

# PARTNERS

## weekly newsletter



4<sup>th</sup> February 2024 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Lent

Our familiar gospel reading this week starts with “In the beginning...” We are about to start a new beginning and during this week Luke and Sarah will move into the Rectory along with their dog Trixie. They won’t officially join us until 28<sup>th</sup> February so for just under three weeks they have a chance to settle in and find their way around.

We are all wondering what Luke will be like I’m sure, but spare a thought for him and Sarah as they have to move house and then meet so many new people. So if they forget your name a couple of times – don’t be upset, there’s only two of them and rather a lot of us!

If beginnings are to lead to long and fruitful relationships and a reawakening to the kingdom of God in this place then we all need to listen and perhaps not say too often (unless asked of course) “we do it like this”, or, “oh no, we don’t do that vicar!”

In the beginning Jesus, when Jesus came to this world he challenged the people and sometimes he made them sit up and think. I know Luke has said he plans to watch and listen carefully to start with but we must also expect him to ask “why” as he seeks to understand us.

Having met Luke at his interview I know the Word is very central to his faith so it is rather appropriate that the reading for the week he arrives starts with “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God”.

Luke, Sarah and Trixie - you are most welcome amongst us.

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 IPT

*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: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2024

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Lent

### **COLLECT:**

Almighty God,  
give us reverence for all creation  
and respect for every person,  
that we may mirror your likeness  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**AMEN.**

### **PSALM 104:26-32**

26. O Lord, how manifold are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

27. There is the sea, spread far and wide,  
and there move creatures beyond number, both small and great.

28. There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan  
which you have made to play in the deep.

29. All of these look to you  
to give them their food in due season.

30. When you give it them, they gather it;  
you open your hand and they are filled with good.

31. When you hide your face they are troubled;  
when you take away their breath, they die and return again to the dust.

32. When you send forth your spirit, they are created,  
and you renew the face of the earth.

## A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians

*Colossians 1:15-20*

*Christ is the embodiment of all that God is*

<sup>15</sup> Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; <sup>16</sup> for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers - all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

*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 1:1-14*

*Jesus is God's Word for us.*

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. <sup>4</sup> What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into

being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

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 our creator,  
by your gift  
the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise,  
and the bread of life at the heart of your Church:  
may we who have been nourished at your table on earth  
be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross  
and enjoy the delights of eternity;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**AMEN.**

**SP6 Friendship Group** – Our friendship group will be held on **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February** from 10.00am – 12.00md at the Ship Inn, Fordingbridge High Street. This group is for anyone who is bereaved or lonely and would like a cuppa and a friendly chat. We also organize outings, theatre trips and garden visits. If anyone would like to join us do come.

**Avon Valley Men's Fellowship** - Our first meeting of the year will be on **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February** at The Old Beams pub, Ibsley. We will gather from 6:30pm for a 7pm start. After a one course supper our speaker will be the Revd. Peter Vargeson, an Associate Priest with the Ringwood Benefice. Peter will be talking about the links his last Parish had out in Africa, where they built a church, training college and ran a project for Aids orphans. If you would like to join our friendly group you would be most welcome. Please contact Stephen Darke ( Email - [darkefamily@btinternet.com](mailto:darkefamily@btinternet.com) or phone 01425 656988).

**TOFSS (Too Old For Sunday School)** will take place on Thursday 8 February at 15 Provost Street, from 10.30-12 noon, when we will be watching The Chosen. Coffee/Tea and Biscuits. All welcome. Further details from Pat Bloomfield (01425 837735)

On **Saturday 10th February** the Friends of Fordingbridge Museum hold their winter **Soup and Pud Lunch** in St Mary's Hall from **12 noon till 2pm**. Tickets are £8 and available from The Fordingbridge Bookshop or on the door.

Do come along and join **Fordingbridge History Society** on **Monday 12 February** from 2.30pm in the Church Hall to hear **the story of the controversial Fort Nelson and the Palmerston Forts**. They were built to protect Great Britain's major naval harbours and dockyards from offshore attack, and those guarding Portsmouth were the first to be completed. Lewis Sharp (Secretary of the Palmerston Forts Society) will focus on Fort Nelson and reveal how the nickname 'Palmerston's Follies' came about. For further information, contact Helen Coote on 01425 654995 or check out the website at [www.fordingbridgehistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.fordingbridgehistorysociety.org.uk).

**Hyde Mothers' Union** next meeting is on **February 13<sup>th</sup> at 2.30pm** in Hyde Centre. We are so pleased to welcome as our speaker, Alex Sains whose title is "Next steps ....A surprising road to retirement"  
Come and join us for what will be an inspirational afternoon.

**Pancake Party at Woodgreen Village Hall**-On Shrove Tuesday, **13<sup>th</sup> February**, the church family of Hale & Woodgreen will be having a fantastic Pancake Party from **3pm-4.30pm**! All welcome, pancakes £1, Hot drinks £1, donations towards Hale Church Roof- whatever you like! Come and enjoy the flipping fun....

**Big Model Train Event 2024!** The Friends of Fordingbridge Parish Church announce the arrival of Neil's Big Trains at St Mary's Church Hall at **10am on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February, departing at 4pm, returning at 10am on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February and leaving at 4pm** - this weekend is at the end of our local half term. Admission £5 adults, £1 children 5-16, Family ticket £8. Refreshments available, for which offers of help with baking and serving are welcome so please sign up on the lists at St Mary's, FB. Don't miss these amazing trains!

**Sign up for the service to welcome Rev Luke Wickings – Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.30pm, St Mary's Fordingbridge** It will help us to plan for this service if local people can indicate whether you and your families intend to come to the service (we realise you might have to change plans but having an idea will be very helpful). For this there will be a sign-up sheet in your church from **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January** and we need to know by **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February**. If you intend to attend but cannot get to a church during that period please email [mark@fordingbridge.com](mailto:mark@fordingbridge.com) with this information: Number in your group as congregation, number in your group as choir, and how many are any of Gluten Free, Dairy Free, Vegetarian or Vegan, again by **11<sup>th</sup> February**.

**Lay Vocations Morning Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April, 9.30am – 12.30pm** All Saints Church Hall, St Leonards & St Ives BH24 2LS

Do you think God might be calling you to use your gifts to serve Jesus Christ? But unsure of what your next step might be?

Join us at All Saints Church Hall, St Leonards & St Ives where Bishop David will share about God's calling on our lives and how we can respond to that call. The Winchester School of Mission team will share about the pathways available and afterwards the team will be on hand to answer your questions.

- Do you already serve or want to serve but would value training and networking opportunities? – Come and find out more about the Bishop's Commission for Mission (BCM) available in Pastoral Care, Worship, Children, Youth & Families Ministry, and Beyond Church Walls.
- Do you feel called to preach regularly in your church? - Our Bishop's Permission To Preach programme could help you flourish.
- Would you like to explore licensed lay ministry? - We can help you explore the pathways available.

All are welcome to join us for this morning, designed to help you prayerfully consider your response to God's call on your life - no strings or expectations attached.

Please contact Tracey Nicholls via at [tracey.nicholls@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:tracey.nicholls@winchester.anglican.org) to book your place.

**Epiphany concert:** Thank you to everyone involved in the concert at St Mary's church, Hale last Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> January. We were treated to a very special programme with a wide variety of both music and singing. These things require a lot of thought, effort and commitment from everyone are so lucky to have Canon Gary Philbrick lead the Hale ensemble, Amanda Clarke leading the Hales Angels, supported by Barry Groves. This year we were joined by Mike on the oboe and Margaret on the flute. So many talented people. The raffle was well supported but do please check your tickets below:

Orange: 384 Bottle of gin

Green: 248 Hamper,

Green: 282 Weekend bag,

Green: 246 Kath Kidson toiletries

Green: 249 Set of tablemats/coasters.

Please contact Lynda Warne for further details.

**Do you know children, young people or an adult, who have recently been bereaved?** We have been given some beautiful books produced by Winston's Wish, which belonged to Rev Kate Wilson: Three books are especially for children or young people who have been bereaved. A Leaflet called "Living with Loss", gives helpful Bible verses, perhaps more suitable for adults. One copy of each is in St Mary's FB. Please borrow if they may be helpful (from the Book Rack).

Further copies of these books are available in St Giles Hermitage, Godshill. One can usually park just beyond St Giles on the left, going up the hill.

**Foodbank Donations.** Food banks are struggling to keep up with demand at the moment. If you are able to afford one extra item when you go shopping could you help to provide: tinned rice pudding, tinned custard, mashed potato, tinned meat pies, long life milk, long life fruit juice, squash, tinned veg (all sorts), coffee, pasta and curry sauces, jam, shampoo and deodorant. You can drop off at Fordingbridge Co-op, at Woodgreen Church and at Fordingbridge Church. Please continue to help if you can.

**ITEMS FOR PARTNERS** need to be sent to the Church Office (e-mail address below) by 5.00p.m. on **Wednesdays**. Please put 'Partners' in the e-mail subject line. Thank you, Zoe

## Reflection

With the death of Judas Iscariot the remaining eleven apostles decided to fill the position that was vacant. There were two candidates, Matthias and Joseph who was also known as Barsabbas. Both were known to the apostles having worked with John the Baptist and being part of the outer circle of disciples.

On the day of the assignment Simon Peter read two passages from The Psalms, one as follows "Let another take over his charge". They all then knelt down in prayer asking for guidance and finally drew lots. The lot came to Matthias who accepted the position. Some historians have criticized his appointment saying that they should have waited for Paul to join them, also that Matthias was not mentioned again in the Bible, But many were not mentioned but only the once, besides Paul was his own man, he created and coped with his own affairs, his travel, letters, and his opinions speak for themselves.

After receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the apostles dispersed , each travelling to different countries preaching the gospel and baptising. Matthias travelled to Judea, the Caspian sea and to Turkey where he lost his life. There is more than one account of his death, one says that he was crucified , another says that he was stoned and beheaded, but according to a Roman official he died in Jerusalem. It is claimed that his remains are buried at St Matthias Benedictine Abbey in a town named Tier in West Germany. However another story tells that St. Helena mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great transported his remains from Jerusalem to Rome. We shall never be certain of the Truth.

Michael Ireland

**CHURCH OFFICE IS OPEN TO VISITORS** between 10.00 am and 12.00  
Contact via Email : [Office@AvonValleyChurches.org.uk](mailto:Office@AvonValleyChurches.org.uk) or call 01425 653163 between 10.00 am and 12.00 or  
leave a message Website : [www.AvonValleyChurches.org.uk](http://www.AvonValleyChurches.org.uk)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Lent

4<sup>th</sup> February 2024

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

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<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8.15 am</b>	<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Breamore</b>	<b>Morning Prayer (BCP)</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>Allsorts</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Hale</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Hyde</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10.45 am</b>	<b>Sandleheath</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>	<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>6 O'Clock Service</b>
Monday Wednesday Friday	10.00 am	Online	Morning prayer ( <i>Meeting ID: 846 5168 7529, Password: 764200</i> )
Tues 6 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	Breamore	The funeral for the late Andrea Dymott
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>	10.00 am	Fordingbridge	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Heather Cottage	Bible Study
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8.15 am</b>	<b>Hyde</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Breamore</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>Sung Eucharist</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Hyde</b>	<b>All Age Service</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Woodgreen</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>
	<b>10.45 am</b>	<b>Sandleheath</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>
	<b>6.00 pm</b>	<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>Evensong</b>