

PARTNERS

weekly newsletter



31st March 2024 - Easter Day

This Sunday is a reminder to us that, however desperate a situation might appear, if we truly believe, anything is possible. If you had been there 2000+ years ago on that crucifixion day and were a follower of Jesus what would your mood have been by the end of the day – desperate I guess. Then a couple of days later the confusion would have set in – what is this I am being told – can it be true, or is someone playing a dreadfully cruel joke?

We have the benefit of history. We know what happened over the coming days to prove that Jesus had risen but on that first Easter Day it must have been very difficult to know what was going on. In a few days we will read about Thomas, the so called “doubter”. I don’t blame him for needing some proof even though Jesus did gently rebuke him. But he wasn’t turned away, he was invited closer in - “touch my wounds”.

Even on days like Easter Sunday we may all have doubts and worries, but we have the promise that the risen Jesus is with us, the Jesus who has been there for all believers since the first Easter Day and who will be there for us until the end of time. It is our commitment to reach out to him in faith with the assurance that he will walk with us as he walked with those on the road to Emmaus, who we will also hear about soon. The difference is we don’t have to recognise Jesus because we know he is here.

If Jesus had a care for the man on the cross next to him, even in Jesus’ darkest, most desperate hour (“you will be with me in paradise”, he tells the man), then we can be sure he is there for us.

On a more trivial note, if you are in Fordingbridge on Sunday morning I suggest you try to get to the Easter Eggs before I do – you have been warned! “Alleluia, Alleluia” this Sunday we can say “He is Risen indeed, Alleluia”.

Mark Ward

St Mary’s
Fordingbridge
SP6 1BB

St Mary’s
Breamore
SP6 2DF

Holy Ascension
Hyde
SP6 2QJ

St Giles
Godshill
SP6 2JJ

St Boniface
Woodgreen
SP6 2AJ

St Mary’s
Hale
SP6 2RF

Sandleheath
Uniting Church
SP6 1PT

We welcome all, especially visitors and those attending for the first time. If you need gluten free wafers at Communion, please speak to someone at the door before the service.

Please take this newsletter home with you for the week ahead. God Bless!

Readings for this Week: 31st March 2024

Easter Day

COLLECT:

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

AMEN.

PSALM 118:14-24

14. The Lord is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.
15. Joyful shouts of salvation
sound from the tents of the righteous:
16. 'The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds;
the right hand of the Lord raises up;
the right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds.'
17. I shall not die, but live
and declare the works of the Lord.
18. The Lord has punished me sorely,
but he has not given me over to death.
19. Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord.
20. This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.
21. I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
22. The stone which the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

23. This is the Lord's doing,
and it is marvellous in our eyes.

24. This is the day that the Lord has made;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 10:34-43

Peter explains to Cornelius, a Gentile, the significance of Jesus' life.

³⁴ Peter began to speak to those assembled in the house of Cornelius. 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷ That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

At the end, the Reader says:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

THE GOSPEL READING

Please stand and turn to face the Gospel Reader

When the Gospel is announced, the Reader says:

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *John*

Glory to you, O Lord.

(Glory be to thee, O Lord.)

John 20. 1-18

Mary Magdalene with Jesus on Easter Day.

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to

them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' ³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' ¹⁶Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."' ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

(c) *New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible.*

At the end, the Reader says:
This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

(At the end, the Reader says:
This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to thee, O Christ.)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

God of Life,
you for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son
to the death of the cross,
and by his glorious resurrection
have delivered us from the power of our enemy:
grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him
in the joy of his risen life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

Readings for Sunday 7th Apr: Ps. 133, Acts 4: 32-35, John 20:19-31

First Eucharist of Easter on Sunday 31st March - this year our first Parish Eucharist of Easter will take place at **6.30am at Godshill Cricket Forestry Car Park** SP6 2LN. If you are coming to this wonderful Service, please would you consider helping by bringing a thermos jug of hot water. I can drop off a jug to you to fill, please get in touch! Ruth Crosland 07955210769.

Many thanks. **NB-this will be an early start as this year the clocks will have gone forward in the early hours of Easter Day!!**

Last Chance!! There is still time to donate to our Deanery Lent Appeal to help our Partners in Kinkiizi Uganda. The current aim is to raise funding for two projects in Nyakatare Health Centre - to ensure a reliable supply of electricity and to help with the salary of an obstetrician at the newly operational Maternity Wing. The estimated cost is £5,000. Please give any gifts to the Church Office, The Rainbow Centre, 39 Salisbury Street, SP6 1AB or place in St Mary's (FB) wall safe and mark your donation "For Kinkiizi". Direct payment can be made to Christchurch Deanery Synod Kinkiizi Account. Sort Code 52 21 34 Account Number 25750607 (ref NHC). Thank you in anticipation.

Avon Valley Community Matters Family Easter Celebration - We are looking forward to our Easter Celebration for families on **Wednesday 3rd April** with craft activities, an egg hunt and an Easter Story in the Church before heading over to the Church Hall for a delicious Lunch! Volunteers are always welcome so if you can spare an hour or two to help set up, or would like to come and watch the Easter Story then please talk to Irene Canton or email familybefriender@yahoo.com for more information.

Avon Valley Men's Fellowship - Our next supper will be on **Wednesday 3rd April**. We meet at the Old Beams pub, Ibsley at 6:30pm for a 7pm start. After a one course supper our speaker will be Michael Walshaw who will be talking to us about the evolution of the Swanage Railway. We are a very friendly group and always keen to welcome new members. If you are interested in coming along please contact Stephen Darke for more information. Email - darkefamily@btinternet.com / Telephone - 01425 656988.

Clarendon Palace (just east of Salisbury) was once a significant Medieval Royal residence. Do come and find out about its long and chequered history on **Monday 8 April from 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall** when **Fordingbridge History Society (FHS)** will be joined by **Dr Cindy Wood** (Lecturer in Medieval History at the University of Winchester and Secretary of the Friends of Clarendon Royal Palace) who'll bring the Clarendon story to life and share information about current excavations. A warm welcome is extended to visitors and guests. Please note this is an *evening* meeting. For further details contact Helen Coote on 01425 654995

Hyde Local Church Area – LCC membership and Churchwarden nominations will be held at our **AGM on Wednesday 10th April** at 7.30pm in the Church Centre. Everyone is invited to hear a review of the past year and to look

forward to the coming one. We need to elect/re-elect all the Local Church Council members and nominate two Churchwardens. If you are interested in standing on the LCC committee, or are interested in the role of Churchwarden please ask for a nomination form and more information from Jan Butcher or Martin Ings. Existing LCC members need to complete a nomination form to stand again. We will have the nomination forms in Church on Easter Sunday and thereafter. Nominations for **LCC** members should be received by **Tuesday 9th April**.

Sheila Rolfe. Many in the Parish will remember Sheila (wife of the late Rev. Charles Rolfe) from the time when she and Charles were very much a part of the life of Fordingbridge Parish. Sadly, Sheila died recently, and there will be a **Thanksgiving Service** at **St George's Church in Harnham**, Salisbury on **Friday 12th April at 11.30am**. May Sheila rest in peace and rise in glory.

Fordingbridge Choral Society will present Rossini's "Petite Messe Solennelle" in St Mary's Church, Fordingbridge on **Saturday 20th April** at - **please note start time - 7pm**. We've invited talented soloists, pianist Sam Hanson and harmonium owner and player Dr Richard Hall. Tickets £15 in advance from ticketsource.co.uk/fordingbridgechoral and Fordingbridge Bookshop, £18 at the door and **free for 18s and under**. Don't miss this exciting performance.

Hyde Church Electoral Roll. Notice is hereby given that the Electoral Roll is being revised, to be presented for the APCM on **8th May**. Please check that your details are correctly listed on the Roll which will be displayed in the Church until **21st April**.

Fordingbridge Local Church Area – Local Church Council membership and Churchwardens On **Sunday 21st April** we hold our LCC AGM to which everyone is invited after the 10am service in the Church Hall. It is an opportunity to catch up with the past year and also to look forward. We need to elect the Local Church Council members and nominate two Churchwardens. Would you stand for one of these or perhaps both? The LCC looks after Fordingbridge, Godshill and Sandleheath. As well as the Churchwardens two members of the LCC sit on the PCC. If you have questions about either opportunity please speak to Nigel Spratt or Mark Ward. We hope to have the LCC nomination form in church by Sunday 17th, but if not by Sunday 24th. Nominations need to be made by Easter Sunday. Please think seriously about being nominated. Existing LCC members need to complete a nomination to stand again. In 2024/25 the LCC will meet on Mondays from 7.30pm roughly once a month.

APCM – The Annual Meeting of the whole Parish is on **May 8th**; it is an opportunity to look back at what has happened in the previous year and to look forward with our new rector to the coming year. The Local Church committees will meet before then and each Church area will need to appoint members to the local councils.

At the APCM we will need to appoint two wardens from each church area and one lay member (the deanery reps have a three year tenure). Mark Ward is the deanery representative for Fordingbridge so if elected to continue as warden there will need

to be two lay representatives from Fordingbridge so that each local church area has the agreed total of four members. Nomination forms for wardens, local and PCC reps will be available in the churches. If you have any questions, do please discuss with your churchwardens.

Quiz night on the 10th of May from 8pm to 10.30pm in aid of Bee Against Poverty Zambia at the **United Reformed Church**. £12 per team for a maximum of 6 players. Money raised will go towards Bee Against Poverty Zambia who are raising funds for an orphanage project in Kitwe Zambia. If you would to enter a team please contact via email: beeagainstpovertyzambia@gmail.com or phone 01725 518053 by **1st May**

Save the Date - Ruth Crosland's Ordination as a Deacon - Sunday June 30th at 10.00am in **Winchester Cathedral**. More details to follow.....

Reflection

The first Easter day was the fulfilment of our Lord Jesus Christ's ministry here on Earth. He overcame death and darkness and offered everlasting life to all those who accepted his word and the promise of everlasting life. Jesus suffered terribly during his trial and crucifixion on the first Good Friday. He is accused of treason and blasphemy by the priesthood and Caiaphas the high priest. He is abused and mocked by those around him and receives a flogging from Pilate. But for all his distress and pain, He says " Father forgive them for they know not what they do"

The first Easter day holds many events and signs as the resurrection of our Lord unfolds. Firstly the stone is mysteriously rolled away revealing an empty tomb, Simon Peter and John arrive at the tomb in great haste having been told the news, Jesus shows himself to Mary Magdala and to the Apostles in the upstairs room, also to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Many begin to realize the meaning of his words when he said "The son of man must suffer pain and death, and on the third day rise again to fulfil the promise of everlasting life to all believers .

The Easter story is the most significant of the Christian festivals and it also marks the end of our Lord's ministry on Earth. It also heralds a new beginning and a fresh start for us and our Christian faith. Most important of all our relationship with our Heavenly Father and his son Jesus Christ. Let us pray for a fresh start this Easter.

Michael Ireland

CHURCH OFFICE IS OPEN TO VISITORS between 10.00 am and 12.00
Contact via Email : Office@AvonValleyChurches.org.uk or call 01425 653163 between 10.00 am and 12.00 or
leave a message Website : www.AvonValleyChurches.org.uk

Rector -Rev Luke Wickings. Contact via Email rector@avonvalleychurches.org.uk or call 01425 839937 /
07983 398984. Please note Luke's day off is Friday

Easter Day

31st March 2024

**Online services available via Facebook or Website
at 'Avon Valley Churches'**

Sunday	6.30 am	Godshill Common	Sunrise Service of Holy Communion
31st Mar	8.15 am	Fordingbridge	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.00 am	Breamore	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.00 am	Fordingbridge	Sung Eucharist
	10.00am	Hale	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Hyde	Holy Communion
	10.45 am	Sandleheath	Morning Service
Wed 3rd	10.00 am	Fordingbridge	Holy Communion
Sunday	8.15 am	Fordingbridge	Holy Communion (BCP)
7th Apr	10.00 am	Breamore	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Fordingbridge	Allsorts
	10.00am	Hale	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Hyde	Holy Communion
	10.45 am	Sandleheath	Morning Service
	6.00 pm	Fordingbridge	The 6 O'Clock Service