



St Marks Church

Pennington

To love, to serve, to give to all – in Jesus' Name

Your teachings, oh Lord,

are sweeter than honey...



JULY 2017

Minimum Price – 50p



FROM THE PULPIT

Last month I wrote about resting on one day a week, and taking time to pray to God. So, this month I want to talk more about prayer.

We can pray anywhere - we don't have to wait till we next come to church. We can pray when we're walking, almost asleep, on the bus, as we sing. God is always listening. We can pray standing up, lying down, sitting or kneeling, or running if we feel that energetic!

We can pray at any time - it can be at any time of the day or night, when we're working, when we're washing up, when we plan to pray, when we pray spontaneously. We might just send up a quick prayer when we're caught in a crisis, or we see someone in immediate trouble. These prayers are known as 'arrow prayers'.

Prayer is really just talking with God. It can stretch from a shared smile with Him in seeing something beautiful, to an anguished wordless cry of pain. It can be a milli-second long, or many minutes. It can be wordless, or wordy. It can be clear, it can be muddled. It can be calm, it can be angry. It can be thankful, it can be pleading. It can be a chat, just telling God how we feel, or how we're finding the day, or what is pleasing us or annoying us. Or it can be silent. The part we most often forget is the times when we listen to God, because prayer with God is like any two-way conversation with our friends or family. We expect to listen to our friends when we talk with them - but most of us tend to forget this when we tell God all the things we want Him to know!

God knows it all already of course, but He wants to hear from us. Just as we may know what our child did in school, we want to hear it from them. It's in sharing that we come to know and understand each other more, and it's exactly the same in our relationship with God.

Often, we think we don't hear from God because He may not answer our prayers in the way we expect, so we keep looking for an answer which we think is best, when actually God has something much better waiting for us, when we open our minds and respond. Often, we think we don't hear from God because we don't like the answer which He is giving us. Bill Hybels, an American pastor, wrote that God answers prayer in one of four ways: no, wait, slow, go. It's for us to look for which answer God is giving to us, and trusting that He really does know what's best for us: after all, He designed and created us!

If we look out for answers to prayer, we find our thinking changes to become more in line with God's way of thinking, and it becomes easier to spot where He is answering our prayers. We see the 'God-incidences' in our lives which we may previously have just thought of as co-incidences, and notice the amazing ways God blesses us, which we'd never have thought of asking for ourselves.

God is always listening, always here for us. He will always hear your prayer, and always answer you. Enjoy your chats with Him.

Yours in Christ, Anne

READINGS FOR FAMILY SERVICES

The 3rd Sunday After Trinity, 9:30am

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 2nd July | New Testament | Romans 6.12 - end |
| | Gospel | Matthew 10.40 - end |

The 4th Sunday after Trinity and Sea Sunday, 9:30am

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| 9th July | New Testament | Romans 7.15 - 25A |
| | Gospel | Matthew 11.16 - 19, 25 - end |

The 5th Sunday after Trinity, 9:30am

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 16th July | New Testament | Romans 8.1 - 11 |
| | Gospel | Matthew 13.1 - 9, 18 - 23 |

The 6th Sunday after Trinity, 9:30am

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 23rd July | New Testament | Romans 8.12 - 25 |
| | Gospel | Matthew 13.24 - 30, 36 - 43 |

The 7th Sunday after Trinity, 9:30am

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 30th July | New Testament | Romans 8.26 - end |
| | Gospel | Matthew 13.31 - 33, 44 - 52 |

DRIVERS FOR BASICS BANK

Basics Bank needs Voluntary Drivers for occasional delivery help. It would involve being asked on a specific day if you could collect parcels from the Cabin behind the URC Lymington at about 11.30 and deliver them to our clients that day. If you are interested and able to assist please request a volunteer's application form and further details from admin@basicsbank.org.uk or ring 01590 610008. Thank you.



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For further information see:-
www.lymingtonrotary.org
www.facebook.com/lymingtonrotary

Pleased to be supporting the Pennington Parish Magazine the Rotary Club of Lymington, formed in 1948 meet weekly, on a Wednesday, at the Lymington Community Centre where we lunch together and enjoy short duration speakers. Approximately once per quarter we have an evening meeting where we enjoy the company of our friends and family. We are a membership who care about each other and also care about our community whether local, national or international. We believe in doing good work but also enjoying fun and friendship whilst we seek to help others.

| Date | Time | Details |
|------|-----------|---|
| 1st | Saturday | 14:00 Church Fete, Pennington WI Hall |
| 2nd | Sunday | 08:00 Holy Communion (Said, BCP) with refreshments following 09:30 Family Communion 18:00 Evensong, with act of healing |
| 3rd | Monday | 10:30 Staff Meeting |
| 5th | Wednesday | 10:15 Coffee Morning, Church Centre, followed by 'Reflections' 11:00 Sharing Scripture, St Marks Lady Chapel 11:30 Holy Communion, followed by fish and chips |
| 6th | Thursday | 12:30 Friendship Lunch |
| 8th | Saturday | 19:30 Woodside Singers "Summer Swing" concert |
| 9th | Sunday | 08:00 Holy Communion (Said, BCP) with refreshments following 09:30 Family Communion |
| 10th | Monday | 10:30 Staff Meeting |
| 11th | Tuesday | 13:30 Strictly Come Crafting, Church Centre |
| 12th | Wednesday | 10:15 Coffee Morning, Church Centre 11:00 Sharing Scripture, St Marks Lady Chapel 11:30 Holy Communion, followed by fish and chips |
| 16th | Sunday | 08:00 Holy Communion (Said, BCP) with refreshments following 09:30 Family Communion 18:00 Evening Worship |
| 17th | Monday | 10:30 Staff Meeting |
| 19th | Wednesday | 10:15 Coffee Morning, Church Centre 11:00 Sharing Scripture, St Marks Lady Chapel 11:30 Holy Communion, followed by fish and chips 15:00 Messy Church |
| 23rd | Sunday | 08:00 Holy Communion (Said, BCP) with refreshments following 09:30 Family Communion 11:00 Baptism of baby Ava-Grace Katie Newland 18:00 Evensong |
| 24th | Monday | 10:30 Staff Meeting 14:15 PJS Leavers Service |
| 25th | Tuesday | 13:30 Strictly Come Crafting, Church Centre |
| 26th | Wednesday | 10:15 Coffee Morning, Church Centre with monthly draw club 11:00 Sharing Scripture, St Marks Lady Chapel 11:30 Holy Communion, followed by fish and chips |
| 28th | Friday | 15:00 Wedding of Laura and Jonathan |
| 30th | Sunday | 08:00 Holy Communion (Said, BCP) with refreshments following 09:30 Celtic Communion |
| 31st | Monday | 10:30 Staff Meeting 19:00 PCC Meeting |



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ST MARKS DRAW CLUB

The winning numbers for the recent prize draw were as follows: congratulations to our winners!

| | First | Second | Third |
|-----|-------|--------|-------|
| May | 120 | 413 | 266 |

CHURCH CENTRE

| | | |
|-----|---------------|--|
| Mon | 09:00 – 10:30 | Yoga |
| | 13:45 – 14:45 | Pilates |
| | 15:30 – 20:15 | Children's Dancing |
| Tue | 09:30 – 10:30 | Zumba |
| | 13:30 – 16:00 | NHS Retirement Fellowship (<i>1st Tuesday only</i>) |
| | 13:30 – 16:00 | Strictly Come Crafting (<i>2nd and 4th Tuesdays</i>) |
| | 18:15 – 19:15 | Pilates |
| Wed | 10:15 – 11:30 | Coffee Mornings |
| | 15:30 – 17:15 | Messy Church (<i>once a month, see calendar</i>) |
| Thu | 18:15 – 20:15 | Pilates |

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BOOKINGS

Church Centre Bookings

Pilates

Children's Dancing

Yoga

Zumba

Strictly Come Crafting

NHS Retirement Fellowship

Shirley Saunders

Lynda Hutchins

Kayleigh Sergeant

Anna Hasling

Lucy Thomas

Dorothy Davies

Jacqui Allan

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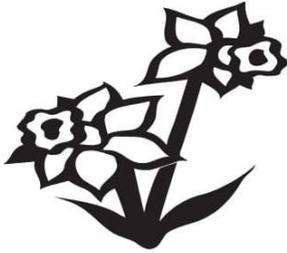
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COST OF PREACHING...

One beautiful Sunday morning, a priest announced to his congregation: "My good people, I have here in my hands three sermons...a £100 sermon that lasts five minutes, a £50 sermon that lasts fifteen minutes, and a £10 sermon that lasts a full hour. Now, we'll take the collection and see which one I'll deliver."

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OUR COMMUNITY

News and events from various groups in and around Pennington.



CHURCHYARD REPORT

Ingrid Bolhoven, 01590 677940

As I write these notes, the sun is blazing down and all is quiet. The tall white daisies present a wave type motion in the gentle breeze. A few butterflies are flapping around the grasses and flowers. Like me, the birds are keeping a low profile until the cool of the evening. The low growing 'eggs and bacon' Bird's foot trefoil, is much in evidence, a favourite with many different butterflies, and the emerging flowers of the lavender attract bees and hover flies. A joyful discovery recently was the low growing pink flowers of the Dog Rose where the grass had been cleared, in the rough places near the banner. They have lay hidden for so long, but will be looked after now their whereabouts is known. The paths, recently cleared present an area in which to stroll round the churchyard. On any day, people are attending to loved-one's graves, and the benches provide a place for a rest and maybe reflection. The vegetable plots do well and after due care and attention, salad leaves have been much enjoyed and donations made.



You are welcome to make any comments, contributions etc, and even join us in a first Thursday of the month working party in the churchyard. Refreshments and ideas shared and friendships made.



PENNINGTON WI

On Tuesday 13th June, the members of Pennington WI gathered in their hall for the monthly meeting. Newly nominated President Daphne Gold thanked Peggy who provided a lovely arrangement for the President table's rose

bowl. President Daphne gave all the members a brief introduction to herself and thanked the members for voting her in as President.

President Daphne gave her report on all the recent Pennington WI events, all of which were successful.

- There was the recent Beetle Drive, that made a profit of approx £140 - which will go into the Hall Refurbishment Fund.
- The monthly Play Reading Group continues to receive very positive feedback by the attendees – when next the group will be reading “Candid Peel”.
- The ever enjoyable monthly Lunch Club returns on Wednesday 28th June at Camellia’s Restaurant, Everton Nurseries.
- The recent Group Quiz which Boldre won.

Following from President Daphne’s report were some reminders for upcoming events and activities including the upcoming fundraising stall in Moore Blatch’s courtyard at the Lymington market on Saturday 24th June, the outing to Amberley Museum on 22nd August, the upcoming Donkey Derby, the Dementia UK World Record Tea Cosy on Monday 19th June and the Quilting craft workshop which will run over two days on 17th June and 22nd July.

Secretary Samantha Young was up next to go over the correspondence highlighting some interesting items in the current edition of Hampshire News, in particular a couple of events taking place in Lyndhurst and Denman Taster Days. Sam also went over various articles of correspondence. Following, Treasurer Di Young gave a brief report on the accounts highlighting the fantastic fundraising efforts. President Daphne gave a brief reminder of what was on the ‘boards’ table including notices and sign-up sheets for various outings, activities and competitions. Daphne also gave a brief explanation that there is a hall management sub-committee and there is a sub-committee for outings and programmes as well as letting people know that Beryl Brown is the Lunch Club organiser and the President herself is the Craft Workshop organiser.

Following this, President Daphne introduced the guest speaker who gave a fascinating talk and riveting demonstration on vintage fabrics.

HOLIDAYS AT HOME 2017

Joy Elphinstone



This year's Holiday at Home is taking place on the 1st and 2nd Thursdays in August. Anyone living in the Parish who will be spending the summertime at home is very welcome to join us.

On Thursday August 3rd, a minibus will leave from outside St Marks at

1pm - where we are going on a pleasure boat trip from Hythe Marina from 2 to 4pm. Depending on the tide, we will either have a tour of Southampton docks - or venture up the Hamble or Itchen river for a short cruise. Tea and cake will be served on board and a minimum donation of £2 is suggested for the refreshments. After our nautical afternoon, a minibus will return guests to the church by 5pm - transport can also be arranged to and from the pick - up point.

On Thursday August 10th, there will be festivities at the church centre with the theme of "Camping" starting at 11am and continuing until 3:30pm. The day will include a talk by a local author, a creative project, a pub type quiz, a "thought for the day" and will round off with "Campfire" songs.

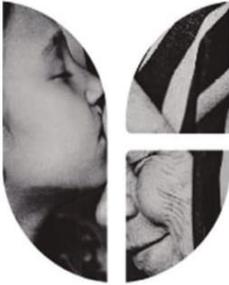


Refreshments will be provided throughout the day and a hearty lunch will be served.

Transport can be provided and payment is by donation.

Please contact Joy on 01590 677422 if you would like more details - or to receive an invitation and booking form: alternatively, please speak with Rev Anne or one of the church wardens.

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1ST LYMINGTON BROWNIES



Erika Rutter (tawny owl)

In June, we had a *Dads Evening* – and we're happy to report that this went very well! We came

together and made a box fire - by putting foil all over the boxes and then placing this over a barbeque fire. We also made rock cakes, which were cooked in the boxes: it generally worked very well - but some were sadly a little burnt on the bottom!

All of the dads had a great time with their girls - in between the fun, they all played dodge ball in the garden.



Towards the end of the month, on the 22nd June, we took a trip to Woodside gardens and on the 29th we enjoyed a trip out to Milford Beach.



Coming up on the 6th July, we will be taking ourselves along to Keyhaven to enjoy crabbing off the quay – hopefully we'll catch good sized *Brachyura* (that's crabs to you and I) – and I will tell you about that next time!

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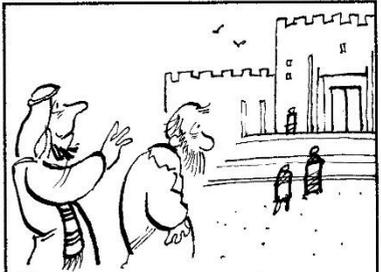
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The
Tale of the
**TWO MEN
SAYING
THEIR
PRAYERS**

**JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS**

**ONE WAS ABOUT TWO MEN WHO
WENT TO THE TEMPLE TO PRAY**



**ONE WAS A PHARISEE
(A MAN A BIT LIKE A PRIEST)**

**THE OTHER WAS A TAX
COLLECTOR. (NOT A POPULAR
MAN IN JESUS' DAY!).**

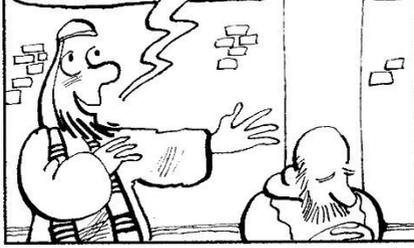



**THE PHARISEE BEGAN
TO PRAY**

**WHAT A GREAT CHAP I
AM! I NEVER DO
ANYTHING WRONG!!**



**I AM SO PLEASED WITH MYSELF,
ESPECIALLY AS I AM NOT A SCOUNDREL,
LIKE THIS TAX COLLECTOR!**




**BUT THE TAX
COLLECTOR COULDN'T
EVEN RAISE HIS HEAD**

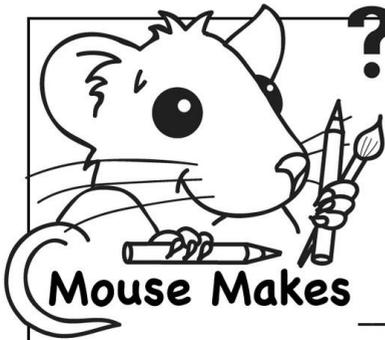
**DEAR GOD... I AM VERY SORRY!
PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR
ALL THE WRONG THINGS
I HAVE DONE.**




**IT WAS THE TAX COLLECTOR,
NOT THE PHARISEE, WHOSE
PRAYERS WERE HEARD!**



**JESUS EXPLAINED -
'DON'T BE PROUD WHEN YOU
PRAY - INSTEAD BE HUMBLE.'**



What should not be hidden under a bowl?

Matthew 5:14-15



Who was welcomed back?

Luke 15: 11-32



What ate the seeds that fell on the path?

Matthew 13:3-23



What was lost?

Matthew 18:12-13



What did the wise man build his house on?

Matthew 7:24-27



What is the kingdom of heaven like?

Matthew 13:45-46



DID YOU KNOW?

Jesus often used simple stories called **parables** to teach people about God, His Kingdom and about how God would like us to live.

In His parables Jesus used objects and pictures of the world around Him to help people to understand.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can read Jesus' parable stories in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke but only Luke records the parables of *The Lost Coin*, *The Good Samaritan*, *The Prodigal Son*, *The Friend in Need* and *The Rich Fool*.



Find the parable pictures in the word search

PARABLE • WHEAT • WEEDS
SEED • TREASURE • GATE
HOUSE • ROCK • SAND
PEARL • COIN • FIG • TREE
SHEEP • GOATS • WINE
TAX COLLECTOR
LAMP • PHARISEE
SHEPHERD • SAMARITAN

MIXED UP PARABLES



Which parable picture word goes with which?

NARROW — GOATS
SHEEP — GATE
WHEAT — BRANCHES
MUSTARD — COIN
LOST — TREASURE
GOOD — WEEDS
VINE — SON
HIDDEN — SAMARITAN
PRODIGAL — SHEEP
LOST — SEED

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

ORGAN RESTORATION APPEAL



Within the chancel of St Marks stands our organ, which remains largely unaltered from the originally installed instrument - built by Bishop & Son around 1904, the instrument is situated on the north side of the chancel and extends partially into the vestry behind. With musical pipes nestled within an oak carved trellis, our organ has led song for new lives coming together through marriage, provided the right note as we say a fond farewell to loved ones and brings

our congregation together for worship each and every week.

However, the decades from initial installation have taken their toll upon this centre piece to music at St Marks. Our organists are very talented to make the most of squeaky pedals and leaky pipes - but as time goes by, the quality of the music the organ can produce diminishes.

St Marks are applying for grants towards the costs of restoring this instrument, however we will be short of the full amount to cover the cost for this. Therefore, we would be grateful for your generosity, if you feel able to donate to this cause.

| | | | |
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Peter M. Cooper

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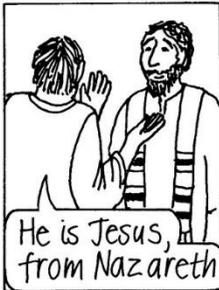
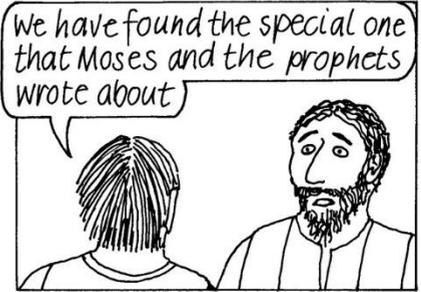
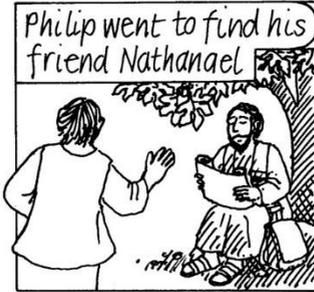


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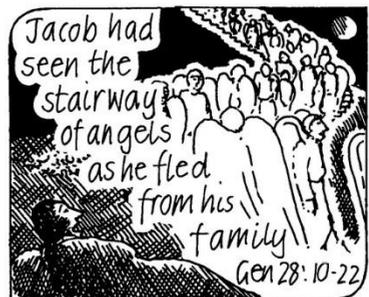
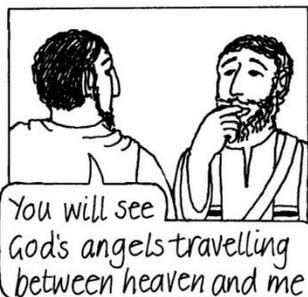
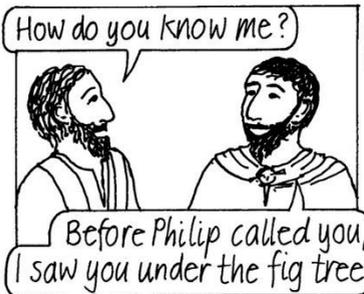
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in John chapter 1 verses 35 - 51

After Jesus had called Peter and Andrew to be his disciples, he went to find their friend Philip...



Background: the ancestor of the Israelites was Jacob, whose name meant 'Grasper' or 'Cheat'; and who cheated his father and brother. God gave him a new start and a new name - Israel - 'Prince of God'. Gen 25, 27, 32



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TRADITIONAL OR MODERN?

Paul Young



I'm not often one for the theatre. It's never been a first choice for me where an evening entertainment is concerned: perhaps it's a sign of modern times, but I'd consider the cinema before a play.

Or perhaps I'm just uncultured.

However, everything I've seen at the theatre I've enjoyed. A ballet, based on the story of Dracula. War Horse – which I won't deny left a tear in my eye. There's a certain skill involved in telling a story when the only space you have to tell it is on a stage; where you've only one take to get it right; where set design, props and lighting are as much a part of the story as the actors performing.

On a grey and blustery evening in June, eight choristers from St Marks met at the Mayflower theatre in Southampton. Tickets in hand, we had come to see "Sister Act" – not to gain any tips on singing or performing you understand, as we've already nailed that. No, this evening was simply a social – and I think I can safely say we all enjoyed it immensely.

I'm sure you know the story, but for those that may not, it's about an aspiring singer that wants to make it big. She's going out with a nightclub owner who is also a criminal: witnessing a murder he committed, she is put into a convent for her own protection by the police.

From her background, she doesn't really fit in: a nightclub singer in a traditional Catholic church: her language, dress and attitude are at odds with piety, prayer and contemplation. But discovering how bad their choir is, she takes command and turns their talent around.

And this is no bad thing. With a declining congregation, the church is in real danger of being closed and the sisters sent away to other convents: however, her modern influence rejuvenates the church – the choir bringing in the people.

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After a showdown in the convent with the nightclub owner, there's a big song and dance number – where apparently their success has even encouraged the Pope to visit. Away goes the excellent but drab church set – out comes lights, a lit staircase better suited to an eighties game show and sequined habits replace the old boring ones.

It's an excellent musical; sadly, the songs don't match the film – so you'll need to go back and watch it a few times if you intend to sing along – but well worth a visit. However, the message of modernity in the church got me thinking: and after the above preamble, here's my thoughts on that...

There's a certain something about traditional church. It's perceived by many outside of the church (and inside in some churches too, if you're unlucky with your priest or how the message is delivered!) as being boring, judgemental and archaic. As church attendance



across the country diminishes, it's seen by many as a contributing cause: there isn't an attraction to those who may need church to come in and find out more.

So, modernise. Out with the old, in with new: modern songs on something other than a dusty old organ. Briefer sermons that cut to the point. A focus on community and coming together instead of complicated aspects of faith and doctrine. Soundbites from the Bible, as it's archaic language is not understandable to all – and longer passages might put people off.

However, I worry that modernising the church in a way that's globally accessible carries a risk. There's a reason why we should be still and quiet for prayer; there's a reason why we should consider our own guilt and sinful nature; there's a reason we should understand our Bibles as best we can.

I worry that a modern church runs the risk of being a shallow church. People come and have a good time; they come and enjoy each other's company over coffee and song; they've enjoyed a motivational pick-me-up talk. They go home and think little more about it until next week.



St Mark's Church



Saturday 1st July 2017

2pm WI Hall

Ramley Rd., Pennington

Summer Fete

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
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They've missed the message: the focus was on the show and the event, not the Gospel we should reflect. It's true to say we are all unique and need to worship in our own way: but a superficial church may not answer questions about the Trinitarian nature of God, the need for Jesus sacrifice, the importance of scripture.

I don't, sadly, have the answer, but I suspect it's somewhere between the extremes of traditional and modern. What however I do believe is that a focus *solely* on community (no matter how important this in its own right is), on the show and not on the hard truths of our faith is a mistake. Humans are fickle things and easily distracted; something shiny comes along and with a shallow church, there isn't enough to anchor a person to remain.

A good time, a good show and sequins are fantastic: but a bit of the traditional is always needed to ensure the message isn't lost or swept aside.

DOCTOR LIVINGSTONE, I PRESUME?

Philip Attwood

I've always been fascinated by the person of Dr David Livingstone, the missionary/explorer. I read and re-read the accounts of his explorations, his amazing expeditions (he was the first European to cross the African continent from west to east on foot) his visits back to England, and finally his lonely death in a remote area of East Africa, where he had been searching for the source of the Nile. But although I had read a good deal about Livingstone, I couldn't say I really knew him. I knew he had a wayward son who caused him a great deal of heartache; I knew he and his wife endured long periods of separation because of his ceaseless quest to open up the African continent – but I had not ever sat in conversation with him.



I would have loved to meet him in the flesh and ask him many questions and really get to know him. That of course was not possible, nor will it ever be possible – but it would have been a boyhood dream come true.



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I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.

Ephesians 1:16-17

Interestingly, in verse 17, Paul prays that the Christians at the church at Ephesus may come to know God better. God longs that we get to know him better each day. He has given us the wonderful gift of prayer, so we can talk to him at any place, at any time.



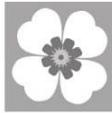
We can share with him our concerns, our worries about health, family members, our feelings of insecurity in our complex world. We also have the opportunity Sunday by Sunday to worship with other Christians and encourage each other.

And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 1:22-23

As the young church grew and expanded in the first century, it faced persecution, hostility and all sorts of other difficulties. But it did not die out or fade away. Those first Christians kept on witnessing by their words and actions to the saving power of the Lord Jesus and his ability to redeem and make new.

Paul reminded the Christians at Ephesus that Jesus is the head of the church, but the power of the risen ascended Lord Jesus is still at work today. Christ protects the church, empowers it and ensures its success. And that also means you and me, who are part of the church, Christ's body here on earth.



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The archbishops of Canterbury and York have asked that in 2017, the ten days between Ascension and Pentecost be given to prayer. However, on any day prayer is important – as God will surprise us with the answers to our prayers, and we will be getting to know him better each day. Paul prays something else for these new Christians; we find that in verse 1:18: he prays that *‘the eyes of their hearts may be enlightened.’* In today’s jargon, we could say that these are ‘light bulb’ moments.

The heart was regarded as the seat of human emotions, the source of our thoughts, judgements and feelings. Sadly, wrong things in our lives – such as jealousy, resentment and withholding forgiveness from those who have hurt us and treated us badly – mean that we are unable to see clearly the things of God. Jesus therefore invites us to be part of his saving and healing work.

That will mean different things for each one of us, but we are called to serve a risen and ascended Lord – who has promised never to leave us or forsake us.

DOUBT

Paul Young

Doubt. I think this – perhaps not above all else, but certainly up there – is one of the defining characteristics of what it means to be human.

We all have doubts from time to time. We doubt ourselves for much of it, questioning if we should apply for that promotion or new job, doubting our abilities to be accepted for it. We doubt we can commit to another for the long term and anecdotal stories of brides leaving their fiancé at the alter nervously waiting are the fear of every groom. As we return home from the hospital with a new life buried in blankets in our arms, we doubt our abilities as parents, realising the enormity of what nurturing a new person in the world really means.

Likewise, we have doubts in others too. We doubt our government will deliver on their promises; we doubt our friends will be on time when we expect to meet them later that weekend; we doubt colleagues could do the job as well as we do, thus we do it ourselves and grumble under the workload.

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And we doubt God.

Faith and doubt, it seems, cannot coexist. How can you have faith, if you have doubt? How can you trust when you find yourself questioning the veracity of God based on your own experiences? When life is going well then sure – but as we all take a knock back every so often, we might start asking “*well if two or more have gathered in your name, why hasn’t our prayer made a difference?*”

And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob’s hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, “Let me go, for the day has broken.” But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” And he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.” Then he said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.”

Genesis 32:24-28

I find word origins quite interesting and here’s one I recently discovered. Israel: the word means “*one who struggles with God*” – suggesting therefore that the Israelites are a people who likewise struggle with God.

As we sift through our old testaments, this “*struggle with God*” is hardly unique and indeed can be a defining characteristic of what is supposed to be God’s chosen people. For example, Psalm 89, which doubts the justice of God’s rule:

But now you have cast off and rejected; you are full of wrath against your anointed. You have renounced the covenant with your servant; you have defiled his crown in the dust. You have breached all his walls; you have laid his strongholds in ruins. All who pass by plunder him; he has become the scorn of his neighbours. You have exalted the right hand of his foes; you have made all his enemies rejoice. You have also turned back the edge of his sword, and you have not made him stand in battle. You have made his splendour to cease and cast his throne to the ground. You have cut short the days of his youth; you have covered him with shame.

Psalm 89:38-45



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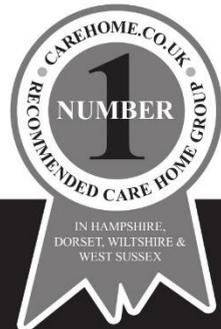
Poem by Serena, resident at Belmore Lodge

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Then take as an example of doubt, Job – from riches to ruins, Job certainly had cause to doubt in God:

“Today also my complaint is bitter; my hand is heavy on account of my groaning. Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat! I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. My foot has held fast to his steps; I have kept his way and have not turned aside. I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food. But he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back? What he desires, that he does. God has made my heart faint; the Almighty has terrified me;

Job 23:2-4, 11-13, 16

Doubt in God is nothing unique it seems but doubt is not the end of the story. Indeed, although chastised by God for his theological questioning, Job was rewarded for his honesty to do so:

After the Lord had spoken these words to Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite: “My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.

Job 42:7

Doubt leads to questioning and from questioning, understanding. Faith without doubt is a brittle thing, easy to be dismissed: but by facing our doubts and investing the time to follow where our doubts are rooted, our faith can be strengthened.



Faith is not blind and unthinking obedience but rather a trust that God knows ultimately what is best for us. Trust that expresses a willingness to trust God and to be trustworthy in relation to God. A trust based on our experiences and observation that God has been true to us on many an occasion before and will therefore continue to be so in our futures.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PRAYERS – JULY

| | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|-----------|---|
| 1 | Our Summer Fete | 17 | Northover Road |
| 2 | Lodge Road | 18 | Oak Tree Mews |
| 3 | Long Close | 19 | Those preparing for marriage or baptism |
| 4 | Lower Pennington Lane | 20 | Oliver Road, Messy Church |
| 5 | Mead Road | 21 | Pennington Close |
| 6 | Maple Court, Friendship Lunch | 22 | Pennington Oval |
| 7 | Meadowlands | 23 | Ava Grace on her baptism day |
| 8 | Meadow Road, Woodside Singers | 24 | Those who work and learn in our schools |
| 9 | Milford Road | 25 | Pinetops Close |
| 10 | Middle Common Road | 26 | Pitmore Lane |
| 11 | Parochial Church Council | 27 | Pound Road |
| 12 | Groundstaff and church cleaners | 28 | Laura and Jonathan on their wedding day |
| 13 | Village shops and shopkeepers | 29 | Priestlands Road, Donkey Derby |
| 14 | Newbridge Way | 30 | Priestlands Lane |
| 15 | North Greenlands | 31 | District and town councillors |
| 16 | North Street | | |

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED – JULY

If you would like someone to be remembered in the prayers at church on the nearest Sunday, please give the name and date to one of our churchwardens, Teresa Nivison or Maureen Barnard.

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| 1st | Jack Sprack | 23rd | John Davis |
| 4th | Pauline Elsworth Ted Press | 25th | Brian Park Robert Press |
| 6th | Reg Miller David Bodley-Scott | 26th | Norah Lynn Leonard Fletcher |
| 7th | Moira Priddice | 27th | Walter Saines Robery Worsely |
| 8th | Edna House | 28th | Mary Hunt Alice Mavis Ralph |
| 12th | Roy Blanchard | 29th | Stuart Vine |
| 16th | Len Squires | 31st | Emily Jane Waldeck |
| 17th | June Totterdell | | |
| 18th | Edna Banks Ralph Leech | | |

THE RECENTLY DEPARTED

1st June Mrs Rosemary Willis

IN CELEBRATION

| | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| 21st May | Arlo Hartnell (baptism) | 27th May | Megan Adair and Scott Shave (wedding) |
| 4th June | Casey Tudor (baptism) | 2nd June | Kerri Jenkin and Mark Dibben (wedding) |

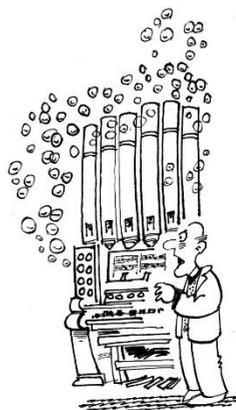
PARISH CONTACTS

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| Church Wardens | Mrs Teresa Nivison | 07541 842025 |
| | Mrs Maureen Barnard | 07541 721440 |
| Parish Administrator | Jackie Paul | 01590 671813 |
| Associate Priest | Rev. Anne Elliott* | 07553 552540 |
| PCC Secretary | Mrs Eve Jolly | 01590 679310 |
| PCC Treasurer | Mrs Teresa Nivison | 07541 842025 |
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| Bible Fellowship | Headteacher | 01590 672104 |
| Churches Together | Mrs Ingrid Bolhoven | 01590 677940 |
| Messy Church | Mrs Anne Harris | 01590 678378 |
| New Forest Basics Bank | Mrs Sandy Negrescu | 01590 675506 |
| | | 01590 610008 |

*Not available on Friday

There are additional contact methods available through our church website (www.stmarks-pennington.org.uk) – as well as general enquiries being welcome via email to enquiries@stmarks-penninton.org.uk.

Whilst we work towards appointing a new priest in charge for St Marks, we are very fortunate to have Anne Elliott with us as a familiar face to lead us in worship. For any day to day questions in regards to St Marks however, please find our church wardens are happy to help with any questions you may have as they guide our church through this time of interregnum.



For the last time! - Which member of the Junior Choir put bubble mixture in the organ-blower?!



SERVICE TIMES AT ST MARKS

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|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Holy Communion (BCP) | Sundays, 8:00am |
| Family Communion | Sundays, 9:30am |
| Evensong with Act of Healing | 1 st Sunday, 6:00pm |
| Evening Worship | 3 rd Sunday, 6:00pm |
| Evensong | 4 th Sunday, 6:00pm |
| Holy Communion | Wednesdays, 11:30am |

For any changes to these services, please refer to the calendar on the inside front cover of this magazine, on our parish notice boards or upon our website.

REGULAR MEETINGS

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Choir Practice | <i>(Church)</i> | Sundays, 8:45am |
| Coffee Morning | <i>(Church Centre)</i> | Wednesdays, 10:15 – 11:30am |
| | <i>(Church)</i> | Sundays, 8:45 – 9:30am |
| Rainbows | <i>(Pennington Guide hut)</i> | Tuesday, 5:15pm |
| Brownies | <i>(Pennington Guide hut)</i> | Wednesday, 6:00pm |
| Brownies | <i>(Pennington Guide hut)</i> | Thursday, 5:30pm |
| Guides | <i>(Pennington Guide hut)</i> | Thursday, 7:15pm |
| Beavers | <i>(Pennington Scout hut HQ)</i> | Thursday, 6:00pm |
| Cubs | <i>(Pennington Scout hut HQ)</i> | Wednesday, 6:30pm |
| Scouts | <i>(Pennington Scout hut HQ)</i> | Monday, 7:00pm |
| Scouts | <i>(Pennington Scout hut HQ)</i> | Friday, 7:00pm |
| Explorers | <i>(Pennington Scout hut HQ)</i> | Thursday, 8:00pm |



St Marks welcomes all who come through our doors – be your visit a brief one for the wedding of a friend or family, or a regular one as a member of our church family. If you wish to help St Marks to spread God's truth in our local community and beyond, your donation is always welcome.

*You can donate by text if you wish; simply send the message PRAY25 and your donation amount to **70070** to donate to St Marks Church - for example, 'PRAY25 £5' - and make a difference today.*

St Marks Church, Ramley Road, Pennington, SO41 8GQ

www.stmarks-pennington.org.uk

Submissions for the August edition are required to the editor by the 18th July 2017