

The Ampfield Messenger



*The Parish Magazine of
St. Mark Ampfield*

March 2025
Vol 745 Issue 3 £1

www.acnb-church.org



The Parish Church of St Mark, Ampfield

Our vision: To be channels of God's love in the world

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DEADLINE: The third Friday of each calendar month.

Contributions to this magazine are always welcome, however it may be necessary to edit or shorten articles. Note that the views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor or the Parochial Church Council. Advertisements in this publication do not carry the endorsement of the editor or the Parochial Church Council.

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Welcome to the March edition of the Ampfield Messenger. We are always looking for copy reflecting local interest and events, why not give it a go?

Email cl.kerr@hotmail.com with your ideas and contributions.

The Editors

Letter from Vanessa

Dear Friends

Well, isn't it lovely to finally see the sunshine?! It was beautifully hopeful in St Mark's room today, with the sun shining through the window - and even more sunshine inside from the children and their carers who came for our first St Mark's Minnows! It was such a joy to see St Mark's room full, and as you will see, Phil, our churchwarden, had a fabulous time playing with the trains!

It does give us hope when the sun begins to shine after a long winter - literally or metaphorically! Lent is fast approaching, and this year, we are following the Church of England's Lent course, Living Hope. In turbulent times, hope is hard to find, and this course gives us the opportunity to find something deeper and richer than mere optimism. Hope in God is possible even in the disappointment of daily setbacks or deeper hurts, and in this course, we can explore how to find hope in times of frustration and how to notice signs of hope around us.

We have opportunities across the Benefice to join in with the Lent course - do send me an email if you want to chat about it!

My prayer for all of us this Lent is that we will see signs of hope all around us - whether that's in the daffodils blooming, or the sound of children playing.

Vanessa



Weekly service pattern

Sunday Services

	All Saints	St Mark	St Denys	St John
1st Sunday	11:00 Messy Church	09:30 Tidy Church	09:30 BCP Matins or Communion	11:00 Communion or Morning Prayer
2nd Sunday	11:00 Communion	09:30 Communion	09:30 informal Morning Prayer	
3rd Sunday	11:00 Communion	09:30 Communion or Morning prayer	09:30 BCP Matins or Communion	
4th Sunday	11:00 Communion	09:30 Communion		
5th Sunday	11:00 Communion	09:30 Communion		

Midweek Services

When	Where	What
Tuesday, 10:30	St Mark, Ampfield	Small group Communion in St Mark's room, followed by coffee
Wednesday, 19:00	All Saints, North Baddesley	Communion in a peaceful candle lit space in the midst of your busy week



Friends of Chapel Wood by Graham Roads

Chapel Wood is the area of natural woodland that surrounds St. Mark's Church, by the A3090 and Chapel Hill. It was purchased many years ago by the then parish council to provide Ampfield parishioners with a community woodland. The wood has a network of marked footpaths, a small stream, a pond with a dipping platform and open areas.

The Friends of Chapel Wood is a brilliant team of volunteers that care for the wood. Their role is twofold. They act as a sort of referee amongst the plant species. Without their help, the wood would eventually be taken over by a few dominant plant species, footpaths would become overgrown, and the variety of wildlife would diminish.



The Friends also help to develop the wood's infrastructure. The current project is the slope to the west of St. Mark's Church. Once covered by rhododendron and brambles, the slope is slowly being cleared. A rustic path has been built to link the church with the existing footpath network and the area is being planted with wild woodland flowers and bulbs.

Cont. ...

...Cont.



The plan is to introduce smaller woodland trees and shrubs, such as blackthorn, hazel, crab apple and some wild roses. Each of these has been selected because they provide flowers for pollinating insects and fruit for birds. The slope also gets some sun and is an ideal spot to place a couple of benches to provide an area of contemplation.

If you fancy the idea of joining some like-minded neighbours for a few hours once a month, just turn up in the St. Mark's car park at 09:45 on the second Saturday of every month. The Friends are a good bunch. Tools are provided. It is a good way to have a bit of fun and help our community at the same time!

Graham Roads



Ron & Stella's Quiz Night

1. Mutton is a meat from a sheep that is older than what age?
2. Which is the only vowel on a standard keyboard that is not on the top line of letters?
3. Fissures, Vents and Plugs are all associated with which Geological feature?
4. How many ribs are there in a human body?
5. What is the capital of India?
6. What is the first book published by Jane Austin?
7. What is the deadliest insect?
8. What is the deadliest mammal?
9. First discovered in Wuhan, China. What was the name of the deadly infection?
10. Which city does the famous graffiti artist Banksy come from?

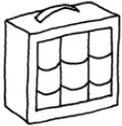


Ron Cobb

Answers on p. 32



RAFFLE PRIZES



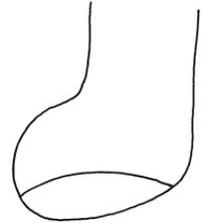
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TOILETRIES FROM
LAST CHRISTMAS



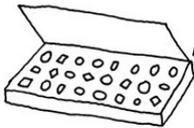
POTTED
PLANT
(ALWAYS A
BEGONIA)



HALF AN HOUR OF
A CONGREGATION
MEMBER'S TIME



HIGHLY IMPRACTICAL
CUDDLY TOY
(NO SPACE TO
SHOW IT ALL)



BOX OF
CHOCOLATES

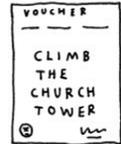
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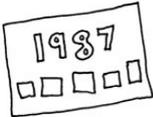
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BOTTLE OF
LIQUEUR
(HAS BEEN A
RAFFLE PRIZE
SEVEN TIMES
ALREADY)



VOUCHER FOR
RELIGIOUS
EXPERIENCE



VINTAGE
CALENDAR



UNWANTED
APPLIANCE



JIGSAW

CartoonChurch.com

**If you see someone without a smile on their face
– give them yours!**



Benefice News

Lent Lunches

Lent lunches in St. Mark's room start on the 7th March. See p.14 for full details.



Friends for Lunch Wednesday March 19th

February's lunch went down a treat when 20 diners enjoyed chicken casserole and treacle tart. We're nearly full for March, contact Pam on Tel. 02380 411146 or Email - pamm@acnb-church.org for availability.

St. Mark's Stall at the Ampfield Market

We sell bric -a - brac, gifts and seasonal items to raise money for the maintenance of the buildings of St. Mark's. If you have anything to donate, please contact Chris on 01794 367104. We are happy to collect. Thank you for your support.

The Children's Society

A really big 'Thank you' to all who attended The Christingle /Crib Service on Christmas Eve at St. Mark's. I can now let you know that I am able to bank £164.94 for The Children's Society. Bless you all. **Heather Claxton**

Friends of St. Mark's

- Sat 19th April:** Coffee morning with Easter egg hunt, Easter bunny face painting, Easter card making, produce and cake stalls and raffle. All for £3 per adult and £1 per child.
- Fri 9th May:** Back by popular demand - Quiz Night with Ron as Question Master. Tickets will be online and there will be a bar. Look out for more details.
- Sat 5th July:** Summer Cream Tea with children's treasure hunt
- Fri 10th October:** Wine Tasting
- Dates TBA:** Live Band 'Beggar's Belief' and Beetle Drive

Pilgrim Course

The last sessions before the Lent course starts will take place on Wednesday **5th March** at All Saints 2 - 3-30pm and **Saturday 8th March** in St. Mark's Room 10 - 11.30 am. If you haven't been to one before it doesn't matter, there is a range of resource material to explore questions of faith. Our ethos is that we are exploring together, and there are no wrong answers and there will be cake! For more information please look [here](#).

Benefice News

St. Mark's Minnows



The new baby and toddler group started in February and is a great success.

Please spread the word!



St. Mark's Fete and Dog Show - Saturday 14th June

The fete and dog show will be back in June. There will be a raffle with super prizes. Grab a bargain on the plant, bottle, jewellery, and book stalls. This year there will be a petting zoo. The refreshment area will include a barbeque, Pimm's and beer tent, teas and coffee and an ice cream seller. There will be new classes alongside the old favourites in the fun dog show and prizes for children and plenty of games. Music will be provided by a ukelele band.

Would you like to help on the day? Please contact Phil:

07799 435 715 or Email: philb@acnb-church.org

Benefice News



Across the Benefice

Ash Wednesday (5th Mar) Communion & imposition of ashes

To mark the beginning of Lent the Wednesday evening Communion service at 7pm at **All Saints** will include the traditional imposition of ashes (marking the forehead with a cross), reminding us to repent and “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return”.

Lent Courses at St. Mark’s and All Saints

Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and repentance - preparation for Easter. Join us for a Lent discussion course on Wednesday afternoons or Thursday evenings:

*Wednesdays: 14:00 - 15:30 at All Saints, North Baddesley
(12th, 19th, 26th March and 2nd, 9th April)*

*Thursdays: 19:30 - 21:00 at St Mark’s, Ampfield
(13th, 20th, 27th March and 3rd, 10th April)*

Lent Quiet Morning 12th April 9.30 - 1pm at St. Denys

Join us for some time of reflection in the beautiful space that is St Denys' Church. There will be a combination of reflection, discussion, and worship. Relaxed and informal, all are welcome.

Note that there will be no Pilgrim’s session at St Mark’s on 12th April.

Lent Lunches at St. Mark’s Fridays 7 March, 28 March, 11th April

Join us for delicious home made soup, bread and cheese. Lent Lunches in St Mark’s Room, Ampfield: . Come anytime between 12:00 and 13:30 - No booking necessary

Donations go to The Romsey Foodbank and Winchester Beacon (Night Shelter).

Benefice News

All Saints

Folk Band Evening

Tickets are selling well for this evening on Saturday 15th March at All Saints Church featuring the 'Birnie Boozle Band' and can be purchased on line using this [link](#)

Spring Craft Market

Following on from the successful markets that took place at All Saints last year, another one has been planned for Saturday 22nd March 11am - 3pm.

St. Denys - talks and recitals

1pm, Wednesday 23rd April - Dennis Bryant, "The Humorous Poet"

Author, Poet and Public Speaker, he will recite some poems, with a few jokes and anecdotes thrown in, maybe even a cheeky duet, sung with his wife, Sheila.

1pm, Wednesday 14th May - Duncan McKellar

Our church architect is planning to entertain us with a fun, eclectic, folk-inspired vocal/guitar performance.

1pm, Wednesday 18th June - Jonathan Durrant, River Keeper

and Chairman of the Test & Itchen Association will be giving us a talk
"A Journey Down The River Test."

1pm, Wednesday 22nd October - The Southampton Salty Sea Dogs

Will be performing sea shanties and songs with a few jokes thrown in. Those of you who supported their performance last year will know just how much fun this motley crew are!





LUNCHESES AT ST MARK'S AMPFIELD

Fridays

7th March 28th March

11th April

Join us for a light lunch of home-made soup,
bread & cheese and fruit

Come any time between 12noon and 1.30 pm
St. Mark's Room

Donations will go to Romsey Foodbank and
The Winchester Beacon (Night Shelter)

#

Just turn up, or for more details tel, Chris: 01794 367104

ST MARK'S MINNOWS

FUN AND FRIENDLY
BABY AND TODDLER GROUP!

ST MARK'S CHURCH ROOM, AMPFIELD SO51 9BU



TERM TIME THURSDAYS

(FROM 27TH FEB)

9.30 – 11AM

COFFEE ON FROM 9.15!



ACNB CHURCH

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN AMPFIELD,
CHILWORTH AND NORTH BADDESLEY

St Mark's Church
A3090 Ampfield SO51 9BU
search online for @acnbchurch

Benefice News

Digital Hub - All Saints: Wednesdays 10.30am - 12 noon

If you know anyone who would like some extra help when using their laptops, tablets or phones then please pass on details about digital hub. This is a group that has been set up to support those who are finding difficulty with such technology. They meet every Wednesday from 10.30 - 12 noon in All Saints.

Social Hub - Wednesdays at All Saints 10am - 12 noon

During the morning there will be an opportunity to have a go at some crafts, do jigsaws or just relax with a book that has been borrowed from the Community Library (also open on a Wednesday morning) or just sit and chat. There are free drinks and biscuits and sometimes other treats!

Welcome Cafe at All Saints Thursdays at 10am

The café is for any and everyone in the community to come and meet friends for a catch-up and enjoy great coffee. There is no charge for coffee but donations are welcome. We particularly welcome those who find themselves lonely or who have been bereaved. There are trained 'listeners' who will be happy to sit with you and if appropriate signpost to other helpful organisations, all in complete confidence



Sunshine Saints Fri: 10:00am at All Saints (term-time only)

Sunshine Saints is the toddler and baby group which meets every Friday in term time from 10:00am to 11:30am in All Saints Church. It is an opportunity for the children to have fun playing together. There are snacks for the children and tea and coffee for those who accompany them, suggested donation: £2.



Building works at All Saints and 'thank you Pam'



We like a chance to share cake at All Saints and on Sunday 23rd Feb, we were able to both celebrate the completion of some significant building works *and* say 'thank you' to Pam, who's been our treasurer for an incredible *forty* years.

Our recent building works have achieved a lot. There's a new door that provides level access to our accessible toilet, which improves our inclusivity; a new meeting room and kitchen, giving us more flexible space to use; and new windows, making the church more energy efficient.

A big 'thank you' to Councillor Alan Dowden for formally opening our new meeting room and kitchen. Alan is pictured above on the brink of cutting the ribbon! Alan's been a supporter of the church and our work in the community for a long time, so we were delighted that he could join this celebration.

The celebration also gave Vanessa a chance to ambush Pam, who has recently stepped down after an incredible forty years as our treasurer. A massive 'thank you' to Pam, for all her work keeping track of the parish finances over four decades. And thank you to James Pitkin, our Rural Dean and one-time curate at All Saints for joining us in wishing Pam well.

Sally Kerson

Ampfield Village Hall

SPRING QUIZ NIGHT

?? ?? ?? ?? ?? ??

Come & join us at the friendly

Fun Ampfield Village Hall Quiz Night with Raffle!

By demand, the Ampfield Quizmasters are back again!

Friday 21 Mar. 2025 at 7.30pm

(Doors open at 7pm)

Come as a team of up to 6, or in smaller numbers and teams will be made up on the night.

A bar will be available and 'bar snacks' will be put on your tables. If you wish, please bring along your own picnic supper to enjoy during the interval or throughout the evening

Cost £5 per person inc. 'bar' snacks

BAR

Prizes for winning table.

RAFFLE

Pay on the evening but please book your place or a table first.

Contact: Martin Hatley 07970 501050

Or email: info@ampfieldvillagehall.org.uk

All proceeds to go to the Village Hall Funds – a registered charity No. 1057353

BOOK YOUR TABLE NOW

Village News

The Charity Raffle in the Market on December 7th 2024

A huge thank you to everyone who came along and enjoyed the December Market and supported the annual Christmas Raffle in aid of charity. For many years the proceeds of the raffle have been sent to the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund in memory of my late husband Martin and Liz Easterbrook, The founder, Maggie Blanks set up the charity when her husband died, I spoke to her many times and she kept me informed of the latest research that was enabled by their many supporters and their generous donations. Maggie decided to step down at the end of 2024 and the charity closed so I sent our donation instead to Pancreatic Cancer UK and they were very grateful indeed for £140 raised during the December Market thanks to everyone's generosity and kindness.



A taste of the
Ampfield Market



Julie Trotter

The Ampfield Market

(Established in 2000, now in its 25th year !)

**will take place
on**

**Saturday 5th April 2025
From 10am to 12noon
in Ampfield Village Hall
(SO51 9BJ)**

Our Market has a great reputation, we regularly sell fresh fruit and veg supplied by Hansards in Awbridge and delicious bread and cakes supplied by Matts Bakery. Honey, preserves, plants and fresh flowers. Cards, wrapping paper and books. Collectables, unusual crafts and jewellery. Clothes, toys and puzzles. Bric a brac, seasonal treats and much much more !

**We serve fresh coffee and a wonderful selection of cakes throughout the morning.
Come along with friends and family to enjoy this special monthly community event.**

Parking and admission are always FREE.

All proceeds support the Village Hall. Registered charity no. 1057353
Contact Julie on 023 80254587 or Julie@ampfield.org.uk for table bookings etc.

WHAT'S ON IN THE AMPFIELD VILLAGE HALL THIS MONTH – SPRING 2025- JOIN IN ONE!

MONDAYS

PILATES WITH HANNAH – Two sessions in the morning. Starting at 9.15 & 10.30am. Mixed ability mat class. Details at www.pilateswithaplomb.com

AMPFIELD PARISH COUNCIL regularly meet on a Monday evening for their meetings. Details at www.Ampfield.org.uk .

TUESDAYS

AMPFIELD BRIDGE CLUB Play friendly duplicate bridge. Meets Tuesday evenings (except at Xmas time) from 7pm to 10pm. Need a partner or more information contact Janet Cox on 07879 915726 or email janetwallace1@hotmail.co.uk New members always welcome.

WEDNESDAYS

NEW CLASS! YOGA MORNING with Yoga by Gaynor - for details see Friday 1st **AMPFIELD BROWNIES** meet every Wed. evening during term time. 6pm to 7.30pm Tel. Sue Moore 01794 523947

ROMSEY MODELLERS Build model kits? Join this club on the 1st and 3rd. Wed. of each month 8pm to 10pm.. www.romseymodellers.co.uk

THURSDAYS

YOGA MORNING with Diana Craven . We are pleased to welcome back Diana to her regular class. 9.30-10.30 am. Please note her new email address for further details cravendiana18@gmail.com

AMPFIELD ART GROUP meets Thurs. afternoons during term time 2pm to 4pm. Very friendly atmosphere. Beginners and those wishing to develop their skills welcome. Contact email: Julie@ampfield.org.uk

PILATES WITH HANNAH PLOMB 6.15-7.20pm . For details:see Monday or www.pilateswithaplomb.com

FRIDAYS

YOGA ON FRIDAY MORNINGS with YogaByGaynor 9.30 to 10.30am All levels, Gentle, Vinyasa Flow Yoga. Facebook: @yogaByGaynor /or Email: yogabygaynor@yahoo.com

SATURDAYS

VILLAGE MARKET (Established 2000) The first Saturday of every month 10-12noon (except Jan. and Aug.). Interested in renting a table? Ring Julie on 02380 254587 or email Julie@ampfield.org.uk.

CARD MAKING WORKSHOP WITH VANESSA. A range of crafts taught, meets monthly, normally on the second Saturday of each month from 10am to 4pm. A very relaxed day and delicious coffee provided. Details from Vanessa 01794 515490 or email Ampfieldcards@gmail.com .

SUNDAYS

NEW GROUP! SEWING SUNDAYS Small group of crafters, who meet once a month on a Sunday. Open to all who want to bring along their dressmaking, knitting or other textile projects. Email Michelle michelleewaters@gmail.com

Enquiries & hall bookings tel. Martin Hatley 07970 501050 Or visit our new website: www.ampfieldvillagehall.org.uk Or E mail: info@ampfieldvillagehall.org.uk

NEW DIARY DATES: *The QUIZ NIGHT returns on FRIDAY March 21st in the Village Hall £5 per entrant inc, bar snacks. Book a place or table now & pay on the night.*

BADDESLEY DIVISION COUNTY COUNCILLORS ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Ampfield Residents,

I was first elected to the County Council in a By-Election on the 2nd January 1992 and have served the Baddesley Division for 33 years. I have now though, decided not to stand for another election.

Local Government is undergoing significant change through the devolution proposals. This will entail Hampshire having combined unitary authorities; an elected Mayor; and in due course the dissolving of the County & District and Borough Councils. However, parish & town councils will remain. It may be a few years before this is finalised. Until the changes are completed, I will continue to serve the Baddesley Division with the interest of my constituents as my focus.

A huge increase in those requiring Adult Social Care and Children's Special Educational Needs have created overwhelming pressure on the financial position of the County Council. Presently 75% of the whole Revenue budget goes to try to cover these services. The Chief Financial Officer at the County Council has reported that without any further government funding the remaining reserves are insufficient to sign off a balanced budget for the year 2026/27 and that will result in the County Council sending a Section 114 notice to Central Government.

Until central government addresses the Social Care issue to protect our vulnerable adults and children any new Combine Authority will have the same difficulties. I have always argued that until you finance Social Care adequately, the NHS will never properly recover.

The Council Tax for 2025/26 will be £1609.83p for a Band D an increase of just under 5% and 2% of this will be allocated to Social Care. The administration at the County Council sought a 15% rise but this was rejected by Central Government. County Councillors Community Grants. I was pleased to be able to grant £1000 towards the cost of repairing the roof of St Marks Church after the despicable theft of the lead from the churches roof. Wessex Cancer Trust also gained a large grant.

Alan

County Councillor Alan Dowden



Update – gas works in Flexford Close, Eastleigh SO53 6RY

We're writing to provide an update on the ongoing gas works and water ingress within our pipe network in Flexford Close in Eastleigh.

Our engineers are waiting for Clancy to complete repairs to the water main located in Baddlesley Road before we can safely complete further investigations and necessary repairs. In the meantime, our engineers will be closely monitoring the status on site.

Once Clancy are complete, we will be able to start our investigations and repairs. This will involve excavations and potential traffic management on the road. At this stage, we don't know what traffic management will be required or how long the work will take to complete.

For further information and progress updates on these works, please visit our website at <https://www.sgn.co.uk/our-gas-works/roadworks-your-area>

Kind regards

Susan

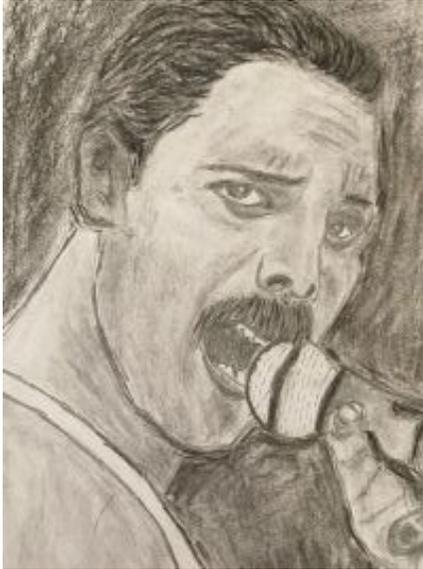
Stakeholder and Community Manager

“ I don't mind high church or church - what I can't abide is long church”

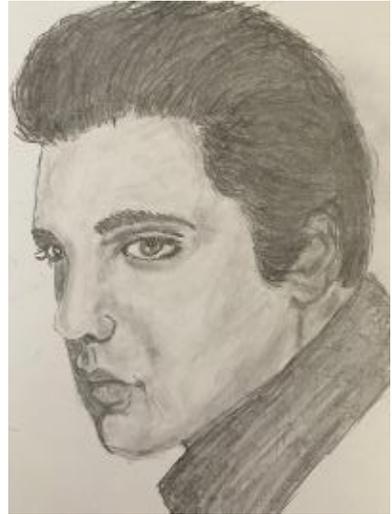
Prince Philip - his view of long sermons

Ampfield Art Class Gallery

Julie Trotter's Art Class takes place on
Thursday afternoons
from 2-4pm at the Village Hall



Freddy Mercury, pencil -



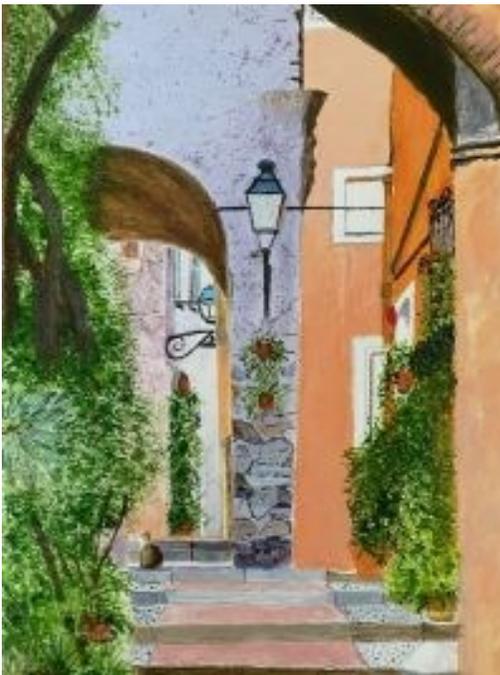
Elvis, pencil - David



Shepherds warning,
Latham, Lancashire,
watercolour - Nick.



Red Barn Farm ,
watercolour -
Nick



Merton, France, acrylics - Diane



The old lifeboat station at the
Lizard Cornwall, acrylics -
Diane

FROM THE ARCHIVES

MARCH 1979

ST. MARK'S "MOTHERS UNION"

Every month or so we meet for our afternoon gatherings which always are happy times of fellowship and interest. Therefore our numbers steadily increase, as well as visits to us by old members who have left our Ampfield Parish. At our last meeting on Thursday, February 8th we welcomed two new members, delightful young wives and mothers, and we do so enjoy our mixed ages "togetherness".

Our Treasurer, Mrs. Rita Bardell, kindly welcomed us to her home, Windy Willows, near The Potters Heron, for a New Year meeting. The Vicar as usual opened the service and afterwards spoke to us about "The Body of Christ". He then invited questions, in which we all joined and helped by his answers. Later the buffet tea party made it easy for all of us to circulate and talk with each other, while younger members brought around delicious home made cakes, etc., any remaining were put up for purchasing and made a good sum to put with the monthly collection to help the many countries MU members. Many of the mothers of overseas families are often in need of family food and clothes, their church also needs support and money to buy Bibles and Hymn books for their Sunday Schools and crowded church services. With their joyful singing and real interested caring for our Country by prayers where their loved Mothers Union first started by God's guidance.

No MU meeting during March, as several committee members will be in other countries, including our secretary, who is going to Jerusalem, where her daughter Sara is now nursing at the very large Jerusalem Hospital, and our prayers surely will be for her often.

So please note the date of our Spring Gathering; here at "Yew Tree Cottage" Wednesday, April 25th at 2.35 p.m. When cold winds and snow are over! and flowers and birds and warm sunshine stir our hearts and minds with the Easter Resurrection message to us from Our Saviour whose coming brings deep joy to countless families, as to ours and yours.

As ever, Marjorie Wagland

ENTERPRISE WORKS

Dear Friends,

This morning a picture postcard of Gethsemane arrived from Sara Rose, now nursing for a few months in Jerusalem. This reminds me that March 25th is Mothers Day. For Jerusalem with all her scandals is the mother of us all. Certainly of the Church and so of our Western civilisation, with all its faults. The enterprising commercial world has changed Mothering Sunday into Mothers Day. The profitable result is that never before have so many children spent so much time and money showing love to their mothers. And never before have so many Christians been involved in caring for their churches and the churches so cared for. So thank you, Sara! Your mother church here is proud of your enterprise and your Christian caring. For the rest of us here on March 25th there is the Family Service at 9.45 for prayer and praise and posies.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Three days later on Wednesday, March 28th there is the Annual Church Meeting in the W.I. Hall at 7.30 p.m. Last year 29 were present. But there are 130 of you on the Electoral Roll of the Church, and 220 of you take this under-priced magazine. The meeting is all over by 9, and you get free refreshments to enable you to bear it. We will try to finish the elections and accounts in the first half and have the second half to meet and talk. Regretfully, it is the only day in the whole 365 days of the year that we meet as the church, and not just as occasional patrons of Matins, Evensong or Family Services. So do please come! This is not just a little huddle for members of the PCC. It is for all of you who care for the church. Not just for the building, but for making our faith and fellowship more relevant and inspiring to ourselves, our families and to the world about us.

Finally, it is now Lent, and so time for exercising some self-denial. Useful and difficult at all times. So if you don't like meetings, here is an obvious opportunity to make yourself miserable in a good cause. It will do you good and make you feel better, even possibly self-righteous, and so more in need of God than ever!

Yours in Christ,

George Slater

Thought for the Month

What can Paddington Bear teach us?



We have all grown up knowing who Paddington Bear is, but he really shot to fame, or came to life as it were, when he appeared in the first animated film. Who hasn't felt the pull of his warmth and humour as the young Paddington, who named himself after a railway station, brings chaos and then joy to everyone he meets? It's a story that reminds us of the beauty of welcoming an outsider, as the Brown family did, of letting down the drawbridge, and experiencing an arrival that cannot fail but to transform us all. Paddington was an alien; indeed, he was an economic migrant. He came to London to better himself, his Aunt Lucy made him stowaway on boat in order to reach this country. A lot different to how many migrants arrive today on flimsy hardly seaworthy vessels. Sadly, our country doesn't always have the best track record of welcoming outsiders and letting down the drawbridge. With more and more people having to leave their home countries - for a whole variety of reasons - and displaced people looking to lay down roots elsewhere, the refugee crisis is still as heart-wrenching as ever. Therefore, Paddington's story feels remarkably twenty-first century.

Paddington Bear was created by author Michael Bond in 1958 after he was inspired by the plight of refugee children arriving in the UK during World War 11 and children being evacuated away from the bombing to the countryside. Hence the fact that Paddington wears a luggage label saying 'please look after this bear. Thank you' her!

Cont. ...

...Cont.

Since then this little bear has endeared himself to adults as well as children and he even appeared with the late Queen during her Platinum Jubilee and shared his love of marmalade sandwiches with And now across the country there are Paddington Bear benches which have drawn people together as they sit often talking to complete strangers.



A Peruvian bear who finds a home with the Brown family and whilst they get a little exasperated with him, at the same time have many adventures. This could be a reminder to care for strangers and embrace the adventures God has in store and to see the lighter side of life!

Sally Kerson

The Paddington Bear in the picture can be purchased at the next Craft Market in North Baddesley and he is standing by some delicious marmalade which Jean Smith makes to raise funds for St. Marks Church.



Seen in the Straight Mile Romsey.

A place to enjoy, to feel safe and to make friends.

by Paul Oliver

Few people attend church these days as most people are aware but perhaps are not aware of how the church can be used, or what a great facility it can bring to local life, or indeed to those a little further afield. I am fortunate to live in sight and sound of St Marks, to walk through Chapel Wood and enjoy the architecture of the church, its surroundings and the wildlife which lives within it. Not the churchgoers, although I know one or two who can be a little wild at times. There may be the odd bat, owl or dormouse who pay their respects within the church and that's fine. The church is open to all.

My walks through Chapel Wood, especially in the early morning when deer and other creatures have yet to withdraw to their daytime refuge, are something I cherish. This prompted me to give something back, nothing onerous or significant enough for me to feel obligated, just to join in a few things and lend a hand. This led me to helping the Friends of Chapel Wood for a



couple of hours on some months, to enjoy quizzes and wine tastings in the St Mark's Room and to make friends. Helping out at the Church Fete probably brought me more enjoyment than any assistance I gave. You often get back more than you put in, its that sort of place.

Not once have my beliefs been sought nor any attempt made to encourage me to attend church services. I have never encountered any sense of attempted coercion. All I have ever found is kindness, friendship and acceptance. That is something we all wish and I would encourage others to enjoy the pleasures that have come my way.

Cont. ...

...Cont.

St Mark's Room is available at modest cost for meetings, social gatherings, private parties, all similar events and to people of any faith or none. There are toilets, catering and parking facilities. Chapel Wood has several woodland paths, grassed areas, sunny glades, a pond and seating areas. Its also where you will find the Church Fete and a quiet place for a picnic. When I look across from my home, watch people pass by towards Ampfield woods and I see the church alone and empty, it saddens me a little. It would be a delight to see more people enjoying the facilities of what is on offer, including friendliness and a place to feel safe and welcome. Please use it.



Paul Oliver

“My Lords, the sooner [Elon] Musk goes to Mars, the better”

**Baroness Featherstone in the House of Lords,
quoted in Church Times**

Answers to Ron & Stella's Quiz Night

1. Two Years
2. A
3. Volcanos
4. 24
5. New Delhi
6. Sense and Sensibility
7. The Mosquito
8. The Hippopotamus
9. Covid-19
10. Bristol



*So little trouble do men take in the
search after truth, so readily do they
accept whatever comes first to hand.
Thucydides*



Most holy God and Father,
hear our prayers for all who strive for peace
and all who fight for justice.
Help us, who today remember the cost of war,
to work for a better tomorrow;
and, as we commend to you
lives lost in terror and conflict,
bring us all, in the end,
to the peace of your presence;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Rotas for St. Mark's in March

Date	Sides 1 & 2	1st Reading	Text	2nd Reading	Text	Intercessions	Coffee	Music
2 Mar 0930	Cafe	Church					Heather	Mark & Abbie
9 Mar 0930	Sally C Diane	Heather S	Deut. 26.1–11	Heather C	Romans 10.8b–13	Sally	Chris	Clive
16 Mar 0930	Chris Heather C	Chris K	Genesis 15.1–12, 17–18	Stephen	Philippians 3.17 – 4.1	Vanessa	Jennie	Clive
23 Mar 0930	Robyn Mark B	Ron	Isaiah 55. 1–9	Mark B	1 Corinth. 10.1–13	Ron	Stella	Karen - CDs
30 Mar 0930	Ron Phil	Jennie	Exodus 2.1–10	Robyn	2 Corinth. 1.3–7	Jean	Karen	Clive

Please make sure you find someone to take your place if you are unable to do your turn, and annotate the rotas displayed in the vestry and the porch.

Thanks for all your help.

Phil Budden

Flowers: No flowers during Lent



From the St. Mark's Register

Baptism 23rd February: Romilly Elizabeth Shaw

Please hold Romilly in your prayers




The Birnie Boozle Band

will be performing on
Saturday 15th March
All Saints Church, Rownhams Road
North Baddesley SO52 9ER

7.30 pm (doors open at 7.00pm)
 Tickets £10 each - will include light refreshments

Licensed Bar
 buy on line or use QR Code
<https://bit.ly/4gU7Pmd>

Pay on night if tickets are still available





acnb-church.org

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 at All
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Buy Easter
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SPRING CRAFT MARKET

Saturday 22nd March
11am - 3pm

All Saints Church, Rownhams Road
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 gifts for all ages
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 artisans

There will be refreshments on sale
 including homemade cake



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