, delighting in all that he has made. The creation of humankind points to His special and profound relationship with us as human beings. The story is filled with such joy and colour, but then something goes wrong. Humans make a poor choice, and what follows are some of the saddest verses in the Bible: "Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden..." In the cool of the day, when work was over and all was at rest, God walked into the garden to be with his creation, man and wife, to enjoy their company and talk with them, but they were ashamed and hid from him.

The hot days of summer and the busyness of our lives can sometimes squeeze out our desire to just chat with God and yet the story that emerges from the Bible is of a God who goes out of His way to find and talk with and enjoy our company. Maybe we feel we're too far from God or not good enough for him to come and talk with us. But that's really not the point. Perhaps we all need to find gentle "evening moments", when all is hushed and quiet, when we can just be ourselves in this beautiful world enjoying its peace and then just wait, wait for God to come. He will come if we ask, He loves to be with us and talk with us. There's no need for us to feel ashamed or abashed or to feel too inadequate. God takes us as we are and through the eyes of His Son sees us wonderful, as companions, as someone to sit down with in the cool of the day and have a good chat. May we all be blessed with rich conversations with our wonderful creator and friend.

Rev. Tony Edmonds.



Update on TWAM - Tools With a Mission September 2025

Firstly, we would like thank everyone who has kindly donated to TWAM in recent months. Locally, we have collected a wide range of items from sewing machines (over 20), knitting machines, drills, generators, bandsaws, chopsaws, lathes, and many hand tools for the various trades, all of which are on their way to, or have already arrived in countries in E. Africa. This is an on-going mission and by the end of 2025 alone, TWAM will have sent 25 machines , container loads to Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania. This is the most they have ever achieved, since the charity started 30 years ago. Each container is loaded not only

with machines, but also between 800-900 fully refurbished toolkits, which will transform lives of those in some of the poorest communities of Africa.

TWAM is a growing Christian charity that collects donated good-quality, useable tools in the UK, volunteers then refurbish them, sort them into trade kits and send them to the developing world for livelihood creation. In Africa we support local people, meeting local needs with skills training projects. We supply tools to equip training centres and also provide trainees with a starter kit when they graduate. Whole communities can be transformed once individuals have the skills and equipment. As the mission grows, the need for good-quality tools increases, so we are committed to sending as many tools and meet as many needs as we can!

So how can you become involved? We have over 500 volunteers in the UK but need more. There are several ways you can help practical, financial and spiritual. If you have tools to donate, please contact your local collector, (who is my husband) on 07590 903922 or you can email him @twam.uk to arrange collection. If you do not have tools, but would like to help financially please see the TWAM website.

This year, for Christmas presents, perhaps you would consider giving an 'Alternative Gift', such as providing an electricians kit (£25) or a computer kit (£35) or a sewing machine (£25). This is an amazing way to help a vulnerable person to break free from poverty. I can provide more information on this next month or please have a look at the TWAM website – twam.uk for more details.

If you belong to a group in the community and would like us to give a talk, please do get in touch. Also, if you know somebody who is downsizing, or retiring from trades such as plumbing, carpentry, electrical or construction, or can no longer use their various machines, please pass them our details and spread the word about TWAM.

Thank you.

Judy and Richard Forgan

Swanage Parish Finances

April – June 2025

This is the second financial report that has appeared in “Church Alive!”. The intention is that these will be in the magazine every three months from now on. The previous one was in the July issue and this one covers the following quarter.

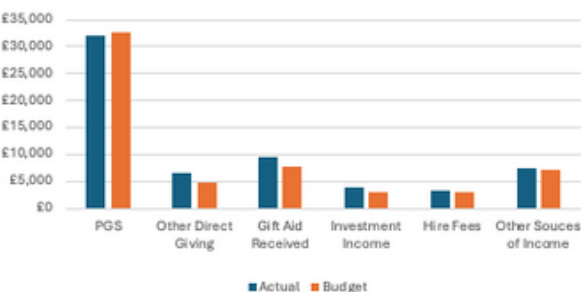
The categories in the chart will vary slightly from issue to issue as the year progresses. There is no reference this time to the All Saints’ tithe payment as, apart from an ongoing standing order of £100 per month, the year’s payments were made in the first quarter. Similarly, there was a category labelled “response to appeals” previously, which is not needed this time.

The total income from all sources for these three months was £62,734 and the expenditure considerably lower than the previous period at £63,612. The lower difference results, among other things, from the fact that there were no invoices for major work on any of the church buildings during the second quarter of the year. There are, however, larger invoices for work which has been done to come in the coming months. The income was boosted by the fact that some people make an annual donation through PGS and that mostly comes through in this quarter and additional money was claimed through Gift Aid.

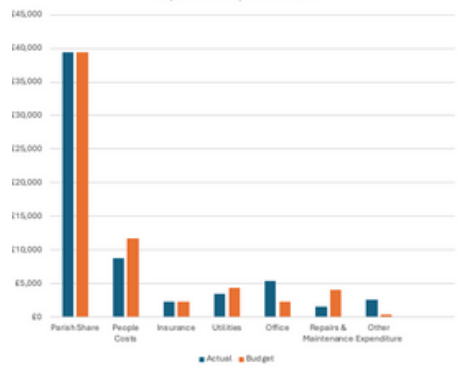
The income and expenditure figures vary from month to month, but the additional income and lower expenditure make encouraging reading. As indicated, however, some of the figures are affected by seasonal factors and the overall forecast is still for a sizeable deficit for the year as a whole (possibly around £48,000) so we must still be doing what we can to increase our income and, where possible, reduce our expenditure.

John Way PCC Treasurer

Income April - June 2025



Expenditure Apr - Jun 2025



National Week
of Prayer

Join us.

Gather. Remember. Return.

nationalweekofprayer.uk

6-14 September 2025

Timetable of NWoP Prayer opportunities in Swanage & Studland

Sun 7 Sept 6-7pm	Worship & Prayer at Emmanuel Baptist Church
Mon 8 Sept 6-7pm	Prayer in the Northumbrian Tradition at St Nicholas, Studland
Tue 9 Sept 9-10am	Churches Together Prayer Meeting at Emmanuel
Wed 10 Sept 10am	Prayer Meeting at St Mark's church
Thu 11 Sept 9:30 -10:30am	Worship & Prayer at All Saints
Fri 12 Sept	<i>watch this space Friday's event TBC</i>
Sat 13 Sept 8am	Prayer Meeting at St Mary's church

Gather. Remember. Return.





Any Questions?



'Faith and Ethics in a Secular World'

We are pleased to welcome our speaker for this event

Canon Professor Vernon White

Visiting Professor in Theology at King's College, London.

Previously Canon Theologian at Westminster Abbey, Vernon has had a varied career in theological education, university chaplaincy, and cathedral and parish ministry, and has lectured and published extensively.

Vernon will focus on what Christian faith can offer to debates on ethical issues in today's social and cultural environment.

Tuesday 14th October 2025

The United Reformed Church, 112 High Street, Swanage,
BH19 2NY

This promises to be an interesting and thought-provoking evening. Do put the date in your diaries – we look forward to seeing you there.

Doors open at 6.30 pm coffee/tea presentation from 7.00 pm

Do come – everyone welcome!

Further information from David Williams
d.stephen.w1@gmail.com



Health and Wellbeing Event at The Mowlem on Thursday 2 October - Save the Date!

Everyone is invited to come along to the free Health and Wellbeing Fair in The Showbar any time between 11:00am until 3:00pm. The PPG will be hosting a stand at this event - do drop by and say “Hello”.

At 12:30pm, you will also be able to watch the first screening of a short film about Health Services in Purbeck - please book your free seat to watch the film in the Mowlem Theatre by visiting The Mowlem’s website at: <https://themowlem.com/event/health-and-wellbeing-event/>. There’s no need to book if you are just attending the Health and Wellbeing Fair.

The event is being organised by the Purbeck Integrated Neighbourhood Team, which brings together all the providers of health and care services in Purbeck - including primary care, community care, adult social care, children and young people services and the voluntary sector - so they can work together more closely to help people stay well for longer and provide streamlined, personalised support when people need it. The PPGs in Purbeck are also working with the Purbeck Integrated Neighbourhood Team to ensure people living in Purbeck are involved in improving and shaping local services.

Our next PPG meeting will be held at the Surgery on Tuesday 9 September 2025 at 6:00pm, when we will be joined, by Dr McIntosh, one of the GP Partners at the Practice.

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.

**Mrs Margaret Broadhurst (Dr Margaret Guy) Chair
Swanage Medical Practice PPG
11 August 2025**



HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Do you love to sing?

**Join the Purbeck Arts Choir in September
as we begin rehearsals for our next concert
Handel's Messiah on Saturday 29th November
in St Mary's Church, Swanage.**

All welcome.

**Rehearsals will start on Thursday 4 September
in Swanage.**

**please contact Lavinia King (Chair)
purbeckchoir@gmail.com
or 07974795978**

Two free taster sessions offered before commitment to sing and pay!

SWANAGE TOWN BAND

PLAYING IN THE BANDSTAND THIS SUMMER

WEATHER PERMITTING

Saturday 13th September 2.30 pm

**If wet, we will play in the Methodist Church at 3.00pm. This concert will
be in aid of Weldmar Hospicecare.**

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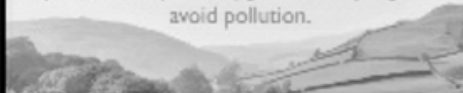
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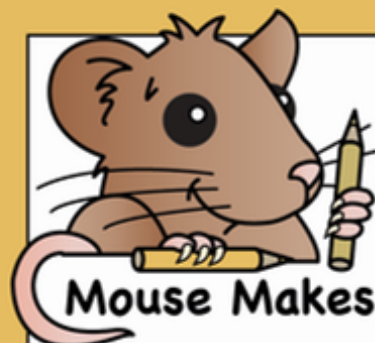
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Mouse Makes

"May the people **praise** you **God**...
The **land yields** its harvest, God,
our God **blesses** us."

- from Psalm 67:5-6

"**Honour** the
Lord with your
wealth and the
first part of
your **harvest**."

- Proverbs 3:9

"Let us fear and respect the Lord our God.

He gives **autumn** and **spring** rains
at the right time. He makes sure that we
have the harvest at just the right **time**."

- from Jeremiah 5:24

"God... gives you **rain** from
heaven and good harvests
at the right times. He gives
you plenty of **food** and
fills your hearts with **joy**."

- from Acts 14:16-17

"So the one who **plants** is not
important, and the one who **waters**
is not important. Only **GOD** is
important because He is the one
who makes things **grow**."

- 1 Corinthians 3:7

D	E	B	R	E	A	D	C	R	O	P	S
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S	U	N	F	I	E	L	D	R	E	A	P

Find the words in **bold** type in the bible quotes in the
wordsearch then look for the words below too!

PLOUGH • FIELD • SOIL • SCATTER • SOW • SEEDS • SUN
REAP • PICK • CROPS • GRAIN • CORN • BARN • BREAD • THANKSGIVING

Across

1 'A little later someone else saw Peter and said, "You — are one of them"' (Luke 22:58) (4)

3 Giving (1 Peter 2:5) (8)

9 They came to Jerusalem seeking an infant king (Matthew 2:7) (3,4)

10 'An athlete... does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the — ' (2 Timothy 2:5) (5)

11 Pacifist, temperance advocate, open-air preacher, leading 20th-century Methodist, Donald — (5)

12 'Come quickly to — — , O Lord my Saviour' (Psalm 38:22) (4,2)

14 'The God of Abraham, — — — , the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus' (Acts 3:13) (5,3,5)

17 Sear by intense heat (Revelation 16:8) (6)

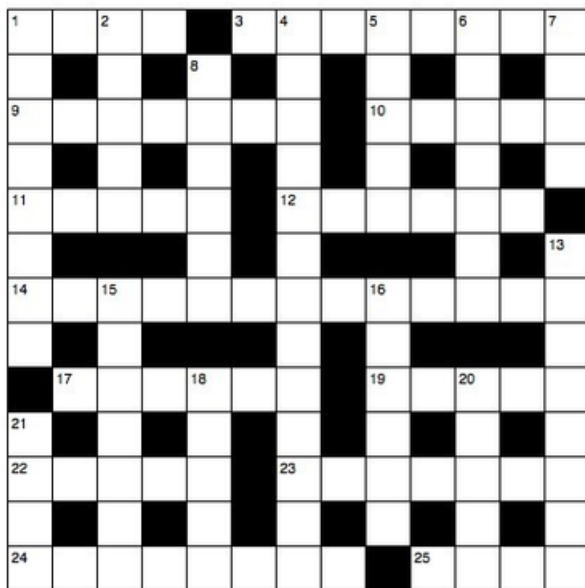
19 'It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust — — ' (Psalm 118:8) (2,3)

22 Goods (Nehemiah 13:15) (5)

23 i.e. train (anag.) (7)

24 Surrounding area (Luke 24:50) (8)

25 'Righteousness will be his — and faithfulness the sash round his waist' (Isaiah 11:5) (4)



Down

1 Elegant and creative (Exodus 31:4) (8)

2 'Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all — , but we will all be changed' (1 Corinthians 15:51) (5)

4 'I... delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your — — — is' (Colossians 2:5) (5,2,6)

5 Enlist (2 Samuel 24:2) (5)

6 Of the Muslim faith (7)

7 Sharp intake of breath (Job 11:20) (4)

8 Woven cloth (Ezekiel 16:13) (6)

13 Plentiful (Romans 5:17) (8)

15 CIA char (anag.) (7)

16 Paul and Silas stopped him committing suicide after an earthquake in Philippi (Acts 16:27–28) (6)

18 One of the ingredients in the making of incense for the Lord (Exodus 30:34) (5)

20 Episcopal headwear (5)

21 Inhabitant of, say, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia or Bulgaria (4)

Cover Page

The olive tree and olive branch have been symbols of peace and reconciliation ever since the account of Noah's flood. When the dove brought Noah *"a plucked olive leaf in its beak,"* the olive branch represented new life sprouting on the earth *Genesis 8:11*. The olive tree was alive and growing. The promise of the dove's olive branch was a new beginning for humanity, peace and reconciliation with God, renewal, and revival. The slow and hearty growth of the olive tree also implies establishment and peace. Some of the oldest olive trees in the world still grow today in the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives.

In Memoriam

We are planning to bring you information from the Parish records starting next month. Thanks to Jane Cooper for her help on providing these details.



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August Crossword answers

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P		T	A				A		N		H	
P	E	T	E	R		Z	E	B	E	D	E	E
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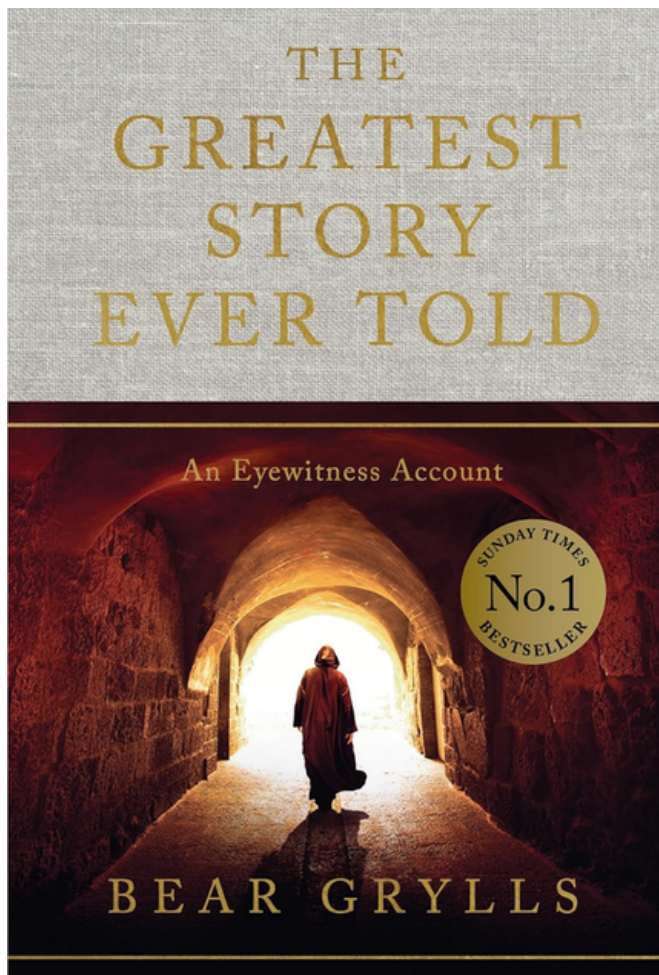
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Bear Grylls OBE writes:-

"I stuck closely to the accounts recorded in the four gospels, adding some dialogue and details for context and flow. However, not a single word of Yeshua has been changed from the original accounts in the New Testament.

I used different English translations to capture the context, either NIV, MSG or ERV. "

The author of over 100 books, Bear says if he were only to have written one.....this book would be it.

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changed the course of the world forever.
He lived and died over 2,000 years ago, fulfilling expectations
that existed long before his birth.

His birth had been mystically foretold by astrologers for
hundreds of years, yet the rulers of his day dreaded his coming.
This humble builder-teacher became a magnet for the poor and
down trodden, a symbol of love and mercy, who transformed
the lives and restored the health and purpose in all who
encountered him.

The local elite and governing rulers eventually tortured him and
put him to death in the most violent and public of ways. Yet that
was only the beginning...

In the years since, billions of people have dedicated their lives
to this man and have testified to his divinity and truth.
To others, he is little more than another rebel who was killed by
one of the most brutal empires in human history.

How we each respond to this story dictates the course of our
lives. And it all rests on the great mystery that occurred at the
end of his life - a supernatural event that he had predicted with
utter clarity.

Did this humble man tell the truth?

Could one man really be the focal point of the universe?
Read on to find out, and get ready to make up your own mind.
Wherever this journey takes you, this is arguably:

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Letter from the Bishop of Salisbury

September is always a month of endings, as well as new beginnings. As the bright colours of summer fade into the oranges and browns of autumn, shiny new school shoes make an appearance, along with fresh notebooks as we head back to our desks after a break over August. We start again, carrying with us the feeling of a new year beginning.

September then is always a month of change, and because of this it can be unsettling. We reflect on or maybe grieve for that which is drawing to a close, and can feel a mixture of anticipation about what is new or next. It is likely that we feel this even more acutely this September, living in a world which feels increasingly insecure from the perspective of fast-changing global politics and conflicts around the world that show no sign of abating. All is changing; all feels very fragile and deeply uncertain.

One of this country's much-loved hymns is 'Abide with Me', famous for being sung at every FA Cup Final since 1927. The words are based on Luke 24: 29 and were written by the Reverend Henry Francis Lyte, with one of the stories about this suggesting that he wrote them in September 1847 – just after he had conducted his final church service and when very ill with tuberculosis. He died two months later.

Putting aside questions of when Lyte wrote these words, the fact remains that they capture the constancy of God's presence and love, even as the seasons change, our lives change, our world changes; in life and in death:

*"Change and decay in all around I see
O Thou who changest not, abide with me."*

This then is a beautiful reminder that even though we, and indeed our world, pass through times of change and can feel unsettled as a result, God goes with us. God in Christ abides with us, his presence and love unchanging in our ever-changing world:

"Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. (Luke 24: 29)

Bishop Stephen

Hebrew Word of the Month

There's a beautiful Hebrew word in Scripture that carries both weight and hope:

Teshuvah (pronounced: te-SHOO-vah).

It means repentance—but not in the cold, guilt-heavy way we sometimes imagine. Teshuvah literally means "return." It's about coming back to where we belong... back to God's heart.

In the Bible, teshuvah isn't just about saying "I'm sorry." It's about a turning—a decision to change direction and walk toward the One who loves us most.

God's call to teshuvah is everywhere in Scripture. In Joel 2:13, He says:

“Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.”
That’s the heartbeat of teshuvah: God isn’t waiting with crossed arms, ready to scold us. He’s standing with open arms, ready to embrace us.

We see it when someone who’s been far from faith walks into a service and starts weeping during worship. We see it when a person lays down old habits and starts a new life in Yeshua (Jesus). We see it in the quiet moment someone says, “I’m ready to follow Him again.”

Teshuvah is a homecoming.

But sometimes, it’s not easy. Pride whispers, “You can fix this yourself.” Shame says, “You’ve gone too far.” But God’s truth answers: “Come home—I’ve already made the way.”

Yeshua showed us the fullness of teshuvah. Through His death and resurrection, He made it possible for us not just to turn toward God, but to walk right into His presence—clean, forgiven, free.

Right now, teshuvah might mean something different for each of us. Maybe it’s giving up a secret sin. Maybe it’s letting go of bitterness. Maybe it’s simply spending more time with God after drifting.

Wherever you are, you can turn back today. The way is open.

A Simple Prayer:

God, thank You for always calling me back to You. Thank You that no matter how far I’ve wandered, You never stop loving me. Help me to lay down anything that pulls me away from You. Lead me home, and let my life honour You in every step I take. Amen.

Love and blessing,
Pastor Israel Pochtar

Letter from the Editor

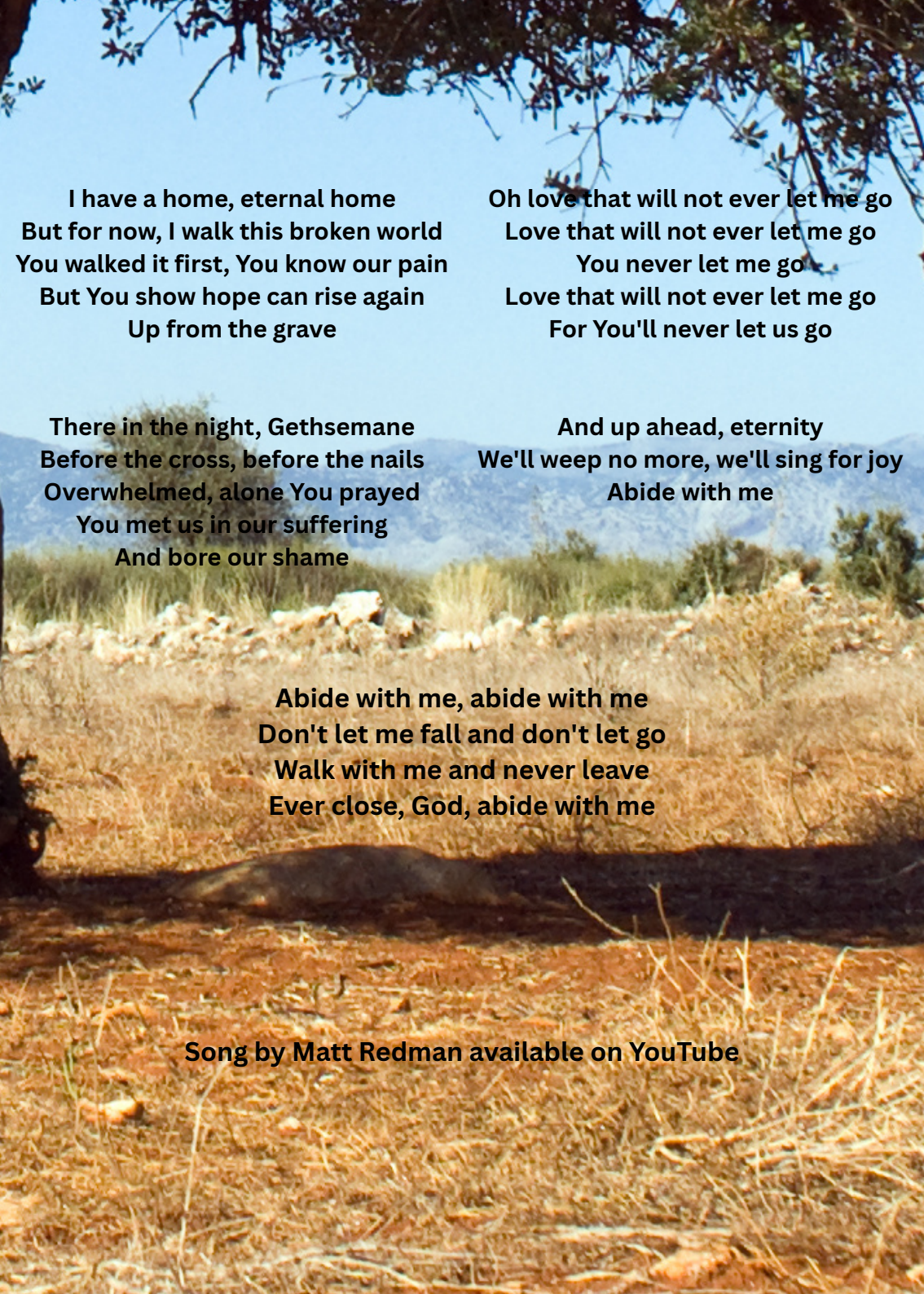
I am grateful to Avril for bringing up the subject of the terrible war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas, that has resulted in so much suffering for so many. As the reports from the different churches show, we have so much to be thankful for, living in such a beautiful place as Swanage and the Isle of Purbeck. Even when we become ill or suffer various difficulties, the love and support of family and others is there to help us through dark days and nights, and we pray for those in these awful situations.

In a recent uplifting sermon, Rev John Cooper spoke of what is the experience of so many of us, that it is very hard to watch the evening news these days. Avril speaks of being horrified by the reports of the war in Gaza, a response that is surely shared by by us all, anyone who has feelings of care and concern for their fellow humans.

Avril then raises the issue of Christian Zionism, and points us to the views of Stephen Sizer and Rev John Stott on this emotive subject. John Stott eloquently presents one view of the relationship between Israel and the Church. Another view is presented by Derek Prince in his book, *“The Destiny of Israel and the Church.”* Both John Stott and Derek Prince are highly educated Cambridge scholars and great men of God, and even they come to different conclusions.

Church Alive! is not the forum for debating such a vast and important subject, and I hope that that in the coming days we will have many opportunities in meetings being organised for us to search the Scriptures, in love, to find the truth of God’s Word on Israel, the land they occupy and the Palestinians role in claiming their right to the land, and other important subjects.

Two events taking place in September well worth attending are “Faith and Ethics in a Secular World,” Canon White, Any Questions, Page 21, and “The Battle for the Truth,” John Hooper, The Olive Branch, 12.September, 7 pm at Harmans Cross Village Hall.



**I have a home, eternal home
But for now, I walk this broken world
You walked it first, You know our pain
But You show hope can rise again
Up from the grave**

**Oh love that will not ever let me go
Love that will not ever let me go
You never let me go
Love that will not ever let me go
For You'll never let us go**

**There in the night, Gethsemane
Before the cross, before the nails
Overwhelmed, alone You prayed
You met us in our suffering
And bore our shame**

**And up ahead, eternity
We'll weep no more, we'll sing for joy
Abide with me**

**Abide with me, abide with me
Don't let me fall and don't let go
Walk with me and never leave
Ever close, God, abide with me**

Song by Matt Redman available on YouTube