

# **PARTNERS**

## **weekly newsletter**



**18<sup>th</sup> February 2024 - 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent**



In this painting entitled the fight between Carnival and Lent by Pieter Bruegel the Elder you can see the main characters in the foreground, the fat butcher on the barrel and the thin woman on the trolley, representing Carnival and Lent respectively.

In amongst the 200 or so figures, team butcher epitomises all that speaks of affluence and overindulgence, there is a suckling pig, a rotisserie, cakes, bones, playing cards, heavy drinking, excess, all centred on the left-hand side of the painting with the Inn centre stage. For Lent's team, centred around the church, the thin woman is surrounded by herrings, fasting breads, ash crosses on people's foreheads, women in black clothing. It's very much a painting of 2 halves, feast and famine, excess and meagre rations, Carnival and Lent. Both sides are not better than the other, but both are extremes of human experience.....

Fast forward to more modern times and the film *Chocolat*, often shown and discussed as a Lent course. Vianne, the new incomer to the town divides the church congregation and annoys the Priest with her offerings of chocolate in Lent. But she offers so much more...

A listening ear, a sympathetic shoulder, a laugh and the encouragement to live life to the full with amazing pastoral skills.

I hope your Lenten reflections are fulfilling.

Ruth Crosland

**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**

# Readings for this Week: 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024

## 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent

### COLLECT:

Heavenly Father,  
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,  
and grew closer to you in the desert:  
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer  
that we may witness to your saving love  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**AMEN.**

### PSALM 25:1-9

1. To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; O my God, in you I trust;  
Let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies triumph over me.
2. Let none who look to you be put to shame,  
But let the treacherous be shamed and frustrated.
3. Make me to know your ways, O Lord,  
And teach me your paths.
4. Lead me in your truth and teach me,  
For you are the God of my salvation; for you have I hoped all the day long.
5. Remember, Lord, your compassion and love,  
For they are from everlasting.
6. Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions,  
But think on me in your goodness, O Lord, according to your steadfast love.
7. Gracious and upright is the Lord;  
Therefore shall he teach sinners in the way.
8. He will guide the humble in doing right  
And teach his way to the lowly.
9. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth  
To those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

## A Reading from the Book of Peter

*1 Peter 3:18-22*

<sup>18</sup>For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, <sup>19</sup>in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup>who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. <sup>21</sup>And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

*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 *Mark*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

**(Glory be to thee, O Lord.)**

*Mark 1:9-15*

*Jesus is affirmed at his baptism by the words of God the Father, and the gift of the Spirit, and after a period of preparation goes public with his proclamation of the Kingdom of God.*

<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' <sup>12</sup> And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. <sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

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:**

Lord God,  
you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven;  
by it you nourish our faith,  
increase our hope,  
and strengthen our love:  
teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread,  
and enable us to live by every word  
that proceeds from out of your mouth;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**AMEN.**

**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!

**Sandleheath United Church** are holding weekly prayer meetings **every Monday during Lent**. They will start at **10.15 am until 11.30 am**. This will be a time to explore prayer and quiet reflection. You are welcome to join us. For further information please phone Sue Ledger on 01725 517389.

**Care Home Visits** – This year we are resuming our monthly visits to Fordingbridge Care Home and Allenbrook, (both on Station Road in Fordingbridge), on the third Monday of each month, to provide a short service for the residents and staff. Our February visit will be on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February – 11am** at Fordingbridge Care Home and 2.30pm at Allenbrook, when we will be thinking about Lent. The short service lasts less than 30 minutes, and generally comprises three hymns, a reading, a short reflection and prayers. If you would like to join us, especially to help with the singing of three hymns, please meet in the reception at Fordingbridge Care Home at 10.50am and/or at Allenbrook at 2.20pm. It will be a wonderful opportunity to join in worship with the residents and staff at both places. Mary Melbourne (LLM & Anna Chaplain)

**SP6 Friendship Group** – Our friendship group will be held on **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February** from 10.00am – 12.00pm 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.

**MU/ MICHAELMAS** - our next meeting is on **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February** in St Mary's Church Hall, Fordingbridge at 7.30pm. Helen Inglis will be telling us about Alabare Care in Salisbury so promises to be an interesting evening. Everyone is welcome and if you need a lift just contact Helen Tague on 01425 655462 or Viv Finch on 01725 512267. We look forward to seeing you!

**2024 Lent Course Programme** : This Lent our small groups in the Parish are all running series looking at Prayer. There will be five options, and everyone is welcome to join whether or not they are a regular part of a particular small group.

The days, times, locations and start dates are as follows :

- Tuesday evenings (19.30) (**20<sup>th</sup>**) : "How to hear God" – Seagry Lawn, Frogham, contact Heather Clark (656820) or Jan Butcher (653219)
- Wednesday mornings (10.00) (**21<sup>st</sup>**) : "Prayers of the Bible" – Heather Cottage, Rockford contact Sheilah Collis (470343)
- Wednesday mornings (10.30) (**28<sup>th</sup>**) : "How to hear God" – 15 Provost Street, Fordingbridge, contact Pat Bloomfield (837735)
- Wednesday evenings (19.30) (**21<sup>st</sup>**) : "How to hear God" – 19 Bartons Road, Fordingbridge, contact Alex Sains (07816225030) or Julian Sims
- Friday mornings (10.30) (**16<sup>th</sup>**) : "Prayers of the Bible" – 20 Forest Lake Avenue, Ringwood, contact Canon Michael Anderson (471490)

As we enter a new phase in our Parish with Rev Luke's arrival this month, Lent seems an opportunity to learn to listen to God and think about how we pray for the future our Parish, the church communities within it and our wider community. 'How to hear God' is based on a book and videos from Pete Greig (many of us have followed his courses in the past) and 'Prayers of the Bible' has been prepared by Canon Michael using a number of resources. I am sure both will encourage and challenge us all.

I hope you will be able to join one of the above and it would help the hosts if you could let them know if you will be coming to their group. Julian Sims (07887 637047)

The **February coffee morning** will be a Big Brew fundraiser for Transform Trade, a Fairtrade charity. Do join us on **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February** 10.30am-12 noon for cakes, a guessing game and a quiz, as well as our usual great coffee, raffle and good company. Then you could retire to the Village Hall for lunch - delicious home made soup and a roll, served every Friday 11.30-2.30 at CAMEO.

The church family of Hale and Woodgreen.

**For the attention of the whole parish - getting St Mary's Fordingbridge ready for Luke's service – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 6pm**

We need to re-arrange the church ready for the service which is on Wednesday. We need helpers to move chairs and other furniture etc. If you can help please join us for about 1 hour on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Thank you. Mark Ward

**Refreshments for the Induction Service on February 28<sup>th</sup>**. Contributions of tray baked cakes are needed. Forms will be available at all our churches for anyone

willing to help, to give details of what they can provide so that we can assess how much we can rely upon. Please deliver your contribution to Fordingbridge church on the morning of the service. Janet Newman will be there to receive them. The cakes will be cut up into pieces which can be easily packed into covered trays and brought out at the appropriate time to be served. It is important to provide a list of ingredients used that could cause any problems with allergies. We would also appreciate help on the day to man the service points, please let either Janet or me know or add your name to the cake list and indicate that you will help serve. Thanks for your help, Nigel Spratt

The **WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2024** will be on **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March**. The service this year has been prepared by a group of Christian women from Palestine and will be held at Fordingbridge United Reform Church starting at 2pm. Please join us - everyone welcome.

The **window** in the **North Chapel at St Mary's Fordingbridge** will have the large panels removed during **March 11th to March 13th** inclusive for the stained glass to be re-lead. This is necessary because when the window was made in the 1950s a composite material was used instead of lead and this window, along with many others in churches all over Britain are in danger of collapse because the composite material has deteriorated. Our window will be with Salisbury Cathedral Glass for approximately 10 weeks before it is replaced. The window will be made weatherproof during that time. Nigel Spratt

**Warden Vacancy**-I have completed five years as churchwarden and I will be stepping down from the post at the APCM in May. It has been challenging and interesting with much more happening than I expected when I took it on, only expecting to do the job for two years to fill in until someone else volunteered. I really wanted to help Ian to ensure that the hugely generous legacy that Roy Lillington left to our church was spent wisely on the building that I and several generations of my family have loved and attended. I hope I have managed to contribute towards achieving that. It has been a privilege but it is time for me to pass on the responsibility, and have time to enjoy my retirement. I will continue to work to help and support Mark until a replacement is found and I am considering whether to offer to continue as PCC Secretary which I have been doing on a temporary basis. Nigel Spratt

**Fundraising for St Mary's Fordingbridge – pledge-** In the autumn we spoke to those who attend St Mary's Fordingbridge of our real need to raise funds to increase our income. One suggestion was for you to invite a group of friends to a small event at home which could be a coffee morning, lunch, afternoon tea, etc and ask for a small donation for church funds. To help us to gauge support for this we shall be very grateful if you will complete the pledge form and drop it into the box in church. Of course if you wish to do something else that's absolutely fine but we do need your help! Queries and questions to: Mark Ward - mark@fordingbridge.com or 01425 656120

**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.

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

Thank you, Zoe

## Reflection

During Lent our Home Groups will be running a couple of different series on Prayer. Luke (18:1-14) records that Jesus told a story about a widow who keeps badgering a judge for a result until he gave in! Is Jesus suggesting that our relationship to God is something like that? Where God gives in under a battering of prayer? That doesn't seem quite right, does it?

To persist in prayer and not give up doesn't mean endless repetition or painfully long prayer sessions. Constant prayer means keeping our requests continually before God, believing he will answer. When we live by faith, we are not to give up. If we know He loves us, we can believe he will hear us.

Jesus' story is there to tell us not to get discouraged when prayers don't seem to get answered immediately. God sees the bigger picture and knows what is right in the long term. We need to remember that God is our heavenly Father.

The important point is that we should not lose faith, and not get out of the habit of talking to God, which is what prayer is all about. It must also be remembered that prayer is a two way conversation. We need to bring our hopes and prayers to him and give Him time to speak to us. If we start getting discouraged and get out of the routine of prayer then there is always the risk that we will start to backslide on our faith, which worried Jesus even then. Luke 18 verse 14 – "However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Are we in the habit of praying regularly, or do we just nag God without the faith to trust His judgment? You would be warmly welcomed to join any of our Home Groups as we explore the ways we pray.

Jan Butcher

**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)

# 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024

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

---

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8.15 am</b>	<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Breamore</b>	<b>Matins (BCP)</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Hale</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Hyde</b>	<b>All Age Service</b>
	<b>10.45 am</b>	<b>Sandleheath</b>	<b>Morning Service</b>
	Monday Wednesday Friday	10.00 am	Online
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm	Fordingbridge	The Funeral of the late Peter Hill
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>	10.00 am	Fordingbridge	Holy Communion
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup>	10.30 am	Woodgreen	Fairtrade Coffee morning
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8.15 am</b>	<b>Breamore</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>Sung Eucharist</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Hyde</b>	<b>Holy Communion followed by a baptism</b>
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Woodgreen</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>Evensong</b>

*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!***