

Church Magazine

FREE



MAY 2024

Steyning and Ashurst

Steyning Parish Church

1 Vicarage Lane,
Steyning BN44 3YL

Vicar: The Revd Mark Heather LLB BA

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Church Services

St Andrew's & St Cuthman's

Every Sunday

8:00am 1662 Holy Communion Service

9:30am Sung Eucharist Music Group Eucharist on 19 May

6:00pm Evening Service Reflections on 1st Sunday - see below
Choral Evensong on 19 May

St James's

10:30am Second Sunday Family Service for Ascension

Fourth Sunday Holy Communion

Wednesdays at St Andrew's & St Cuthman's

11:30am Midweek Eucharist

Reflections is a quiet, evening service. This month it is held on Sunday, 5 May and is entitled Come Holy Spirit, Come. (See page 5)

Ascension Day Service - Thursday 9 May - Sung Eucharist 7:00pm

Day of Pentecost. 19 May

Trinity Sunday. 26 May

Parish Office Address:

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Parish Administrator: Pat McMullan.

Parish Office open: Monday - Friday 10am - midday



Pastoral Letter

Dear Friends,

Most if not all readers of this magazine will have been baptized. In the English language, there are two different words for this sacrament: to be *baptized* (originally a Greek work) means to be dipped or submerged. To be *Christened*, as the first five letters indicate, means to become part of Christ and his body, the Church (Romans 12:4-5; compare 1 Corinthians 12:27 and Colossians 1:18).

There is no good reason why the word 'christenings' nowadays tends to refer to the baptism of children. People can and are baptized at any age. At infant baptism, a child's godparents make the promises on their behalf. For those baptised in later years, the service is usually carried out by the bishop as part of their Confirmation. Either way the effect of sacrament is exactly the same.

Anyone who has been baptized is eligible to become a member of the church of England. Exactly how this happens is flexible. Those baptized (in a church of any denomination) can fill in a form which entitles them to vote in our PCC elections, so long as they regard themselves as a member of the C of E and either reside within the boundaries of the parish church, or have been a habitual worshipper in that church for a period of six months. Sacramental membership of the church is conferred by the rite of Confirmation, and someone already confirmed in another denomination can be 'received into the Church' by making a public act of commitment before the congregation.

Anyone reading this who is not a member of an electoral roll, or indeed has not been baptized or confirmed and would like to know more is most welcome to speak to me. One of the positive developments of recent years is that most main denominations recognise anyone's Baptism 'in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' – in that sense we are primarily members of the same universal church, and therefore part of Christ himself (however that may be expressed and understood by any particular denomination).

Fr Mark

FROM THE EDITOR:

As we acknowledge the huge impact on everyone in Ukraine now that this war is in its third spring, our thoughts and prayers continue to be with them all. We hold before God those families who have found refuge within our community.

We extend our love and deep concern for The Holy Land and all the Bible lands.

The front cover shows Fr Mark baptizing a baby and relates to a few thoughts about baptism and Jesus' baptism on p 7.

This is a full magazine with special mention of Christian Aid coffee morning, the Steyning Festival and several longer articles, thoughts and of course our popular recipe for May.

Thank you to all who send in their articles and thoughts providing this rich variety for us to read. You are welcome to join these contributors.

Do please send to:

steyningchurchmag@gmail.com

Sunday Notices

The weekly Sunday notices sent from the Parish Office gives all the information about services, news and events. There is also the list of those needing our prayers. If you would like to receive the Sunday notices contact: office@steyningparishchurch.org or ring 01903 813276

To add any new prayer requests contact:

prayers@steyningparishchurch.org

or ring 01903 813276

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Prayer Diary for May

Wednesday 1 May Philip and James, Apostles

Almighty Father, whom truly to know is eternal life: teach us to know your Son Jesus Christ as the way, the truth, and the life; that we may follow in the steps of your holy apostles Philip and James, and walk steadfastly in the way that leads to your glory; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sunday 5 May The Sixth Sunday of Easter

Monday 6, Tuesday 7, Wednesday 8 May Rogation Days

Thursday 9 May Ascension Day

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we in heart and mind may also ascend and with him continually dwell; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sunday 12 May The Seventh Sunday of Easter

Tuesday 14 May Matthias the Apostle

Sunday 19 May Pentecost (Whit Sunday)

Sunday 26 May Trinity Sunday

Thursday 30 May The Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion (Corpus Christi)

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament you have given us the memorial of your passion: grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries of your body and blood that we may know within ourselves and show forth in our lives the fruits of your redemption; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Friday 31 May The Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

Mighty God, by whose grace Elizabeth rejoiced with Mary and greeted her as the mother of the Lord: look with favour on your lowly servants that, with Mary, we may magnify your holy name and rejoice to acclaim her Son our Saviour; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Our Families and Children's Worker



Hello, my name is Gary,

I have been appointed as your new families and children's worker and I am looking forward to starting my role with you at the end of August.

A little about me:

I am 39 years old and have been a paid church youth worker for the last seven years. Within this role I have looked after six churches and four schools, and

built up lots of other great community relationships in that time. I have also done voluntary youth work for many years, helping to lead many youth groups, junior church groups and serving on tech teams, as well as helping out anywhere else I can. Before I became a youth worker I was a retail manager, so am very much used to lots of hard work! Come and talk to me if you see me around - even before August.

Currently I am studying on a part time basis and hope to finish my course before I join you in August. This will give me a higher certificate in Theology, Ministry and Youth Ministry. As someone who has only just been found out that they are dyslexic because of my study on this degree level course, I now have an explanation as to why I always get told off for my bad grammar and spelling, so hopefully you are all going to be very forgiving for this.

I have four godsons, I love kayaking and running mission trips to Uganda where I have been supporting a local school for the last six years. I have been on other mission trips for the last 14 years.

I am really excited about coming to Steyning and building relationships with you all in church, but most importantly building relationships with the local community. Together we can work to reach the goals of the five-year vision that you have all put together. I'm looking forward to exploring Steyning and seeing how St Andrew's & St Cuthman's can support the mission of building God's kingdom in the local area.

Gary, we all are looking forward to you joining us here, in August, and especially thank you for being at your Annual Meetings so we had the opportunity to chat to you. We send you our best wishes for the final term of your course.



Parish Registers

FUNERALS

14 March (at Worthing Crematorium)

John Rodney White

(died 18 Feb 2024)

20 March (at Ashurst St James)

Edwards Foster (Ted) Jones

(died 23 Feb 2024)

"I turn to Christ"

I recommend to you the job of God-parent and God-child. Our three boys were fortunate enough to have God-parents who were interested in them, and that is so important in many ways. They were baptised at about six months and so this was their beginning of a relationship with God and each God-parent.

In the Baptism service the parents and God-parents make promises of belief and trust in Jesus as our Saviour, and promises of faithfulness. It is a sacramental service that re-enacts the first public moment in Jesus' ministry, when Jesus himself was baptised in the River Jordan. This story comes alive with each Baptism, and does not just stay in the past; Christ is present at each baptism, as he claims us all as his own, and promises to be there in our lives to come.

The story of Jesus' baptism found in Matthew chapter 3 speaks to us through words and signs. It begins with John the Baptist calling a huge number of people to baptism, but also pointing beyond himself to one whose sandal he was unfit to untie. He prepared the way, but then let Christ take over, and he got out of the way. I know someone who has done just that for me - maybe you know someone too? She was a tremendous example to me of how to live with faith and grace, and I could turn to her because I knew she was turned to Christ. I learned to physically turn to Christ, and with my whole body gaze and gaze on him, filled by his presence, and I am still learning. "Do you turn to Christ? Yes, I turn to Christ" (*from the service of baptism*)

Back to the story... when Jesus came to be baptised, we are told that the heavens opened. A sign that God's world entered our world; God's love broke down all the



barriers. Here the great mystery of God's everlasting love became connected with mankind, and so it is for us again and again at a baptism; we have the kingdom of God opening for us. I love the picture on the front cover showing Fr Mark baptising the baby in Steyning church, but Piero de la Franscesca's *Baptism of Christ* at the National Gallery captures this moment of the heavens opening, this moment of serenity and stillness, and I can gaze and gaze on Christ. I learn again that the Holy Spirit is here with me and inside me; that the kingdom of God is not just something out there, but alongside and inside you and me.

And finally, in this amazing account, there are those incredible words - the voice from heaven - "You are my son, the beloved, with you I am well pleased." Not in the past tense, because the miracle is that we are included. We are God's sons and daughters and in baptism then and now, he is saying "I love you no matter what. I will never forget you. You are my beloved - always have been and always will be."

It will take a lifetime to discover the depths of our 'belovedness' to and with God and what it all means. We all find it difficult to believe at times, and if that is you, please don't despair; this love is there even when - or especially when - we cannot feel it.

*Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you.
I have called you by name, you are mine.*

There are some people who have asked "How do I become a member of this church?" Exciting question! There are no hoops for you to jump through; you are a member of this church and the church family, when you come through the porch and into the church to worship with us. You are welcome in our house - this church, and all that we have to offer, especially our love and friendship.

As an adult, this is your first stage, joining in our services, if you are new to trying out church. Over time as you grow in faith and you have not been baptised then this may be your next step, that moment when you publicly declare your relationship with God - that you turn to Christ - that you are baptised. Fr Mark would love to talk about this with you.

My baptism was as a baby, so I don't remember it, and the majority of baptisms held in this church are infant baptisms. They are the most special occasions. There are

some parents who wish their child to have complete freedom, to make their own mind up when they are older. I believe that every single young person/adult should be able to make up their own mind about their faith, just as the parents have. If as parents, you are Christian, and have accepted Christ in your lives and you turn to Christ, then please look again at the setting, the words and the signs within the service itself to help you make your own informed choice about baptism for your precious child. Your child is given God-parents (chosen by you) to share the responsibility of bringing up your child, to develop a loving relationship with your child and to help you in the task of understanding how to let your child grow in the knowledge of the Christian faith. There should be no indoctrination because these God-parents are your friends. The significance of a baptism grows as time passes, just like Jack's beanstalk seeds.

The beautiful thing about baptism is that Jesus was chosen and loved and beloved for about 30 years before he was baptised, but at this moment this 'belovedness' is witnessed and affirmed by John the Baptist and the crowd watching. It is the same beautiful thing at our baptisms; the community of faith comes together to affirm and watch our collective 'belovedness'.

"Jesus did not begin to be loved at the moment of his baptism, nor did he cease to be loved when his baptism became a memory. Baptism is simply the reality of his existing and unending belovedness". Rachel Held Evans

Chris Fitton

DIARY DATE FOR JUNE

We will be holding our **FSW Coffee Morning** at the **Penfold Hall** on **Saturday 29 June** from **10.30am to 12.30pm** and would love to see you all there.

Entrance £3.00 to include fresh coffee and delicious home-made cake.

Alyson Heath, the Diocesan Chairman for FSW, has kindly agreed to come and tell us about the current work of FSW.

We will also have Elaine and Simon's hand crafted cards, a cake stall, plant stall and a great raffle.

(Donations for the raffle and cake stall gratefully received nearer 29 June)

FSW Team



Prayers for Times of Crisis in Jerusalem and all the Holy Land

God of light and salvation, our refuge and our strength,
We pray for the people of Israel and Palestine amid the escalating violence.

We pray for those killed and injured in southern Israel. May your rod and staff comfort them. We pray for those who are grieving, may they know your ever present help.

We pray for the protection of those who have been taken hostage by Hamas. As they walk through this dark valley may they fear no evil.

We pray for all the civilians of Gaza. May they know that their help comes from the maker of heaven and earth.

And we pray for those in leadership in Gaza and Israel. May you guide them along the right paths. We ask all this in union with Christ and trusting in the power of your Holy Spirit.



God of all justice and peace we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land.

Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for people of all faiths - Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land.

While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the people.

Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father.

Lord, we ask that you have mercy on the people who are experiencing hunger and displacement. We pray that you would supply their needs according to your riches in glory. Open the doors for hospitals to operate again, especially for the sake of the sick and hungry children.

God of new beginnings,
in your ways are compassion and hope.
Open our hearts to dialogue and understanding.
Lead us all to answer your call
to become peacemakers
today, and all the days of our life.



Pray for Ukraine and World Peace

Lord we ask for peace for those who need peace, reconciliation for those who need reconciliation and comfort for all who don't know what tomorrow will bring. Lord may your Kingdom come, and your will be done.

We pray that people still in Ukraine will be protected from the violence; that there will be provision of essential food, power and clean water; for vulnerable people who cannot flee.

That refugees will find safe places to stay. For healing for people who are wounded or have experienced trauma; and comfort for those who are grieving. We pray that international leaders will know wisdom and understanding, strength, courage and compassion.

Ukrainian citizens ask that we pray:

- That God would intervene in the situation and stop the violence
- For God's wisdom for the presidents and authorities of both countries
- That God will care for those who are in danger, especially for Ukrainian people who have lost their loved ones, for His comfort and protection over them and the church

Please also pray for the people of Russia:

- That God will comfort Russian families who have lost their beloved ones

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of
weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomor-
row, that your Spirit of comfort would draw
near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or
peace, for wisdom, discernment and
compassion to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious
children, at risk and in fear, that you would
hold and protect them

Prayer points for children

THANK YOU for your loving heart for children.

*WE PRAY for children in Ukraine and Russia who
have lost their fathers in this war.*

*WE PRAY for children who are seeing things no
child's eye should ever see.*

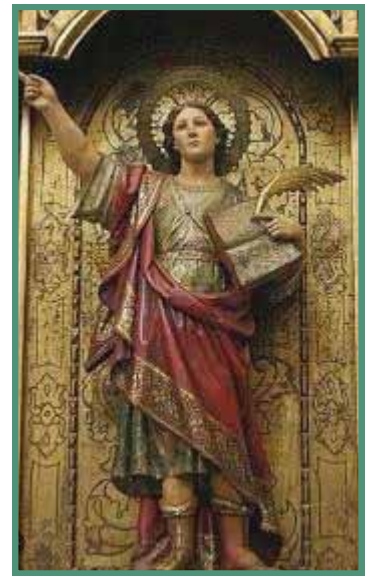
*WE PRAY for protection and food and warmth and
shelter for children in harm's way.*

*WE PRAY for children leaving their homes to a new
everything, both in Ukraine and Russia.*

WE PRAY for an end to this war - so very soon.

Saint of the Month

ST PANCRAS OF ROME, MARTYR (c289-303 AD)



Pancras was born in Phrygia about 289 to parents who were Roman citizens. His mother, Cyriada, died in childbirth and his father, Cleonius, died when Pancras was eight years old. As a result he was given in wardship to his uncle Dionysius. They moved to Rome and both converted to Christianity.

During the persecution of Christians by the Emperor Diocletian around 303 AD, Pancras aged fourteen was brought before the Roman magistrates and was ordered to burn incense to the Roman gods. Pancras refused and was so zealous about proclaiming his faith that Diocletian, impressed by his eloquence, offered him wealth and power if he would offer sacrifice to the gods. Pancras continued vehemently to proclaim his faith and refused the Emperor's command. Finally, Diocletian lost his patience and ordered Pancras to be beheaded; this happened at the Via Aurelia on 12 May 303.

A wealthy Roman lady, Ottavilla, recovered Pancras' body, covered it with balsam, wrapped it in fine linens and buried it in a newly built sepulchre in the Roman catacombs. His severed head was placed in a reliquary which is still kept in the Basilica of St Pancras erected in 500 AD at the place where his body had been buried.

When Pope Gregory sent Augustine to England to convert the Anglo-Saxons, he sent with him relics of St Pancras and, for this reason, many churches in England are dedicated to him. In particular the ancient church in North London was dedicated to Pancras from which the railway station takes its name.

Dying at the age of fourteen, St Pancras is the patron saint of children and his Feast Day is the day of his martyrdom, 12 May.

At that time Jesus exclaimed, "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to little ones."

Matthew 11:25-26

Just a thought ...

Hearing and Listening.

I was thinking about this the other day - although we use our ears for both, how very different they are.

The world around us is rarely silent. We constantly hear sound (or noise) wherever we are, and we are unaware of it unless there is a sudden change to warn us or make us jump!

Listening is very different. I suppose our brains are then involved and therefore our emotions.

One of my lasting childhood memories is of my grandfather. He was very deaf. He always said, "*No need to shout, just speak clearly*". So we did.

Then came the day when his life was transformed. In the late 1940's he acquired a hearing aid - the result was wonderful. He would often walk up the hill to our house, sit in the garden puffing on his pipe, and with a half-smile of contentment on his face, listen to the birds. He wasn't 'hearing' them, he was 'listening.' His childhood had been spent in the Devon countryside, so he recognised every song and twitter. He had never travelled abroad, but had a great love and knowledge of Dartmoor and of the natural world. A strong, hard-working and peaceful person. We loved him dearly, and he us.

Living in Exeter as a young child during the war, there were regular bombing raids. We heard the warning sound of the siren; it was time to get out of bed and down into the shelter; the drone of enemy planes and explosions often very near. Then came the sound of the All Clear. Back to bed. In the morning the piles of rubble, skeletons of remnants of buildings still smouldering.

These were the sounds we heard and responded to - instantly.

How different from the peaceful scene, such a short time later, of my grandfather, smiling, as he listened to the birds.

Are we now in danger of our lives being dominated by technology? Are we slowly losing sight of this beautiful, God-created world, and instead spending our time communicating through the screen of our phones?

So my thought this month is for us to listen to the natural world around us. We are

so blessed to be living in Steyning, this special place, surrounded by natural beauty. Let's leave our phones at home, go for a walk or a wander. Listen. The wind is whistling, leaves still crackle under our feet, birds are still singing or twittering, lambs are bleating.

Enjoy them. Without realising it our souls are being fed.
Thank you Lord for the wonders of your creation.

Maureen Jones

Christian Aid Week



Christian Aid Coffee Morning
Saturday 11 May 10:30am until 12:30pm

The theme of Christian Aid week this year is:

'Pushing back against poverty'.

Christian Aid exists to create a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty.

Please show your support by joining us at the Penfold Hall for coffee or tea and a slice of cake. Of course you do not have to eat the cake all at once because there will be whole cakes to buy and take home with you. Plans are being made for a raffle and we intend to have stalls selling plants and maybe more.

Save the date in you diary to come along to the Penfold Hall on 11 May between 10:30am and 12:30pm where you will be welcomed by lots of the usual volunteers from Steyning Parish Church as well as members of the congregations of Steyning and District Churches Together. By working together we can all make a difference.

If you cannot join us on the day please bring your cakes to the Penfold Hall between 5:30pm and 7pm on Friday 10 May. Or you can drop them off to my house. Just call me on 01903 817144 to arrange a time.



Elizabeth Brown

Memories of Richard Perry 1938 - 2024

Firstly I would like to thank all my dear friends who have supported me at this time and joined the family at the funeral to celebrate Richard's life.

Richard was born on the Isle of Wight in 1938. The family home was a two-bedroom cottage in Ventnor where his grandmother and Aunt lived, and where annual holidays were spent. Most of his childhood was spent in Ilford, where, at school, he was Essex 100 metres hurdle champion. He was involved with the church choir and became a Server. Music was always a big part in his life from piano lessons, where his love of Trad jazz often caused problems with his piano teacher who had other ideas! He enjoyed cycling, swimming and making model aeroplanes, which led to a lifelong love of aeroplanes and then to his decision to do an engineering apprenticeship with De Havilland. Six months of each year was spent at Hendon Technical College (now North London University!!). I was doing a secretarial course at the same time and we first met when he held my hand to stop me from being completely dunked in the College fountain! Our courting days were done in old cars – which didn't always arrive at their destination! (including the first Riley). Jazz dances at College were always special. Richard was sharing a flat with other students in Golders Green, where there were parties and lifelong friendships made.



We married in 1965 and spent the first two years in a flat over a pet shop in Pinner High Street – where we arrived to find goldfish swimming in our bath! By now Richard was working for Grainer in Colnbrook, and in 1967 we bought our first house in Old Windsor where gardening and decorating played a big part in the next couple of years.

In 1969 we were blessed with the arrival of a son Christopher. (Chris). Life changed a little then, but these were fun and happy times. Riley No2 – a Biarritz, was discovered in a garage nearby. It had been on blocks since 1934 and was now for sale. Although money was short at the time it somehow arrived on our driveway –

there was a definite period of stony silence! But then we both enjoyed many happy outings and made many friends along the way!

In 1975 our family was complete with the arrival of Alexandra (Alix). By now we had decided that a fabric bodied car was not suitable for inquisitive fingers, so it was changed for Riley No3 a 9 Tourer with four seats. We shared many adventures in that car, including navigating from pond to pond when the radiator leaked!

Camping was a new venture, and even though, on our first outing, the rain flooded the floor, and on the second, the pole bent and the tent collapsed, we continued camping happily for many years - including travelling parts of France on bicycles with all our luggage in paniers (Alix hitching a lift on the back of Richard's tandem). As the children were growing up more time was involved with all their school activities, football, netball, athletics, cubs and scouts, brownies and guides, In between we enjoyed walking the length of the Thames and many other pathways. Air Shows – where the Spitfires and the Vulcan were special favourites – and standing in our garden at 11am watching Concorde take off.

Chris married Annelise in 1997 and Alix married Olly in 2004, and in 1999 Chris and Annelise gave us our first grandson (Jack) – which was a new and lovely venture. Since then, we have been blessed with three more lovely grandchildren, Megan, Emily and Ben. Being retired gave us more time to spend with them and enjoy them growing up. Kite flying, and sand castles were special, while school pick-ups and bed-time stories were a real treat.

We both retired in 2003, and decided to live nearer the sea, so we moved to Steyning where we have spent the last 20 years. We walked the South Downs and many other trails, learnt to play Bridge, and acquired Riley No4, a March Special. We also managed visiting San Francisco, Australia, the Isles of Scilly, the Azores, Orkney and other Scottish Islands, Maderia, Iceland and most of the Canaries.

Sadly, Richard suffered from Alzheimer's, made worse by Covid, and two years ago



he was admitted to Croft Meadow. It has been hard for us all to watch the lovely man he was disappear into a frail shadow. Rest in peace dear Richard.

Pam Perry

Prayer Points for May

- For all families who mourn the death of a loved one caught in the gun fire at the Russian concert hall and the Aid Workers in Gaza.
- For peace in Sudan
- For the Royal Family
- For all undergoing cancer treatment
- For those responsible for getting the food into Gaza, including Christian Aid.
- For the Steyning Festival organisers and the events.
- For all who are volunteer gardeners in the churchyard
- For all who live and work on De Braose Way, Rosemary Avenue and Saxon Road
- For all organising outdoor and fundraising events this month.



Community coffee



**Do come and join us
on a Wednesday morning
any time between
10am and 11:30am**

**COME IN ...
PLEASE
JOIN THE TEAM
FOR A COFFEE**

Several of our visitors go across to the Church in time for the Wednesday morning service, but there are always plenty of people wishing to chat until the coffee mugs are empty and we don't finish until 11:30.

Elizabeth Brown and the Coffee Team

St Andrew's Men's Society
is a meeting of a group of male
members of Steyning Parish



Church and guests. We meet in the
Penfold Hall, beginning with a glass or
two of wine and nibbles.

Then we enjoy a talk. ***Do join us.***

**Next meeting:
Tuesday 21 May**

Speaker:

**Rev'd Peter Attwood, talk entitled
"Collared!"**

Doors open at 3:45 for 4:00 start

SAMS

Power of knitting

For years Dr Coleman had been feeling sad, depressed, or just nothing at all. Getting up in the morning was a struggle. In her quest for healing, she joined a church-based knitting group that created items for homeless individuals. They met monthly, and Coleman began to experience the presence of God again in a community dedicated to serving others. She writes:

“Revelation did not come to me in thunderbolts. God was just there. In the hot cup of tea. In the women who gathered. In our laughter. In the knitting. God was in my uniform rows of stitches. God was also in the dropped stitch that created an imperfection... There is something holy in the movement of yarn through fingers and needles. It grounds you. It keeps you from falling through the chasms around you... God is in every cell, every person, and every activity. Whether I know it or not. Whether it feels like it or not. God is creating. With yarn and needles, hiccups, unravelling, do-overs, a rhythm, and individual stitches, God is making something new. Something beautiful. I thought that my prayers and good intentions in knitting for homeless men were divine activity. I was knitting God into the hat and scarf. No. God was knitting me. With therapists, medication, meaningful studies, a small church community, a pastor who cared, friends who understood, and a name for my condition, God was knitting me. God was knitting me back together.”

Coleman reminds us that our diagnoses do not define us but are part of our lifelong journey of discovering our true worth in God:

“I don’t want to be reduced to my symptoms and diagnosis. Tied down. I am learning the difference between captivity and rest, between an illness and a condition. There’s nothing wrong with me. After all, this is the only me I’ve ever known. But sometimes I need to slow down, check to see if I’m okay; look at the emotional heap of yarn in my lap, undo a few rows, and try again. I need to know that the things I drop, the things I can’t do the way I want, the hard parts of my life are not failure. They are evidence that I’m human.

*Extracts from Coleman “Bipolar Faith”
and from Richard Rohr meditation Sept 2023.*

Steyning Bridge Club

We are a small, friendly Club with about 12 members and meet every Monday evening between 6.15pm & 9.15pm in the Penfold Church Hall, Church Street.

Anagram for May

The anagram for this month is:

FESTIVALS

REMEMBER: All words to have three or more letters, but only use each letter once. NO capitalised words and NO plurals.

I hope this will bring alive not stifle the brain!

Blessed are the Peacemakers

RELIGION, TOLERANCE AND ARMED CONFLICT

Louise and I recently visited the John Bunyan museum and the church where he preached in Bedford. Bunyan was imprisoned for the “crime” of preaching the gospel as an unauthorised dissenter in 17th century England, after the civil war, at about the same time as the Quaker movement was beginning. He was in prison for 12 years. Religious tolerance was hard to find four hundred years ago – even towards members of the same religion. Dr David Russell, (General Secretary of the Baptist Union and chairperson of the Human Rights Forum of the British Council of Churches when I was secretary to that committee in the late 1970s and early 1980s) often used to begin his presentations on human rights by saying: “We Baptists have never oppressed anyone – we have never had enough power.”

In this short article, as my personal reflection on the “peace” Beatitude, I want to recall some of the peacemakers I have met and been influenced by. In the late 1980s, I worked for the Life and Peace Institute in Sweden and we did a lot of work on the role of religion in situations of armed conflict. I remember Wesley Ariarajah, a Sri Lankan who worked for the World Council of Churches, saying that when intercommunal killing starts, politicians and the public call on religious leaders to make peace across the dividing lines. But, Wesley continued, by then it is too late. Religious leaders must develop respect and friendship for other religious leaders and their communities *before* that or they will not be able to play that vital reconciling role. It is true more generally that early investment in peace making is far more cost effective than the devastating consequences of war.

Religion has an ambivalent role in conflict. It can polarise, with religious leaders as “chaplains to their own side”, or can play a reconciling role. I treasure a signed copy of a book by Desmond Tutu, *God is not a Christian*, in which the Nobel Peace Prize winner says: “*We do scant justice and honour to our God if we want, for instance, to deny that Mahatma Gandhi was a truly great soul, a holy man who walked closely with God. Our God is too small if he is not also the God of Gandhi...*” (p.7) When I worked at Wiston House organising conferences for the Foreign Office, I was pleased that we were able to get Professor Hans Kung to deliver his message that there can be no world peace without peace between the world religions, and it is necessary to work together for a “global ethic”. That said, it is also true that secular ideologies have

been responsible for huge loss of human life, one need only think of Hitler and Stalin to realise that. There is enough blame to share around, without the implausible claim that religion is the main cause of conflict.

I think also of other peacemakers I have known:

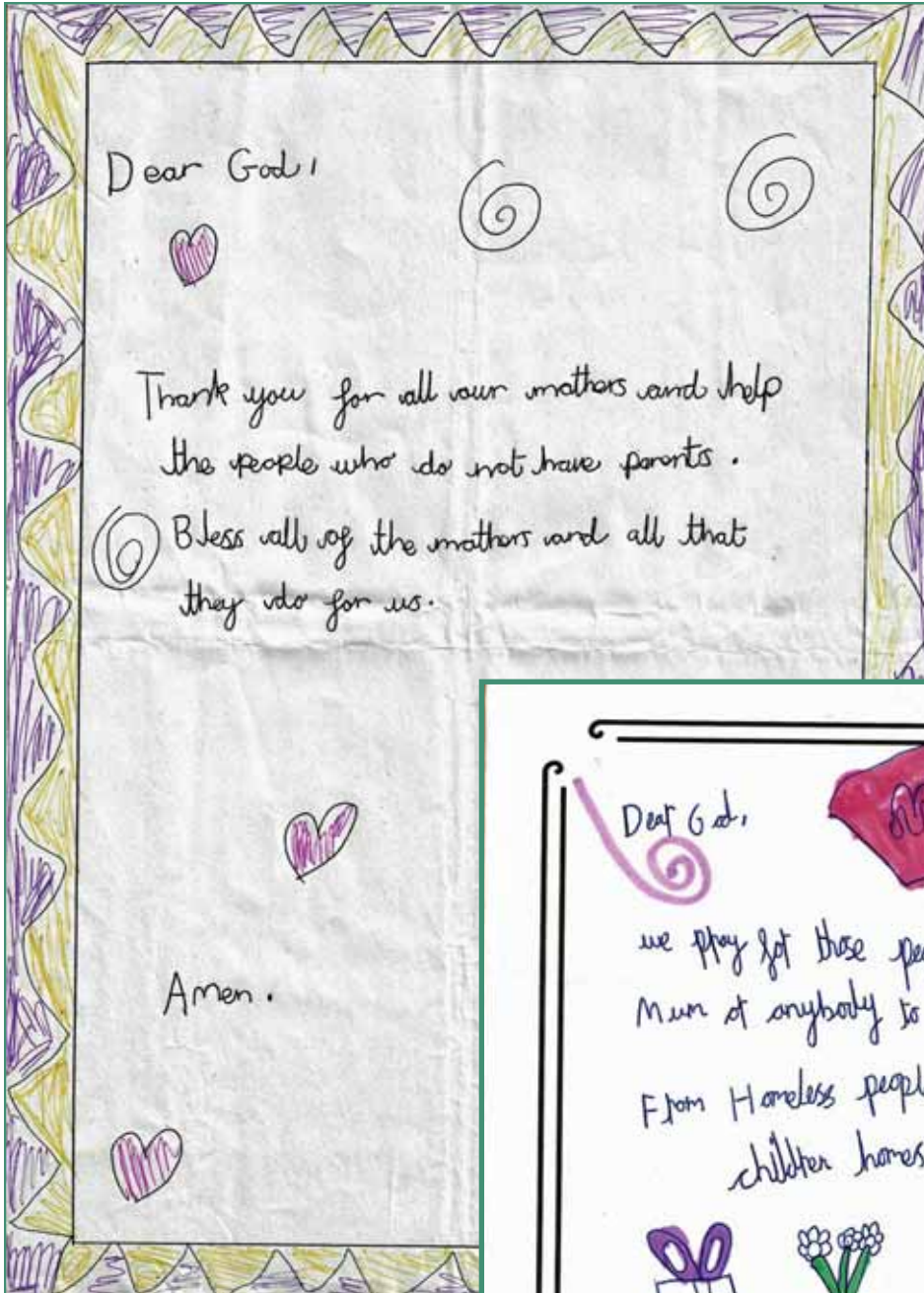
- The Argentine church leaders who came to the UK to seek a common path to peace during and after the Falklands Conflict in 1982;
- Kim Dae Jung, whom I visited under house arrest in Korea in the late 1980s, before he became President of South Korea and sought peace with the North;
- Participants at the major European church conference on Peace with Justice organized in Basel in May 1989, shortly before the Berlin Wall came down;
- East German church peace activists who played such a central role in bringing the peaceful reunification of Germany unexpectedly to pass;
- And Sulak Sivaraksa, Thai social activist and advocate of Engaged Buddhism, who has played such an important role in his own society and in interreligious dialogue for peace.

Mention must also be made of the particular role of women in peace movements, in many contexts, like Northern Ireland (the peace women led by Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams) or the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo who so bravely protested about the disappearance of their loved ones by Argentina's military junta in the 1970s. I also want to recall Adriana Borquez, a woman who was "disappeared" by the military in Chile but who actually managed to escape, who spoke at a British Council of Churches Assembly, and likened herself to Lazarus – reappeared from the dead. And also Setsuko Thurlough, a Japanese woman living in Canada, who I heard speaking of the horrors of surviving the first atom bomb in Japan.

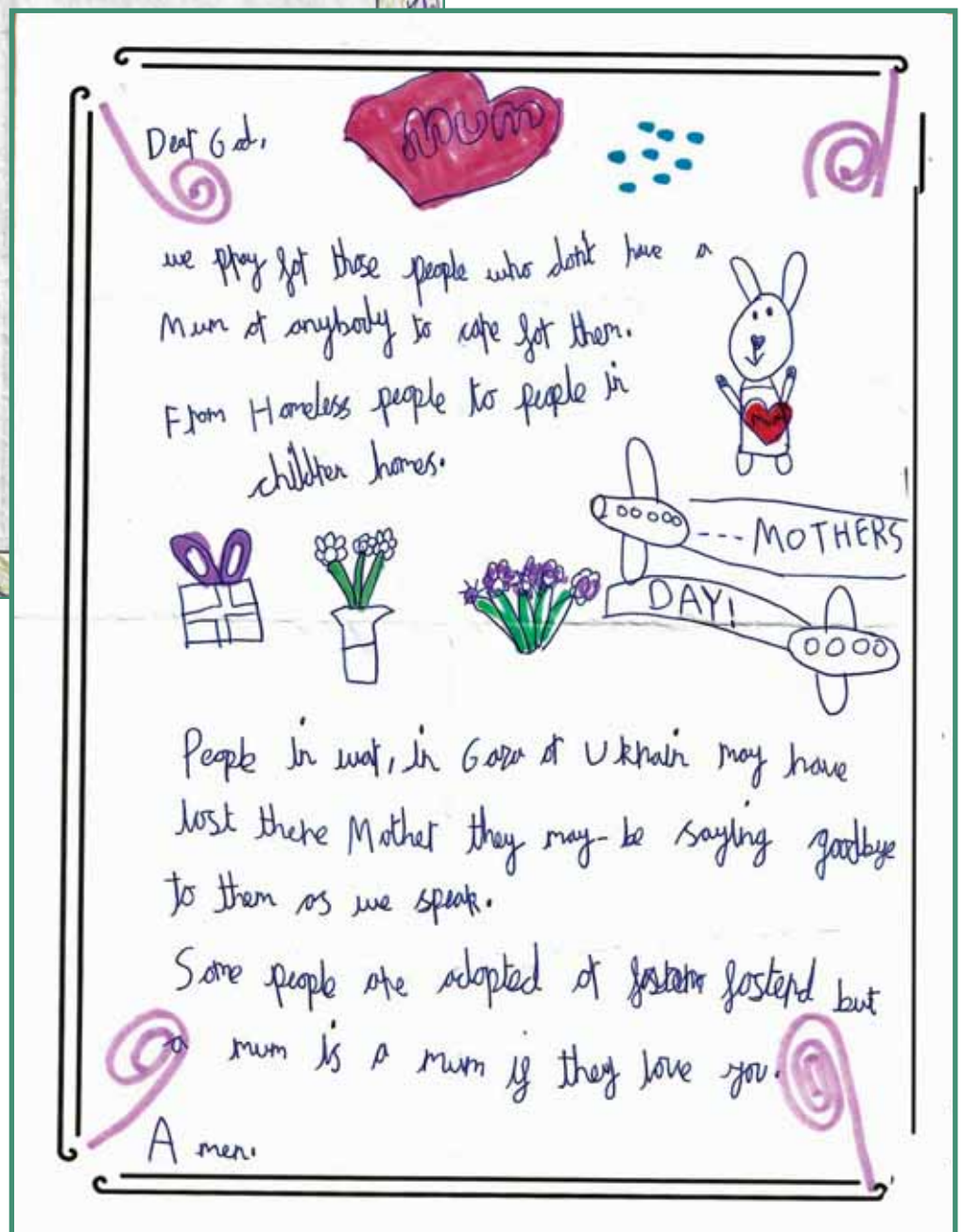
You probably don't know many of these people, but in a way, that is the point. There are many more peacemakers than we know about - people taking risks to resolve conflict and preserve human life - whether through the United Nations or local initiatives. We should pray for them and support them. I am encouraged that our church has supported the work of Christian Aid on some of the forgotten conflicts of Northern Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Rohingya refugees from the ethnic cleansing in Myanmar. We must also continue to seek peace and pray for Ukraine and the Holy Land. Blessed are the peacemakers.

Roger Williamson

Prayers from the children



Cast your mind back to Mothering Sunday! The 9:30 service was a Family Service with the Music Group, and the children read out these lovely prayers. We have their permission to share them with you.



Every third Sunday of the month is the Family service with the Music Group. A much more relaxed Eucharistic service to which you are all welcome. Do bring your children.

Concert: Chanctonbury Chorus

SATURDAY 11 MAY 2024 AT 7:30

Now is the Month of Maying

David O'Dell sings tenor with the Chanctonbury Chorus, does meticulous research and writes the programme notes. I invited him to introduce our next concert:

“May 1st traditionally marks the beginning of spring, ecologically, if not meteorologically or astronomically, and this year Chanctonbury Chorus will mark the occasion with a concert of works that reflect the season.

Four-hundred-year-old madrigals, such as *Sing we and chant it* and *It was a lover and his lass*, will rub shoulders with George Shearing's *Songs and Sonnets* and Bob Chilcott's *Little Jazz Madrigals*, both written in the last 25 years, and accompanied by keyboard, bass and drums. There will also be a performance of Vivaldi's 1715 setting of the *Magnificat* and our professional soloists will entertain with their choice of seasonal numbers.

This performance will raise money for the RNLI, which celebrates its 200th anniversary this year.

Be sure to book early. All of the choir's recent concerts have sold out and we have only avoided having to turn people away on the door by using a shoehorn and remarkable ingenuity. Please don't wait till the last minute!”

David O'Dell

Tickets are £18, which includes a printed programme, available on the door on the night. You can buy tickets from a variety of sources - *Steyning Bookshop, online through Eventbrite (but they charge a booking fee!), from members of the Chorus, or - perhaps easiest of all - from me after most 9:30 services.* I charge no commission! My reward is seeing you enjoy the music we sing. Ask me, if you want to know more.

Canon Nigel



This article first appeared in the April magazine.

MEMORIAL BOOK

To arrange for someone's name to be added to the memorial book in the north aisle of Steyning Parish Church please complete a form found at the back of church. There is a suggested donation of at least £10, to include the cost of all the calligraphy.



Church Flowers

May 12 & 19 Kate Williams

May 26 Chrissie Leader

Thank you to all those who enthusiastically and beautifully decorated the church for the Easter Festival - it was much appreciated. Also many thanks to those who donated towards the lilies.

Carol McKechnie



Study Day on The New Testament

Saturday 11 May 2024,

10:15am to 3pm

The Palace, Chichester PO19 1PY

Also time given for you to go into the Bishop's garden.

(Tea and Coffee will be provided, but you will need to bring or shop for a packed lunch.)

The Arts Society

THE BOOK OF KELLS

A talk by Imogen Corrigan

Monday 13 May 2024, 10:00 – 12:00

The Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft,

This extraordinary manuscript, dating to c.800AD, has been admired for its sublime beauty, but also described as 'cold-blooded hallucination'. A fantasy of intertwined animals, birds and people's heads, it is also a standard Book of the Gospels with full-page illustrations. Annotated by some and stolen by others, it reflects the spirituality of its creators and the Christianity of their age. It is also notable for its errors.

Imogen is a Freelance lecturer. After nearly 20 years in the British army she gained a first class honours degree in Anglo-Saxon & Medieval History and Art at Kent University, and a MPhil from Birmingham.

Free to members, £10 donation for visitors

steyning@theartssociety.org

www.theartssocietysteyning.org.uk

Diary dates for June

Monday 17 June. 7:30pm Three crime writers for the price of one! The Revd Richard Coles will be in conversation with Elly Griffiths and William Shaw will be chairing the discussion. Tickets from Steyning Book Shop.

Saturday 22 June. 3:30pm and 6:30pm. The Hanover Band will be performing all six of JS Bach's Brandenburg Concertos over two sessions, with an optional picnic available in between.

Diocesan Environment Day

St Mark's Holbrook, Horsham, RH12 5PU

Saturday 15 June 9:30 – 4.00

Organised by Revd Buff Forbes Stone, Diocesan Environment Officer,
in collaboration with A Rocha UK.

This will be a day to confirm our commitment to environmental stewardship and inspire further action towards a greener future. It will be an opportunity to hear and share the environmental progress achieved by churches, from reducing carbon footprints to advocating for climate action and fostering biodiversity, showcasing the dedication and innovation of countless churchgoers.

Keren Park, from A Rocha, will speak on '*Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency*'. There will be several workshops on topics such as:

- Managing Church Buildings,
- Managing Church Land,
- Eco Worship,
- Working Together to Make a Difference.

This is a free ticketed event.

For more information see the diocesan website <https://www.chichester.anglican.org/> and go to Events then Talk, Seminar or Conference Events.

Steyning History Society

Notice of the May Steyning History Society Meeting, held at the Steyning Centre, Coombe Court, on Wednesday 8 May 2024, at 7.30 p.m. A presentation by Ian Currie on the subject of "**The History of Weather Forecasting - from Aristotle to Super Computers**" will commence immediately after our short A.G.M. Visitors are welcome to the talk at £5.00 per person. This is the last meeting in this year's programme, and we will then take a break for the summer to recommence in September.

The Friends' concert

The Friends of Steyning Parish Church and Steyning Festival
bring you a concert

featuring rarely heard works by Schubert, Bach and Clarke

Tuesday 28 May 2024, 5:00 - c6:00

At Steyning Church of St Andrew and St Cuthman

Photo credit
Nigel Luckhurst



This unusual and varied concert will highlight Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata, played by Dan Shilladay on viola and accompanied Brian Sawyer.

Schubert's sonata is unusual as it is the only substantial composition still played today which was originally written for the arpeggione - essentially a six-stringed, bowed guitar, invented around 200 years ago in the 1820s.

Another key piece of the programme will be Morpheus, written by Rebecca Clarke in 1917, which will also be played by Dan on viola and accompanied by Brian. The harmonies are frequently ethereal and otherworldly, representing the Greek god, Morpheus, who was especially associated with sleep and dreams.

Finally, Dan will play Bach's suite No. 4 in E-flat major, BWV1010.

About the musicians:

Dan Shilladay is a London-based freelance musician and Co-Principal Viola at the Arundel-based Hanover Band which specialises in music from the Hanoverian period. He has also played with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Britten Sinfonia and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. With Southbank Sinfonia he has taken part in acclaimed productions at the National Theatre of *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* and *Amadeus*.

Brian Sawyer is the popular, award-winning organist of Steyning Parish Church. He has been an organ soloist with The City of Southampton Orchestra, The Horsham Symphony Orchestra and has given organ recitals in Chichester and Arundel Cathedrals among others. He has been the Organist and Director of Music at Steyning Church since 1993.

There is no admission charge for the concert - however there will be a retiring collection for the Friends of the Church in support of a project to enhance facilities at the Church.

Easter Flowers at Steyning



Thank you, Jim Lang, for taking these photos for this magazine. They are beautiful flowers, and so lovely to share them. Editor



What do you think?

I've been trying to keep to the general theme requested for this year of comment on the New Testament, and last month I got a bit carried away looking at the ways in which the proclamation of the Christian faith grew and varied as time went by, and different writers took over the delivery of the Message.

Then it occurred to me to look and see if there were any other examples of a shift in attitude or emphasis with a change of author. I ended up looking at the lead speaker of the apostles. We know him as Peter, but that is just the nickname that Jesus gave him and it stuck. If we were to translate it to today's speak, we would call him Rocky Johnson aka Simon Peter, son of Jonah.

Anyway, I wonder if there is a shift in attitude towards him between Luke's tales about him in Acts, and his gospel stories which he copied from Mark. I read somewhere recently the idea that although Acts follows on from the gospels, it is possible that Luke wrote Acts first, before he came across Mark's gospel. *What do you think?*

When I was a lad, I seem to remember it being said that Mark followed Peter around, and each evening wrote up notes of what he said to become his gospel. Anyhow, Peter seems to be a different character in Acts compared to the Peter of the gospel. In the gospel he is a blundering old fool who only has to open his mouth to put his foot in it; he never learns. He calls Jesus the Messiah and then tells him he's got it all wrong; he shares in the Transfiguration vision, and then wants to put up a tent; he protests loyalty, and then denies knowing him as the cock crows. You can't really take him seriously; he really belongs in a Punch and Judy tent not the Gospel.

But look at him in Acts and you find a man of immense Power. Power over healing, even just his shadow passing by works miracles; power over life and death, Annas and Sapphira drop down dead with terror; Tabitha gets up from her coffin at his command; power over other miracle workers - Simon Magus is forbidden to practise his skills; power to alter church policy, admitting Gentiles to the church - Cornelius - by a fast track.

No wonder they were all scared out of their wits at his approach. If he is the same Peter, he's changed out of all recognition. I have a suspicion that Luke knew of Peter when he heard about him as Paul's travelling companion; and then saw another side to him when he picked up Mark's gospel.

What do you think?

God works in a mysterious way.

Senex

Steypning Festival 2024

SOME OF THE EVENTS IN STEYNING PARISH CHURCH

Friday 24 May

4pm – 6pm A glorious teatime concert of opera and operetta songs from
Singing Salon

Saturday 25 May

4pm Our own **Brian Sawyer** plays a programme of Bach.

Monday 27 May

7pm **Slavic Voices** presents music of all styles from the Slavic world.

Tuesday 28 May

5pm **Brian Sawyer** teams up with **Dan Shilladay**, who is Principal Viola of the Hanover Band, to present a rather special, unusual concert. (see page 25)

7:30pm **Chanctonbury Chorus** 'Come and Sing'. Have fun learning and then performing some well-loved choral pieces.

Wednesday 29 May

7:30pm **Papagena**, the UK's flagship female voice ensemble. Papagena presents a diverse programme ranging from sacred medieval works and contemporary madrigals to lilting Celtic ballads, folk legends and lullabies.

Thursday 30 May

8:00pm A lively, moving and entertaining concert from the men of **Vocal Fusion** who sing acapella.

Friday 31 May

11am – 3pm **Churches Together Fun Activity Day** for children of primary school age.

Saturday 1 June

4pm **Brian Sawyer** plays an Organ Extravaganza

Sunday 2 June

6pm **Festival Service** to celebrate a wonderful week for our community. (Please note the time, not as advertised in the Festival programme)

Steyning Church Swifts - 2023

Last summer was another relatively encouraging year for the Steyning Church Swifts, although slightly down in terms of confirmed breeding pairs from previous years.

Thanks to the group of watchers, comprising Andrew Armitage, John Woodward, Colin Holter, John Wakefield, Alan Swetman and myself (Peter Chase), we managed to establish, with reasonable certainty, that five pairs of Swifts nested at the Church. It is possible that a couple of pairs evaded our watchful eyes.

They could potentially have produced between eight and twelve chicks, which hopefully all fledged successfully.

This was a major contribution to the thirteen pairs that we confirmed as breeding around the town.

The largest number of Swifts seen in the air at any one time was twenty on 20 July 2023.



Swifts feed on insects that are sucked up by air currents to several thousand feet and they travel large distances of ten miles or more when searching for them. It is therefore quite difficult to determine the exact numbers.

This was five more than the previous years.

Eight known Swift nest boxes were also monitored and three of these were used last year.

They seem to prefer nesting in soffits or holes in walls or roofs, so the Church is an important site for them and many thanks to the Church Committee for supporting Swifts.

Swifts should be returning at the end of April so keep your eyes peeled for these iconic birds.

Peter Chase

Food for thought?

If you take **GOD** out of **GOOD**,
you are left with **0**; nothing.

I will happily print your thoughts next month - where does this sentence take you?

Green Day

Weald to Waves is a scheme to create three wildlife corridors running from Ashdown Forest through the Knepp Estate, and along the river valleys of Arun, Adur and Ouse to the coast.

This needs **wildlife friendly gardeners** here in Steyning and Ashurst who can fill in the gaps in the corridor, creating small oases which wildlife can use as stepping stones through urban areas.

Not just gardens but parks, allotments, churchyards, verges, village greens; an endless list of green areas, will all be part of this network of stepping stones.

Put your garden on the map

At Green Day you can pledge your garden or greenspace to the project. You can do this online with the Weald to Waves team and you can physically mark your garden on a large scale map of our local area using a pin, giving a picture of how many, and where the wildlife friendly gardens are.

Steyning Festival Green Day is on Saturday 25 May at

Cuthman's Field

Starting at 11:00am

Facing Challenges

Psalm 34:14

The Lord helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him.

Lord, we lift up all those across the world who face challenges living out their faith.

We ask that you give them strength, wisdom and endurance, and that their lives will be a testimony to everyone around them.

Lord, make us an instrument of thy peace: where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood, as to understand, to be loved as to love.

From The Diocese of Iran

“ Apart from a funeral in Isfahan no church services have been held in the four churches of the diocese of Iran for almost four years. The Covid pandemic caused worship in churches to be halted in the Spring of 2020. Since then, only those churches which hold services in Armenian or Assyrian, the languages of the two recognised Christian ethnic minorities, have been allowed to reopen. All churches which have worshipped in the national language of Persian (Farsi) have not been allowed to reopen. Anglican churches worshipped in Persian. ...

The Anglican church is not involved with the house church movement which has dramatically spread across the country - Iranians who find faith in Christ but who meet privately in small groups of less than ten in homes. Many, though have left the country.”

John Clark, Bible Lands

The Steyning Society



Friday May 17 at 7:00 for 7:30

The Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft

The History of Parham House

by Lesley Chamberlain

The doors are open at 19:00 and there will be wine or sparkling elderflower on arrival. (monetary donations welcome)

Talk will begin at 7:30

Free to members and £5 guests. All very welcome to attend.

Light Up The World In Prayer

9th–19th May 2024

Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus.

**THY
KINGDOM
COME**



Recipe for May

YOGHURT CAKE

Ingredients

- 4 egg yolks
- 4 egg whites
- 400g full fat Greek yoghurt
- 4 tbsp corn flour
- 1/2tsp baking powder
- 4 tbsp sugar
- 40g milk chocolate chips or equivalent

- 20cm tin lined
- Oven 150c fan



Method

1. In a large bowl whisk together the egg yolks and sugar until smooth.
2. Add the corn flour and baking powder. Whisk again.
3. Add the Greek yogurt and whisk until combined.
4. In a separate bowl whisk the egg whites until stiff peaks.
5. Fold in the egg whites to the other bowl.
6. Once combined fold in the chocolate chips.
7. Pour into the prepared tin and bake for one hour.
8. There should be a crack in the top once made.
9. Leave in the tin to cool.
10. Sieve icing sugar on top to serve.

But in the very centre of the table stood the finest cake you ever saw, baked by Kanga and iced by Roo and Tigger, and there was spindly writing on the icing, except that nobody could make out what it said, not even Owl; and when Pooh asked Roo and Tigger what the writing said, they giggled and ran off to play in the bracken.

Everyone had been invited to the party, even Eeyore, and Pooh had pushed a special invitation under the door of Christopher Robin's house. Owl had written it.

From Winnie the Pooh: the Return to Hundred Acre Wood



Hawthorn

You could set your calendar by it. Around the first day of May, our ancestors would step outside to find foamy white clouds erupting across the Sussex countryside; the Hawthorn was blooming, spring was turning to summer. The sight was so visually stunning and so linked with the arrival of May that Hawthorn became the only British plant to be named after the month in which it blooms. Well, the name Hawthorn is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *hagathorn* (*haga* meaning hedge). I'm referring to that other name for Hawthorn: May.

Unlike the impetuous Blackthorn, which flowers in March before it's even bothered to grow leaves, the Hawthorn is more dignified. It waits until it has clothed itself in undergarments of lobed leaves before it dons a resplendent gown of exquisite white flowers. This stunning costume and perfect timing meant Hawthorn took centre stage at May Day celebrations and it partied with Green Men, Morris Dancers, Maypoles and May Queens. 'Gathering nuts in May' actually refers to 'gathering knots of May' to make May Day garlands and decorations.

Then, in the middle of the eighteenth century, tragedy struck. I don't know about you, but I get thrown into disarray twice a year when the clocks change. My life would have gone into meltdown in 1752 as our whole calendar changed from Julian to Gregorian, and we lost an entire 11 days. In this new timeline, Hawthorn now found itself late for the party, blooming around May 12.

It wasn't the first time Hawthorn had been cast aside. Superstitions dictated that bringing Hawthorn indoors led to misfortune – even death. This could stem from the fact that Hawthorn blooms release trimethylamine, which gives the flowers that unpleasant smell of cat's wee and attracts pollinating insects. It's also a chemical formed in decaying tissue and reminded people of the smell of Black Death - and nobody wanted to be reminded of that. I remember at primary school being taught 'Ne're cast a clout 'til May is out'. I translated this gibberish into the fact that you should keep your warm clothes on until the end of May. I've only just discovered that 'May is out' refers to Hawthorn blooming. My clouts could have been cast weeks earlier.

But the world has changed since I was a nipper – we're warming up. For a temperature-sensitive plant like Hawthorn, the blooming times are changing again. Hawthorn is responding to climate change by flowering up to two weeks earlier than it was thirty years ago. It has crept back to bloom around May Day and is now more commonly seen flowering at the end of April. So this May Day, cast your clouts, get out into the great outdoors, and welcome the return of the real May Queen.

Michael Blencowe

Baptism



Jesus's Baptism as told in Matthew's Gospel.

"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him.

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased".

Matthew 3:11-17