

Wareham's Church of England Family

LENT in the Parish of Wareham

Dear Friends,

Do you know how many steps you've walked today ?

How many laps you've swum in the pool ?

What your heart rate is ?

If you're wearing a fitness tracker like a *Fitbit* you probably do.

Fitness trackers have been around for many years and lots of people use them. They come in all sorts of shapes and styles – bracelets, clips and watches - monitoring different aspects of health, now enhanced by AI (*Artificial Intelligence*).

So if you're running, you can potentially track distance run, number of strides, altitude climbed, heart rate and even glucose levels. If you want to know how long you have slept for and even how many times you turn over in bed, you can do this too! And all the data can be analysed via graphs and diagrams to potentially assist people in improving their fitness over the longer term.

It would be fascinating, to consider having a similar method, to monitor spiritual health and wellbeing. After all it's widely recognised within the field of medicine that spiritual wellbeing is a significant contributor to overall health – one of the reasons Chaplains are still employed in the NHS.

What behaviour would one measure to give an indicator of spiritual fitness? Perhaps:

- Number of kind acts carried out, each day?
- Number of minutes spent in silent meditation, or prayer?
- Hours spent reading the Bible and reflecting?
- Number of times we express thankfulness?
- Times we make people feel loved and encouraged?

Whether we're considering physical, or spiritual indicators of health, measurements and statistics are one thing, but understanding the motivation for our behaviour and the emotional whys and wherefores of our actions are another. Gaining understanding is a life-long project !

Life-long wellbeing, healing and wholeness is what Jesus Christ claimed to offer ...



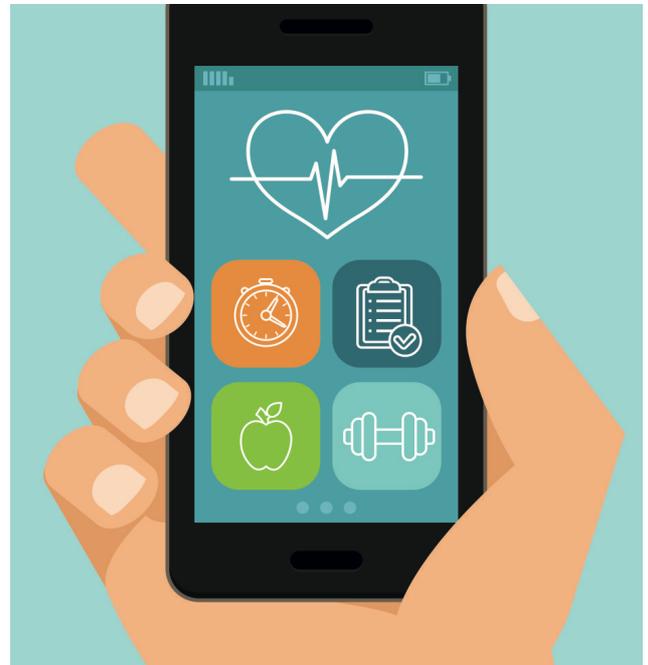
I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10

Sometimes it's very difficult to experience fullness of life amidst the stresses of contemporary living, or if we are sick, have ill health, or family problems.

In the end there are no quick fixes to spiritual health and fullness of life, just as there are no quick ways to fitness – it takes time and commitment.

The six week season of Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday (February 18th) is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our spiritual health; the habits that wound us, or others and the life of the world, in contrast to the life-enhancing 'holy habits' that can bring us joy, peace and fulfilment and a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ as we seek to follow him. Lent is a gift; to turn to God afresh in penitence and humility and to take up new habits, or ditch old ones, so that when we come to Easter, we can celebrate with a sense of renewed life and hope, the resurrection of Jesus our friend and Saviour.



Highlighted within this Newsletter are many opportunities this Lent and Easter, within the life of the Church and our local communities, to enhance our spiritual life and health together. Let's make the most of this precious spring season.

May you have a holy Lent and a joyful Easter.

Deb Neil

The Revd's Deborah Swann & Neil Kelly
Team Rectors of Wareham

Lead us away from temptation, Lord,
and instead draw us closer to you,
the worlds true light.
Shine in our darkness,
guiding our way and illuminating our life,
so that we may find true and
lasting fulfilment.

Amen

In this season of Lent, Lord,
teach us to think not just about what
we shouldn't do
but also about what we should;
about what we can do
as much as about what we can't.

Amen



“Alpha is a way to explore what we hunger after - meaning and intimacy and relationship... In a very non-pressed, non-judgemental environment.”

- Bear Grylls
host of “Man vs Wild”.

Alpha



Wareham's Church of England Family will be hosting an Alpha Course later this year, commencing in May.

Q What is Alpha?

Alpha is a series of group conversations that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. No pressure. No strings. Just space for good food, interesting talks, and open conversations.

That's it.

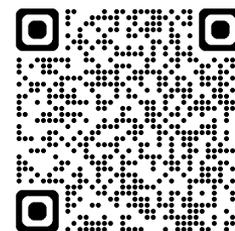
The course usually runs over 8 / 11 weeks – each week a different big question around the Christian faith is discussed and explored together. It's free and everyone's welcome.

No matter your background or beliefs, **you're invited**. Come along and see what you think.

Scan the QR code for more information about the Alpha Course

More details of dates, timings and locations will be provided soon.

If you're interested in joining in ... please contact the Parish Office.



If emailing please add 'Alpha' in the title line.

parish.office@warehamchurches.org.uk or telephone the Parish Office 01929 550905

We look forward to seeing you.

My two little ones love coming here!

Wareham Baby and Toddler group is part of the Wareham Family of Churches outreach. Well-stocked with toys, and well run, it's a place where parents, grandparents and guardians can meet and their little ones can play.

All are welcome, of any faith or none, and are met with kindness and warmth.



It's held in the parish hall and normally meets 10am-11.30am on a Thursday morning during term time. A charge of £2 per family covers tea or coffee for adults, and fruit & snack for children.

HELPERS NEEDED! The toddler group is currently seeking volunteers to help set up and clear away. If you can help, please message Heather or Fran on the Toddler group face book page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/483040361791933/>



Come along & Join a Home Group!

Did you know there are a number of small groups meeting regularly in and around Wareham and Sandford?

These groups draw together different people from all our churches and are normally hosted in a person's home. The groups meet on different days and times of the week and are a great way to meet new people and make friends. There are opportunities to study the bible, and to think about applying it in daily life, to pray and grow in faith.

During Lent, many home groups have a special programme, and this Lent is a great opportunity to try one out! Home groups are a vital part of a vibrant and dynamic church community and we encourage you to come as you are ...

If you would like to try one or find out more, contact Shelma, the Parish Administrator:
Email: parish.office@warehamchurches.org.uk or phone her on 01929 550905

Books & Study Resources for Lent

To Hell's Mouth and Back

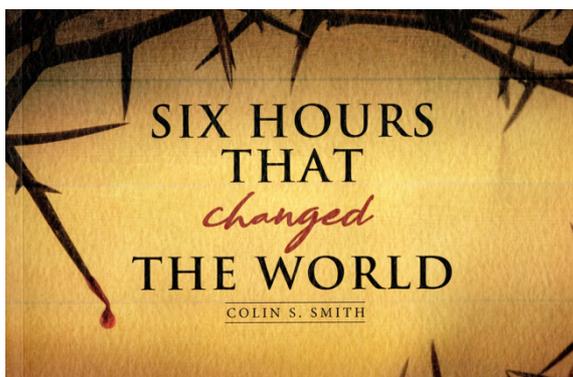
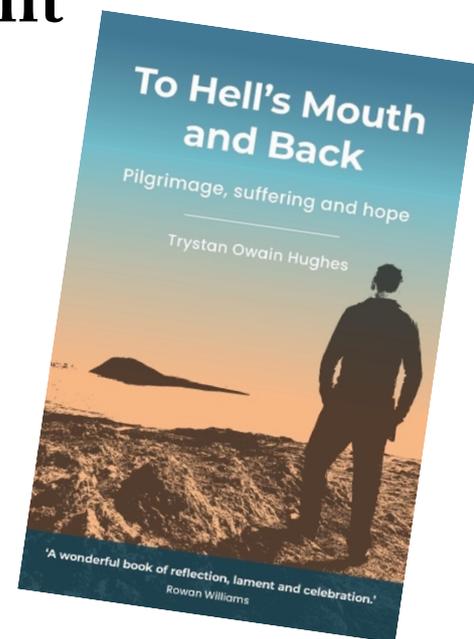
Pilgrimage, suffering and hope

£9.99

Trystan Owain Hughes

After a gruelling 140-mile pilgrimage walking across the rugged terrain of North Wales, Trystan Owain Hughes finds himself facing another, very different pilgrimage as he recovers from a serious injury sustained on the walk.

In *To Hell's Mouth and Back* he explores his experience of suffering, considering how God can redeem and transform pain and disability, and examines how common experiences of pilgrimage are echoed in the challenges of our life journeys. Along the way, the reader is led to consider the journeys we all face, as we search for God's presence and hope in our joys and pains.



Six Hours That Changed the World

Colin Smith discount price £3

Experience the first Easter with this high-quality short devotional. Walking us through the seven 'words' of Jesus from the Cross, Pastor Colin Smith explains the gospel in a simple and compelling way, and with prayers at the end of each section and space to write your own reflections.

Available on Church bookstall or from Jeannette Guinness.



From Wilderness to Resurrection Hope *A Holy Land Journey Through the Heart of Lent*

Sign up for FREE Lent Reflections emails and receive a new video reflection weekly throughout Lent. Available via: embraceme.org

Join EMBRACE to journey around the Holy Land, treading in the footprints of Jesus Christ, seeking to copy his words and acts of hope in our own lives. Each reflection includes a video, focussing on a significant biblical location, Bible readings from the Old and New Testaments, prayers and prompts, helping us move from reflection to action.

Lent Study Guide 2026: Acts of Hope £6.99

'This Lent, journey with us through the Book of Acts and reflect on the attitudes and acts of the disciples that can encourage us to be bringers of hope through Holy Spirit-led attitudes and actions in our own age. Perfect for personal study, home groups, or church congregations.'

Guide includes, Weekly Bible readings, Scriptural Reflections, Stories from Middle East partners, Questions and discussion topics, Prayers and action point - Leader Edition also available.



'PARABLES FROM PALESTINE' OPEN MEETING + TALK BY THE VERY REV'D NICK PAPADOPULOS

TUES 10TH MARCH, 7.30PM

Nick recently spent his sabbatical in occupied East Jerusalem with the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine & Israel; monitoring human rights, visiting holy sites, worshipping in different churches & speaking with various people & organisations

**COME & HEAR FIRST HAND
EXPERIENCES & PERSPECTIVES
FROM THE HOLY LAND**

**AT SANDFORD SCHOOL
WAREHAM, BH20 7BN
FREE EVENT - NO BOOKING REQUIRED - ALL WELCOME**

**PURBECK
DEANERY
SYNOD**



Connection

A while ago I watched an amazing documentary film called "My Octopus Teacher." It is the story of a man and an octopus and their relationship. It is a true story. It may seem a little improbable that a human being and an octopus can have a relationship, and I think that initially the man in the video was rather surprised too. It began with his enjoyment as a child in swimming in a particular place where he was living, and the realisation later in life (after many years of being a wildlife camera man) that he was missing something that had brought him joy. He began to swim in the kelp forests off South Africa, and became fascinated with an octopus. He watched her, took pictures and videos of her, and then one day it happened. He held out his hand towards her and she began to explore his fingers with her tentacles.

Connection is made and the relationship grows.

During Lent, we often think about our relationship with God, and we sometimes do things to help us connect in a deeper way.

I have different ways in which I connect with God at different times. My preferred go to place in prayer is silence; contemplative or centring prayer.

But I also connect with God through being out in nature, through other people, through what I'm reading, through making things... The list could go on.



In the octopus film, the man's relationship with the octopus grows because his awareness grows. There is a point at which the octopus moves den. The man wants to find her, but finding an octopus that is hiding is a very difficult thing to do; they can change colour and shape and even texture to blend in with their background and so he learns how to track an octopus. He learns the sort of marks and signs that an octopus leaves behind them, and he does find her again.

I think connecting with God also has something to do with our awareness. There are times and places, maybe when we join with others in Worship, or when we have a quiet time that is specifically set aside for prayer and Bible reading, that we expect, hope to connect with God. But if we develop our awareness that God is in all times and all places then maybe we will see signs of his presence in less expected moments. I wonder what the "octopus" might be for you?

Hilary

Revd Hilary Bond
Pioneer Priest & Schools Worker





Outdoor Spirituality Events for Lent

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Friday | 27th February | 2-4.30pm | Quiet afternoon | East Holme Priory |
| Wednesday | 4 th March | 2pm | Reflective walk | Starting from Lady St Mary's |
| Sunday | 15th March | 4pm | Firepit Gathering | East Holme Priory |

The Fire Pit Gathering is space that is spiritual but not religious, where everybody is welcome, and whatever you bring will be valued.

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|----------|------------|-----|---|
| Thursday | 19th March | 2pm | Reflective walk with the Coat of Hopes (more info to follow) |
|----------|------------|-----|---|

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|--------|------------|----------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Friday | 27th March | 2-4.30pm | Quiet Afternoon | East Holme Priory |
|--------|------------|----------|-----------------|-------------------|

Quiet afternoons are creation focussed, have a little input but not too much, freedom to wander outside if you wish, and always tea and cake.

For further details contact Revd Hilary Bond, Pioneer Priest Tel: 01929 551219

Good Friday Walk of Witness

Come & Join the Journey 3rd April



8.50am Join us to walk from Sandford St Martin's Church, or
10am Gather at St Martin on the Walls, Wareham to walk to the Quay
with readings, prayer and praise

Followed by Hot Cross Buns in the Parish Hall

HOLY WEEK 29th March – 3rd April

Palm Sunday 29th March

| | | |
|---------|--|------------------------------|
| 8 am | Holy Communion | Lady St Mary Church, Wareham |
| 10 am | Holy Communion with Blessing of the Palms | Lady St Mary Church, Wareham |
| 9 am | Breakfast Church | Sandford St Martin's Church |
| 10.30am | Morning Worship | Sandford St Martin's Church |

Monday 30th March

| | | |
|------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 9 am | Holy Communion | Lady St Mary Church |
| 7 pm | Sharing the Easter Story | Lady St Mary Church |

Tuesday 31st March

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 9 am | Holy Communion | Lady St Mary Church |
| 7 pm | Stations of the Cross | Lady St Mary Church |

Wednesday 1st April

| | | |
|-------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 11 am | Holy Communion | St Martins on the Wall |
| 7 pm | Compline (Night Prayer) | Lady St Mary Church, |

MAUNDY THURSDAY 2nd April Lady St Mary Church

| | | |
|------|--|--|
| 7 pm | Holy Communion with stripping of the altar and foot washing followed by a time of vigil & prayer | |
|------|--|--|

GOOD FRIDAY 3rd April

| | | |
|---------|--------------------------|---|
| 8.50 am | Walk of Witness | starting from Sandford St Martin's Church |
| 10 am | Walk of Witness | gathering at St Martin on the Walls |
| 2 pm | Reflections on the Cross | Lady St Mary Church |



EASTER DAY 5th April

6 am Easter Dawn Service
Wareham Quay



10 am All Age Easter Communion
Café style at Sandford St Martin's Church



8 am Holy Communion

10 am Easter Day Sung Communion
Celebration Service for All Ages

The Priory Church of Lady St Mary, Wareham



10 am Easter Day Communion
Church of St John the Evangelist, East Holme



10.30 am Easter Day Communion
Church of St Nicholas, Arne

Christ is Risen ... He is risen indeed

Alleluia !



The Joy of Church Flowers

For many people, Church flowers are not just a decorative flourish, but an expression of joy in Gods bountiful creation; and a way of bringing the beauty of that creation into our churches.

In Lady St. Mary, we are lucky to have a team of highly talented people who create arrangements that delight and inspire congregation and visitors alike. The team are now eager for new people to join them – no experience needed, just an interest in flowers and an enthusiasm to learn!

To find out more about this wonderful ministry, I spoke to Pat Cherrett, who has been arranging flowers at Lady St Mary's Church for over 40 years.

How did you get into flower arranging?

"A flower arranging evening was advertised in our local 'young wives club'. I was interested, but couldn't afford the flowers, so that was that. But Clive (my husband) picked a few wild flowers and grasses and I was able to go. (This was 50 years ago – you wouldn't pick wild flowers now!) I had no artistic skill in the traditional sense – but with flowers, I seemed to have a knack. I took LEA evening classes, and never looked back."

Pat went on to discover she had a real gift. In 2017 she led a team that entered a display into the Chelsea Flower show. Their entry was 'A Walk Through Time'. It was a vast arrangement, 20 ft square and 14 foot high, depicting - in flowers - the Jurassic coast; meadows and farm land; fishing villages; and oil rigs.

It took months of painstaking preparation, and hard work, so they were utterly thrilled to be awarded Gold!



"When we went in (to the Chelsea flower garden) and saw that Gold Card; well, you'd have heard our screams back in Wareham!"

What is special about arranging flowers for Church?

'It's enjoying God's creation. And it cheers people up. For the big celebrations, Easter and Christmas, you're all there together, working to make something beautiful.'

It doesn't have to be perfect, and an arrangement can be whatever you feel is right – flower arranging is open to individual interpretation.

Over the years, many wonderful people have been part of the team arranging the flowers for Lady St. Marys. A big thankyou to all of them. Unfortunately, some have had to retire so we would be really grateful if anyone, male or female would like to join our team. Pat will be very happy to discuss what is needed and how much you are happy to undertake. No experience needed.



If you are interested in finding out more, please contact **Pat Cherrett** or give your name to any of the clergy, church wardens who will pass it on or contact the Parish Office.

The Welcome Table & Cook Club

*'For I was **hungry** and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.'*

Every Thursday the Welcome Table serves a delicious 2 course meal, free of charge, to those who may be struggling with cost of living pressures. Families come and eat together and many use the weekly get-together to share a meal with wider family. Guests who are reliant on our Wareham Food Bank value the cooked meal and warm welcome. Over the months we have been going, a warm, friendly community has built up, openly welcoming all who come in.

Meals are free, though donations are gratefully received!



A couple of comments from our guests ... *Absolutely fantastic food and such a friendly environment, would highly recommend to anyone!*

From a child ... *your food is lovely and I love how you are doing this fabulous community for people that want to come.*

We are currently fundraising to provide Welcome Table Meals over the long term. If you can support us, please visit our Just Giving Page.



Welcome Table Cook Club

We've just started our first Cook Club! A small group of us come together to cook a meal we can take home. We learn useful hints and tips, and recipes that are quick, easy and very budget friendly!

Cook Club is on Tuesdays at 5pm.

A fee of £2.50 covers all ingredients, which are provided.

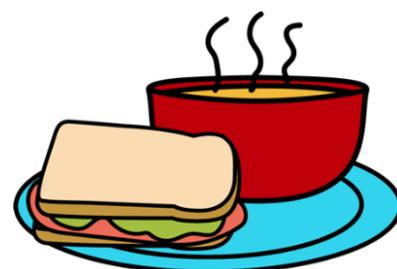
For more details call Anne on 07921 648148

LENT LUNCHES at Not Just Sundaes

During Lent, why not share the simple lunches being offered, free of charge, at Not Just Sundaes, by EMA?

EMA is an established organisation providing education and support to students with additional needs; and the lunches will help the students develop life skills, as well as provide a community service.

Come along and support them! Lunches weekly from March 5th



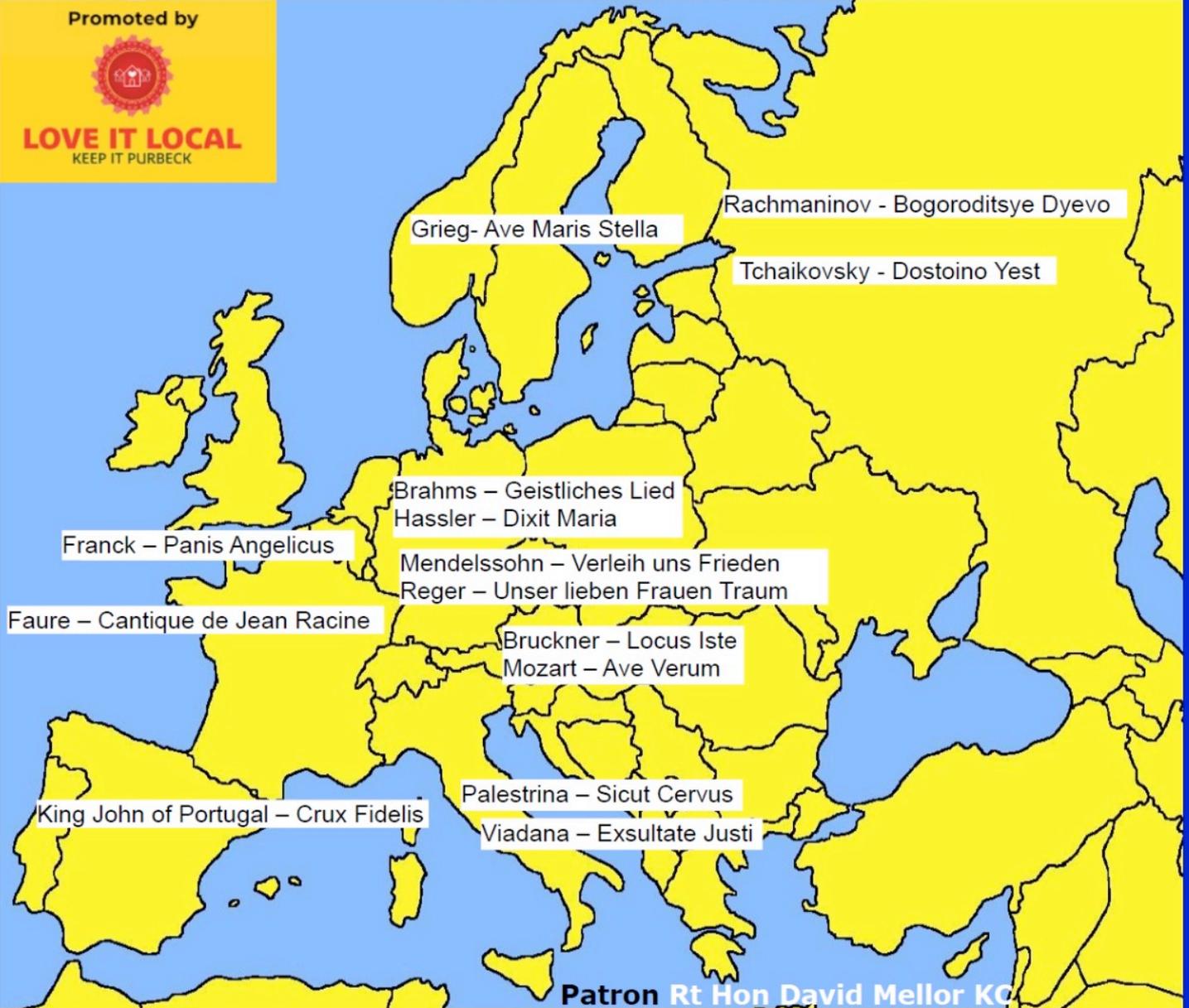


Wareham Choral Society
A Tour of European Sacred Music
Saturday 25th April 7pm
Lady St Mary Church,
Wareham BH20 4ND

Promoted by



LOVE IT LOCAL
KEEP IT PURBECK



Join us on a musical journey across Europe to celebrate
Sacred Music from the 16th to the 20th century!

Conductor

Hazel Ricketts

Organist

Paul Ellis

Mezzo-Soprano

Grace Lovelass

For their financial support for this concert, thanks to:
Wareham Town Council and The King's Arms, Stoborough
<https://thekingsarms-stoborough.co.uk/>



Tickets: £12.50 in advance or £15 on the door
Accompanied under-18s FREE
online <https://www.warehamchoral.uk> email warehamchoral@gmail.com
phone 01202 632678 Joys in Wareham



Dorset Rural
Music School

The Dorset Rural Music School is an independent music school based in Blandford Forum.

It is the last surviving independent music school in England and is run as a charity, offering music lessons, groups and experiences for people of all abilities, aged 5 to 95, with music courses ranging from folk, to choral.

To find out more go to their website at:
<https://dorsetruralmusicschool.co.uk>

A Candle in the Dark

Film Show

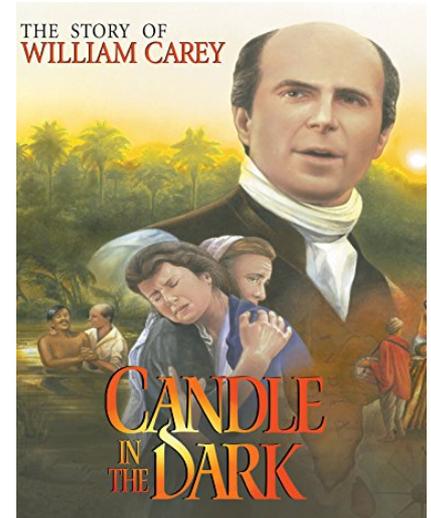
Friday, 27th Feb, 6.30pm & Sat 28th Feb, 2.30pm

Parish Hall, Wareham,
BH20 4LP

A film telling the story of William Carey, a cobbler who, in 1793, set sail for India, taking the Gospel to Bengal and leaving a legacy still felt today.

Tickets £5,
refreshments available,
all funds raised going
towards church funds.

Tickets available from A.F.Joy Men's Outfitters
or the Parish Office.



“GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN”

Rheinberger, Court Composer of
Munich, Mass in E flat written in 1878,
plus Tallis, Howells, Ireland and others

THE ORLANDO SINGERS

Conductor SAM HANSON

7.00pm SATURDAY 7th

MARCH

LADY ST. MARY CHURCH

WAREHAM

Tickets £15 /£5 Under 18s & students

www.ticketsource.co.uk/orlandosingersdorset

www.facebook.com/orlandosingersdorset

Reg. Charity no.1085312



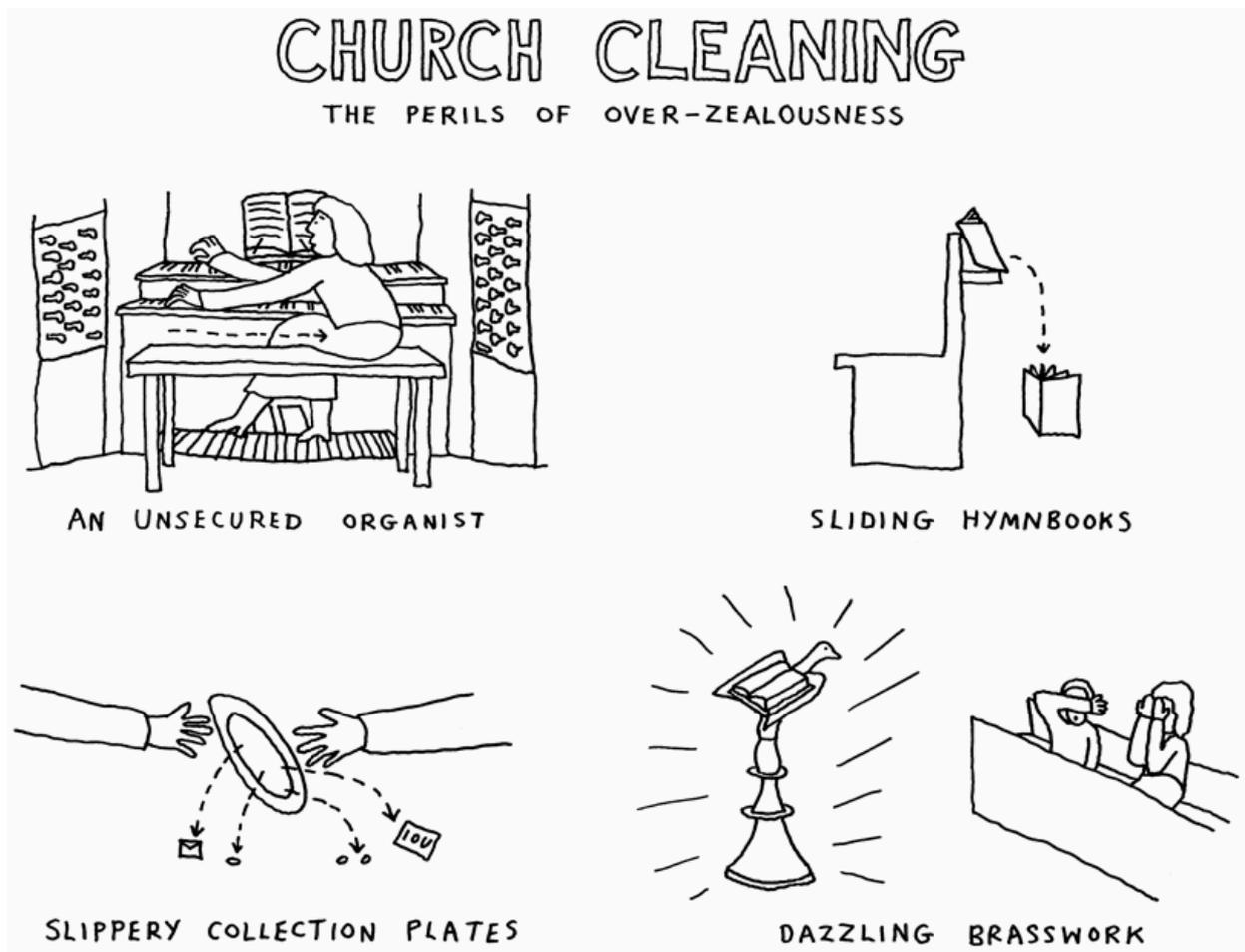
Big Church Clean

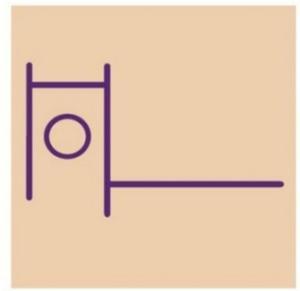
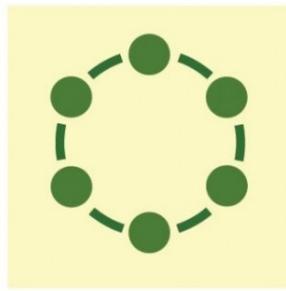
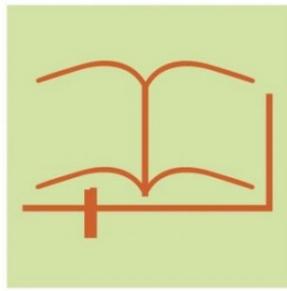
Join us as we come together to Spring Clean
Lady St Mary's Church
inside & out

Wednesday 4th March 11am

If you are able to help, come along for an enjoyable time
Followed by refreshments

All Are Welcome





PARISH GIVING SCHEME

MONEY ... MONEY ... MONEY ...

Did you know....

that there is an easy way for you to give regularly to the work of the Gospel in our parish?

No more looking for collection cash or filling in a pink envelope. Instead – use The Parish Giving Scheme!

This is a scheme run centrally by the diocese. It allows you to give whatever you wish to our Church, automatically via direct debit. Many of us pay our bills this way, and like our bills, once it's set up we can forget about it.

From the church's point of view, it vastly reduces the time and administration our volunteer finance officers need to spend counting cash or filling in paper accounts.

The Parish Giving Direct Debit Scheme lets you decide how much you want to give, and even collects the gift aid, if you want to do that. You remain in control; the scheme will not make any changes without your agreement. If you wish to, you can even allow your donation to keep pace with inflation.

It's simple to start. You can set up the direct debit via:

- A paper 'Gift Form' – available from the Parish Office, churchwardens or the treasurer, Mark Lapper
- Our telephone service on 0333 002 1271, Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm
- Website: <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/givers/howpgsworks>
Our parish number is 340634290

If you would like any help, please speak to a churchwarden, to Mark Lapper, or visit the parish office, open Mon, Wed, Fri from 10am until noon.

Donations

Alternatively, please consider making a Donation to support the work and maintenance of the church in the Parish of Wareham. Contactless donations can be made by selecting your donation amount and tapping the digital giving machine in church.

Alternatively, you can simply scan the QR code.



Thank you for your generous support of this Parish





Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals

The Parish of Wareham offers a variety of services to mark the birth of a child, to celebrate a marriage, to mark the beginning of a journey of faith and to commemorate a life that has ended. To find out more or if you would like to speak to one of the clergy team to arrange a service, please contact us (see below).

Holy Baptism people of all ages are welcomed into the Church through baptism (sometimes referred to as Christening). If you would like to discuss being baptised or having your child baptised in the Parish of Wareham, please contact the Revd Shelma Vaughan (contact details below).

Confirmation is a continuing of what has begun at baptism, affirming our faith and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. If you wish to be confirmed please speak to one of the Parish Clergy.

Weddings & Wedding Blessings the first step to getting married or having a wedding blessing in the Parish of Wareham is to contact one of the Team Rectors (contact details below).

Funerals the clergy are always available to take a funeral, either in church or at the crematorium and to support people during times of need. Contact can be made directly with the Parish Clergy or via the Funeral Directors.

Contact

Team Rectors

neilkelly3@icloud.com

The Revd's Neil Kelly & Deborah Swann

debjswann@gmail.com

01929 208602

Pioneer Priest & Schools Worker

Revd Hilary Bond

hilary.bond@me.com

01929 551219

Associate Priest

Revd Michael Young

myng110@gmail.com

01929 552582

Assistant Curate

Revd Shelma Vaughan

rev.shelma@gmail.com

07356 221296

Parish Office: Church Green, Wareham. BH20 4ND

Open: 10am-12 noon Mon, Wed & Friday

T: 01929 550905

E: parish.office@warehamchurches.org.uk

www.warehamchurches.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 1132868

