

The parish magazine of  
**Hertford St Andrew**

[www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk](http://www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk)

JUNE 2024



PHOTO BY LAURA LIGHTFOOT

IN THIS EDITION:

*ST ANDREW'S GAINS AWARD*

*NEW CHURCHWARDENS ELECTED*

*A YEAR IN REVIEW AND A LOOK  
AHEAD: REV ALAN'S REPORT*

*PARISH AWAY DAY REVIEWED*

*A TALE OF TWO EASTERS*

*ALL THE SERVICES AND EVENTS  
COMING UP AND MUCH MORE*

*AND  
ALL ABOUT THE AURORAE*

Here with you Here for you

# HERTFORD ST ANDREW

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**Lesley Self**

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**Deanery Synod Member:** Shirley Taylor

**Parochial Church Council** comprises the Clergy, Readers, Churchwardens, Deanery Synod Members and Treasurer plus the following elected and co-opted members: Maria Henriksson-Bell, Chris Seward, Jenny Mutch, Louise Cobb, Laura Ramsay, Catherine Sleath, Adrian Walter, Chrissy Barclay, Anthony Collinson, Julie Frazer and Malcolm Fry.

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Richard Taylor (Chairman), Malcolm Fry, Carol Muhr, Philippa Probert, Laura Ramsay, Judy Sharman, David Spring and Rod Willis.

Whilst every reasonable care has been taken in presenting the information in this magazine, no responsibility can be taken for any inaccuracies. The opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Priests, Churchwardens or editor.

# DOING NOTHING



In February Australia passed a "right to disconnect" law that prohibits employers from contacting workers after hours, with penalties including possible jail time for bosses who do not cooperate. The law

comes into effect later this year.

Certain jobs of course are exempt, but under the law, employees will be able to make complaints with their employer about after-hours phone calls or the expectation that they answer emails outside of their working hours.

I applaud this! Everyone deserves a right to disconnect; to switch off from the pressures and demands of work and life.

We're entering what is for some a holiday period, an opportunity to escape to the sun or to whatever climate, culture or adventure floats your boat. You might know that the word 'holiday' derives from the old English word Haligdaeg which means 'holy day'. One translation of 'holy' is 'set apart'. So, these are days set apart to step off the treadmill of life and make time for relaxation and self-care.

Sometimes doing 'nothing' is the best thing we can do. The perfectionist and workaholic within us of course does its darndest to make us feel guilty when we stop. Doing 'nothing' however is always doing something. It's a resting, a refreshing, it's a refueling. In many religious traditions there's an invitation to retreat. These are times set aside to retreat from our usual rhythms to invest in reconnecting with God.

Holy-days are essential, whether we spend them on beaches, in back gardens or with a

religious community. So, take time this summer to switch off. Be kind to yourself. Have permission to do absolutely 'nothing', because we all have the 'right to disconnect'.

Alan

## WELCOME!

I am pleased to welcome everyone to St Andrew's, but in particular visitors and newcomers. Details of services are given in the following pages and the back of the magazine. If you wish to know more about anything mentioned, please get in touch with the contact person named in the article or speak with me or one of the churchwardens. For contact details, see the previous page.

The church is open during daylight hours, and there is a prayer space by the main door where there is an opportunity to post prayers on the prayer board and light a candle.

### **Confirmation Service at St Andrew's on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm**

We're delighted to be welcoming Bishop Stephen Venner to St Andrew's for a Service of Confirmation.

All are invited to this very special service and to support the candidates as the Bishop lays his hands upon their heads, speaks their names and prays for the strength of the Holy Spirit to fill their lives.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE JULY/AUGUST MAGAZINE IS **SUNDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE.**

Please send copy by e-mail to [hertfordsta@aol.co.uk](mailto:hertfordsta@aol.co.uk) or post to Richard Taylor at 22 Highfield Road, Hertford SG13 8BH (Tel. 01992 302995).

# SERVICES AND OTHER EVENTS

## Church Services

You will find a full list of church services on the final page of this magazine and on the church website, with some additional information about certain services on this and the following page.

## Junior Church

Children are welcome to attend Junior Church which runs during the 10.30am Parish Communion service on most Sundays except when there is an All-Age service, when the children stay in church for the whole service.

### ALL-AGE SERVICE

9<sup>th</sup> June at 10.30am

A shorter, child-friendly, interactive communion service with songs, prayers and surprises.

## St Andrew's services on Zoom

(Zoom codes are available from the church office: [standrew.hertford@btinternet.com](mailto:standrew.hertford@btinternet.com) or call 01992 504373)

Join us on Zoom for:

### Service of the Word

every Sunday at 10.30am with praise, prayer and teaching. There is a communion service once a month. Please check the services on the last page of this magazine and the website for dates.

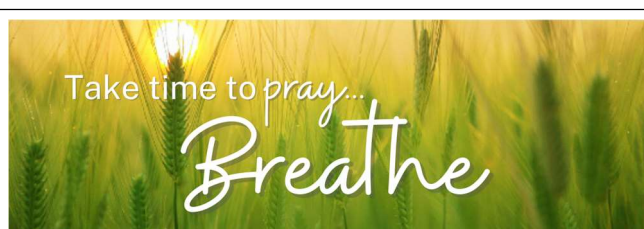
Fancy a chat after our Sunday worship on Zoom? **IT IS VERY EASY TO BE INCLUDED.** Just hang on after the service and instead of leaving you will be randomly put into a small group to speak with other people.

On Zoom on Sundays at 7pm except the second Sunday of the month.



Compline is based on the Felgild Compline from the Northumbria Community and Night Prayer from the New Zealand Prayer Book.

### IN PERSON & ON ZOOM



OUR MONTHLY PRAYER MEETING on  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June at 8.30am  
in church and on Zoom



at 7.30pm on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June  
**IS THE ONLY ONE THIS MONTH**  
Explore the riches of Christian Meditation  
and how it fits with the practice and  
insights of Mindfulness

Each weekly session is free and lasts for about 45 minutes. We begin with some gentle exercises to help still the mind and then a guided meditation, followed by some silence.

Beginners especially welcome!

**IN CHURCH AND ON ZOOM**

Know the Story; Share the Story; Live the Story



# SERVICES AND OTHER EVENTS

## CONTEMPORARY CAFÉ STYLE SERVICE

7pm

on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm

in the St Andrew's Centre

JOIN US AT 6.45 FOR REFRESHMENTS

# soul food

*a service with worship songs,  
creative prayer, gentle discussion and  
time for reflection.*

# FREE Mindfulness

AT SELE COMMUNITY HUB

10.30AM  
ON  
MONDAYS  
3<sup>RD</sup> & 17<sup>TH</sup>  
JUNE

Mindfulness can help with **wellbeing, stress** and **anxiety**. Come along and join the **FREE 30-min sessions**, followed by refreshments.

**Everyone is welcome**

*just turn up!*

**WHERE**  
Sele Community Hub  
Fleming Crescent, Sele Farm SG14 2DJ

# Prayer

CHANGES THINGS

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING

### PRAYING FOR

Our Youth, Our Schools  
Our Community - Hertford and Ware

### WHEN

12:30-1pm  
every Tuesday  
(Term time only)

### WHERE

Pioneer Hall,  
Ware Road,  
Hertford

For more information please contact Helen  
h.houghton@ylinternational.org

**YL younglife**



## PRAYER FOR THE EARTH

Every day in Salisbury Square  
at 12.00 noon

# ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

## YL younglife

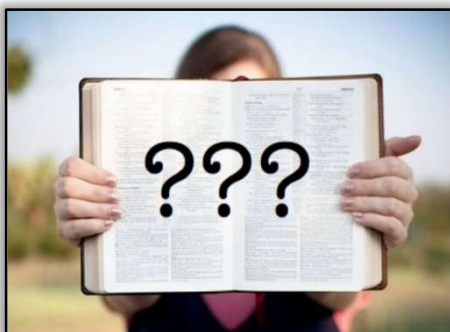
International

# WALK WITH US

**Walk. Pray. Give.**  
15 June 2024  
10am-12 Noon  
Departing from Hertford Methodist Church at 10.10am

Join us as we walk, pray, and raise funds for Hertford Young Life. You're invited to take part however you are able. Please email Bryan Fries at [bfries@ylinternational.org](mailto:bfries@ylinternational.org) or scan the QR Code for more info.

[peoplesfundraising.com/fundraising/hertford-young-life-walk-with-us](http://peoplesfundraising.com/fundraising/hertford-young-life-walk-with-us)



Thursdays at Rev. Bill's house at 8pm starting 6<sup>th</sup> June until 25<sup>th</sup> July.

**Do you have questions about what the Bible is all about? Are you asking: what has it to do with daily life? Or maybe it's just a long time since you thought about the bigger picture and the Bible as a whole. If so, the Summer Bible Course is for you.**

Eight interactive sessions combine video teaching, personal reflection and daily readings. Plus, there is always the chance to share thoughts and experiences, as everyone learns from one another. **If you are interested** talk to Melanie Seward or email the parish office at [standrew.hertford@btinternet.com](mailto:standrew.hertford@btinternet.com)

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# CHURCH FAMILY

## FROM THE REGISTERS

### BAPTISM:

We welcome into the Lord's family: 12<sup>th</sup> May

*Stanley Roni Pilgrim*

## ELIJAH'S DAY AT THE PALACE

Congratulations to Elijah Stewart on achieving DofE Gold Award which takes a great deal of hard work and commitment.



The award was presented to him by no less than the Duke of Edinburgh himself, Prince Edward, at Buckingham Palace on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May. Proud Mum Rachel, pictured above with Elijah, was there to witness the occasion. Sadly, with only one guest permitted, Rev Alan was unable to join them. Well done Elijah!

## Junior Church

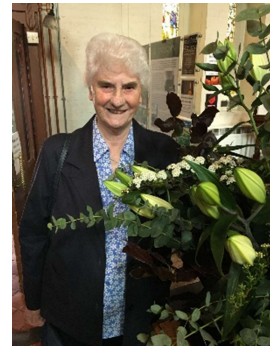
*Fun, friendship and following Jesus*

### Help needed!

We're looking for volunteers to join our wonderful team who help lead Junior Church during the 10.30am service. It's an incredible opportunity to inspire and learn from our young people. Commitment would be no more than once a month. Please talk to Claire Wachter or Rev Alan to find out more.

## CAROL'S FLORAL CARE

The superb flower displays which are there for all to enjoy on visiting St Andrew's are the work of a team of volunteers who, each week of the year, quietly buy, arrange and care for the flowers. All this is self-funded by the team with occasional monetary donations. For the last 20 years Carol Kemp has organised the team and made sure the displays are there for us to appreciate. For festival days there is added work. All told Carol has been involved with the flowers in St Andrew's for nearly 30 years. At the 10.30 service on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May Carol was presented with a gift by Rev Alan as a thank you for her dedicated service to St Andrew's as she hands over responsibility for leading the team to Rosemary Willis.

An advertisement for Euronics, a company specializing in top brand appliances. The ad features a grid of various household appliances like washing machines, refrigerators, and ovens. The central text reads: "EURONICS Let's Make Life Easy... WITH TOP BRAND APPLIANCES 01992 582134". At the bottom, it says "ALBANY RADIO 63-65 FORE STREET HERTFORD" and "FAMILY RUN BUSINESS SINCE 1932".

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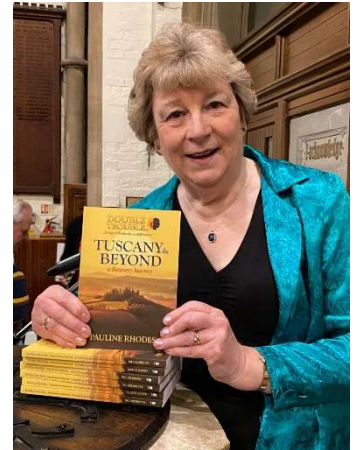
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# EVENTS

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June,  
10.30am - 12.30pm**

Members of the Parochial Church Council are running our Coffee Morning in June. All funds raised will go towards the audio-visual upgrade for the church. As well as great coffee, home-baked cakes and live music, there will be a variety of stallholders, one being



Pauline Rhodes who will be selling her silk cards and signing copies of her book to mark Mental Health Awareness Week. Sale proceeds of her book go to Mind in Mid Herts.

**PERFORMING AT ST ANDREW'S CHURCH  
SUNDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> JUNE AT 3.15PM**

## A10 STRINGS

leader: Nick Gazie -- conductor: David Boarder

Programme includes:

<i>Handel</i>	Arrival of the Queen of Sheba
<i>Bach</i>	Concerto for Oboe d' Amore & Strings soloist: Catherine Wild
<i>Burt Bacharach</i>	(They long to be) Close to you
<i>Justin Hurwitz</i>	City of Stars (from "La La Land")

No charge for admission but a retiring collection will be taken for St Andrew's Church.

**St Mary's Church, Heringfordbury**

*Summer  
Fun Day*

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July  
2-5pm**

**Cream Teas Welly Toss  
Build-a-Rocket Safari Trail  
and the famous  
Teddy Zip-Wire!**

**Fun for all the family**

**ST. ALBANS  
CATHEDRAL  
Music Trust**



## Midsummer Music

**Saturday 29 June 2024  
at Stanstead Bury Farm**

3.30pm – 4.30pm | Organ recital by Richard Pinel and performances by the Abbey Singers in St. James' Church, followed by refreshments.

4:45pm – 6pm | A visit to the old manor house of Stanstead Bury and its Walled Garden.

6.30pm – 8.15pm | A concert of jazz and more performed by students from The Purcell School in the listed 17th century rustic hay barn, with drinks and canapes.

Tickets on St Albans Cathedral website:

Organ recital £25, Jazz concert £35

House Tour: Free – limited tickets.

**\*SPECIAL OFFER\*** - £10 off when you buy both an Organ recital ticket and Jazz concert ticket.

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# EVENTS



**THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL  
INCLUDES TWO EVENTS  
AT ST ANDREW'S**

**TICKETS AND INFORMATION ON OTHER FESTIVAL EVENTS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE WEBSITE: [www.hertsmusicfest.org.uk/performances-and-events-2024](http://www.hertsmusicfest.org.uk/performances-and-events-2024)**

## **A COMPOSER'S LANDSCAPE: DAVID MATTHEWS ON FILM AND IN CONVERSATION Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 4pm - 5.30pm**

A special screening of a documentary about this much loved and revered composer and previously featured Festival composer, with the opportunity to meet him in person.

First screened at the Presteigne Festival in August 2023, as part of the celebration of the composer's 80th birthday, the 50-minute film explores Matthews' multifaceted relationship with landscape, which has been a significant musical stimulus for him. The film also delves into Matthews' fascination for the tango and the inspiration he has drawn from books and his own pencil and watercolour sketches.

A conversation between the composer and Festival Director, James Francis Brown follows with a Q&A session for the audience.

Tickets: Adults £10; Students £5; Under 8s FREE

Wheelchair user + accompanying carer £10

Booking fees apply.

## **TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S...A CHOIR! ST ANDREW'S CHOIR PERFORMING AT ST ANDREW'S CHURCH Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 5.45pm - 6.30pm**

This year, HFoM is proud to present the choir of Hertford St Andrew as well as three of its guiding lights, Jane and Colin Eldred and Harold Chaplin. They embrace the work of one of our most highly esteemed British composers, David Matthews, and reveal their joyful spirit with a programme that exudes a feeling of friendship and reflection.

To include works of: DAVID MATTHEWS, JOHN RUTTER, GIUSEPPE OTTAVIO PITON & OUR OWN HAROLD CHAPLIN With Interludes for viola and clarinet.



FREE event. Donations welcome. Please register for your free ticket via the box office – SEE ABOVE.

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email: [sehscds@hotmail.com](mailto:sehscds@hotmail.com)

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# CHURCH MATTERS

## Nick Hoyle: My Favourite Things

Nick Hoyle plays an important role in a number of aspects of the life of St Andrew's and is heavily involved in St Andrew's services which reach out to the local and wider community on Zoom every Sunday morning and on other occasions.



Having recently completed the Lay Leader of Worship (LLW) training, Rev Alan asked Nick to write something about himself for this magazine now that he will be leading Zoom worship more frequently. Very creatively, he has decided to describe himself by telling us about a few of his Favourite Things!

"In a funny way the song My Favourite Things has shaped my life. I was taken to see The Sound of Music three times when I was a child, and my mum loved it so much that we went to Austria in 1968 (my first foreign holiday). The trip sparked my fascination for foreign languages and I can now look back on a 40-year career as a German translator! So Julie Andrews has a lot to answer for.

**Favourite food:** Blackcurrants. My dad used to grow these tart but fragrant jewels and I'm now up to 4 bushes in my own back garden.

**Favourite drink:** A G&T of a Saturday evening. But only the best gin!

**Favourite sport:** I played hockey for nearly 40 years until age caught up with me, but as a teen I was a season-ticket holder at Bury FC (record FA Cup winners in 1903 but now ninth-tier).

**Favourite book:** A History of the World in 10½ Chapters. Especially the ½.

**Favourite painting:** The Hunt in the Forest by Paolo Uccello. It's held the power to draw me in ever since I first set eyes on it.

**Favourite film:** Hot Fuzz. It's often on telly late at night and if I stumble across it while channel-surfing I simply can't pull myself away from it.

**Favourite TV programme:** Detectorists. Good for the soul.

**Favourite comedian:** Rich Hall. A hilariously funny commentator on the human condition.

**Favourite place:** Sunset in the Arizona desert.

**Favourite season:** Autumn. I love its intoxicating colours.

**Favourite music:** Ah, now we need to differentiate.

Modern? Hotel California (The Eagles).

Folk? Dh'èirich Mi Moch (Julie Fowles).

Classical? The Tallis motet O Nata Lux.

**Favourite hymn:** Modern-style, it has to be Ten Thousand Reasons. Trad, probably Christ is Made our Sure Foundation.

**Favourite Bible passage:** Psalm 139 (without the violent bit at the end).

Some subjects for discussion and maybe some shared interests you may like to delve into when you next see Nick.

*Know the Story; Share the Story; Live the Story*



# EVENTS IN JULY

## Giacomo Susani

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July, 7.30pm  
at St Andrew's Church**

Giacomo is an outstanding classical guitarist whose reputation will soon be enhanced by a solo performance at New York's Carnegie Hall when he premieres his Fantasia for Guitar and Small Orchestra. Described by BBC Music Magazine as "a guitarist with myriad colours and bold sensitivity", he is the winner of several prestigious awards including the London International Guitar Competition, the 2022 Respighi Prize in Composition and, in both 2022 and 2023, the "Convegno Internazionale di Chitarra di Milano". His career development is now supported, among others, by D'Addario, The Julian Bream Trust and The City Music Foundation.

This is his second appearance at the church and he is looking forward to

Tickets are £19 + £1.45 booking fee (Under 18 tickets are free)

[www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-andrews-church](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-andrews-church)



returning to Hertford and to enjoying the acoustics of the building.

A licensed bar serving wine and soft drinks will open from 6.45pm and as well as at the interval.

All profits from the event will go towards the funding of a new [audio-visual system](#) for the church

## **Essex & Herts Air Ambulance set to host Heli-bration event a free fun-filled afternoon for the whole family at Hatfield House**

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024, 12-4pm**  
Essex & Herts Air Ambulance is thrilled to announce its Heli-bration event to celebrate the launch of the charity's new AW169 helicopter. Set against the stunning backdrop of Hatfield House, this one-of-a-kind event promises a fun-filled afternoon for the whole family. Entry is free. There is plenty of free parking available onsite.

The highlight of the event will be the presentation and 'take off' experience of the charity's new AW169 helicopter



which will be on display from 12 noon. Visitors can also look forward to a range of free activities and a display of emergency vehicles.

To register for free tickets for the event, please visit [ehaat.org/heli-bration](http://ehaat.org/heli-bration).

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# THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

Each year there is a meeting of parishioners who vote in churchwardens, followed by the annual parochial church meeting which receives a variety of reports and presentations about the operation and work of St Andrew's. This year's meeting was on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April.

## CHURCHWARDENS

With Rosemary Willis and Shirley Taylor standing down, we are grateful that Julie Markey and Lesley Self offered themselves for appointment, and were duly elected churchwardens by the meeting of parishioners. Rosemary and Shirley were thanked by Alan for all the work they have carried out so assiduously by Rosemary over the past two years and by Shirley over the past three years, attending to the wide range and seemingly never-ending demands and requirements concerning anything which falls outside the pastoral responsibilities of the vicar. They were ably supported by Chris Seward as Deputy Church Warden, who will continue in this role. Rosemary and Shirley each received a bouquet of flowers as a thank you.

Some of you will know Julie and Lesley, while others will not. We will hear from Lesley next month; here is a brief introduction from Julie.

## JULIE MARKEY

Born and brought up in Lincolnshire, I moved around the country for study and work, eventually settling in Hertford in 1991. Having tried a couple of churches I soon found St.



Andrew's and immediately felt "at home". I became a regular member of the congregation and gradually took on the roles of lesson reader, sidesperson and Chalice assistant. In 2002 my husband Jim and I had our marriage blessed in a beautiful service in the church surrounded by family and friends. Our daughter Fi used to sing in the choir and I have occasionally donned a robe to swell their ranks. More recently I sat on the Hertford & Ware Deanery Synod representing St Andrew's and this meant that I also joined the PCC.

My career was spent in the HR profession and I took early retirement from my job as Chief People Officer at Ocado in December 2019. As many of you know my lifetime hobby has been theatre and dance and I am currently the honorary President of Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society. I will hand over this pleasure to someone else at the end of June, freeing up time to fulfil the role of Churchwarden.

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The PCC is the board of trustees of the church and is responsible for its financial affairs and the care and maintenance of the church buildings and its contents. There is a list of current members of the PCC on the inside of the front page of this magazine. At the annual meeting, Laura Ramsay, Catherine Sleath, Lou Cobb and Jenny Mutch were standing down having completed their three year term of office but all put themselves forward and were duly re-elected to the PCC for another three years. We are grateful to all

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# THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

members of the PCC for the time and commitment they give to the church in this way.

## DEANERY SYNOD

Julie Markey stepped down as one of our Deanery Synod members. St Andrew's is entitled to three members on the Synod. Shirley Taylor will continue to represent St Andrew's.

## REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

All reports and accounts presented to the annual meeting are available on the church website.

## ALAN'S REPORT TO THE MEETING

### PERFECTLY IMPERFECT

*GIVING THANKS FOR ALL THAT CHRIST HAS ACHIEVED IN AND THROUGH US AND WHERE HE MAY BE CALLING US AS A CHURCH:*



As beautiful, and cared for and historic as the building we know as St Andrew's Church is, this building of course is not the Church. And

as familiar and comforting and inspiring perhaps as the liturgy, tradition and music might be, this also is not the Church. Take them away, and we still have the Church. Why? Because **we** are the Church; you and I members of a community of ordinary, beautiful and broken people with the purpose of living out our call to be Christ's presence where we are.

The American theologian John Howard Yoder unpacks something of that call:

*'The church seeks to help form people who can risk being peaceful in a violent world, risk being kind in a competitive world, risk being faithful in an age of cynicism, risk being gentle among those who admire the tough, risk love when it may not be returned, because we have the confidence that in Christ, we have been reborn into a new reality.'*

Peaceful, kind, faithful, gentle, loving. This is our calling. And we all know that however hard we try; at times we fall short. As the saying goes; *'If you find a perfect church, be sure not to join it'*. Because obviously if you do, it will no longer be a perfect church.

So here we are, perfectly imperfect. And we gather today to reflect on this past year together, to give thanks for all that Christ has achieved in us and through us, and to explore a little where He may be calling us next.

Fresh in the memory of many of us will be our recent joint Parish Away Day with our sister church of St Mary's. Our theme this year was 'Wholehearted' living, defined by Brene Brown as *'Engaging with our lives from a place of worthiness... cultivating the courage, compassion and connection to wake up in the morning and think, 'No matter what gets done and how much is left undone, I am enough.'*

It was so special to have so many of us, of so many different ages gather to worship, explore and connect. Our thanks in particular go to St Joseph's in the Park School who offered such wonderful hospitality, not to mention delicious food.

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# THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

If you haven't tried an Away Day, you really are missing something very special.

Our work within the three schools including St Joseph's, Hertingfordbury Cowper and our own Hertford St Andrew, continues with whole-school weekly collective worship (or assemblies) on Tuesdays and with Early Years on Wednesday mornings (one of the absolute highlights of my week). I'm indebted yet again to Tracy Plumpton who continues to work alongside me. I'm delighted to say that members of the congregation support our church school through the Walking Bus and through serving as governors, and that recently we've started a prayer meeting at the school for parents, staff and governors.

Last year we trialed Forest Church in the Forest School area at St Joe's. We weren't sure, however, if it was quite the right format and location, so we took the decision to suspend that for the time being as we pray about other expressions of outdoor church, the first of which was A Soulful Walk on Palm Sunday in Panshanger. So, watch this space.

We continue to be indebted to our wonderful team who so faithfully work with our children and young people supporting TMM, Junior Church and Toddlers. It was great fun to be with the TMMers last Sunday when I joined them for a session of games, grill-the-vicar, and a talk from the vicar about Confirmation. Already several of the young people have expressed an interest in joining the Exploring Confirmation sessions in May and we look forward to hosting a

Confirmation service here on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June with the former Bishop of the Falkland Islands no less! If you're interested in joining those sessions, whatever your age, you'd be more than welcome without any obligation whatsoever.

As you'll know, for the last year and a half, we've been advertising for a new Children and Families Worker with no success. It's now time to crank up the prayer for this and for the team who are so brilliantly holding the fort. We've set aside Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May as a Day of Prayer. We'll start at 8.30am with Breathe (online and in person in the chapel), then continue to pray privately throughout the day, and end with a time of committing to pray together wherever we might be at 6pm. For Junior Church in particular, we need to pray for new leaders, so please speak with me or with Claire Wachter if you think that's something God might be nudging you about.

You'll have noticed no doubt that our parish continues to grow, not least with the new housing development Blakemore Manor off Thieves Lane and Welwyn Road. This year Kath Oates and Stephane McCarthy have been welcoming the new residents with a card and a gift of some biscuits, and have been having some wonderful conversations. One of the things that came up a lot was how fortunate we are to have Panshanger Park on our doorstep, so we're beginning to explore how we might create opportunities for people there to connect with one another and with something greater in that particular Great Outdoors.

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# THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

It was wonderful to have our first New Year's Walk there ending with a welcome beverage at the Golden Griffin.

Our fortnightly Mindfulness sessions at the Hub on Sele seem to be going from strength to strength and are building a lovely and supportive community. Our Wednesday evening Mindfulness and Meditation continues to be popular. I love leading these sessions but it's a big time commitment, so starting in June, it will run fortnightly rather than weekly, with every other session being hybrid both in church and online. That said, I'm afraid I'm on holiday in June so there will just be one session on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>.

This year in the Brace Room at St Mary's, we held an eight-week Bible Course which was hugely valued by those who came. We'll be repeating this course starting Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June. Please speak with Kath Oates or Melanie Seward if you're interested. In October, there will be a follow-up course on the book of Romans.

Within the last year we've hosted lots of different events and services which have brought many new people through our doors including the monthly coffee mornings, HarvestFest, Beer and Carols, the all-new Mindful Christmas, the Railway Day and the ever-popular folk concerts. We're indebted to Chris Seward and his team for securing such high-profile folk and helping to bring in this valuable revenue stream which will help us future-proof the life of this church building. As you've already heard we look forward soon to improving the Audio Visuals within the church both to help with

this and to enhance our worship and outreach.

On the subject of technology, we continue to be very grateful to the Zoom team who enable folk from far and wide to connect with others and with God each Sunday.

My huge thanks go to all the groups and teams that sustain the ministry, hospitality and mission of this church including the Choir, our musicians, our Vergers and Servers, our gardeners, the Flower team, the Coffee teams, bell-ringers, the youth and children's teams, Toddlers, Pastoral visitors and all the committees; the Finance Committee who help us balance the books, the Eco Committee helping us with the Church of England goal of becoming carbon-neutral by 2030 and our Communications Team who are doing such a great job of promoting the work of the church and are currently working on a Welcome Pack for newcomers.

One new team created this year is the Prayer Ministry Team, and I'd encourage you to make use of that opportunity to pray with a trusted other, both within and after the 10.30am service.

This year it's been wonderful to add several new people to the Ministry Team, Adrian Walter and Nick Hoyle as Lay Leaders of Worship and Maria Henrikson-Bell taking on the added hat of Pioneer Leader and doing some wonderful connecting particularly with the Home Education community. Our particular thanks as always goes to Rev Bill Church who continues to exercise his wonderful ministry among us.

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# THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

In particular, I'd like to say one enormous thank you to Phil Probert our parish administrator, who's professionalism, kindness and creativity is an invaluable asset to our church. Thanks also go to Carol Muhr, who is not only our PCC secretary but also steps up to help when Phil is away.

Some of you will have heard that Hertford is holding its first ever Pride Family Fun Day on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May, celebrating diversity and inclusion. With the backing of our wardens and ministry team, we will offer our chapel that day as a safe place of prayer and reflection.

You will perhaps be aware that the Church of England has authorised new prayers of blessing for those in same-sex couples entitled Prayers of Love and Faith.

In the pastoral guidance the C of E writes, *'The Prayers of Love and Faith make provision for stable, faithful relationships between same-sex couples and for giving thanks for their faithfulness and their fruitfulness in service to God and neighbour. In that sense, they recognize the couple's commitments to one another. They ask for God's grace in the holy ordering of companionship and godly love as they follow Christ and seek to grow in holiness. They ask for God's blessing for them and their families as they offer self-giving love to one another, and in their witness and service to their neighbours'.*

The pastoral guidelines state that it's up to the individual priest as to whether they are happy in conscience to offer these prayers. It will perhaps come as no surprise to you that I am fully supportive.

It will be important however to consult with the PCC and with the wider congregation. If you have anything you'd like to contribute to that conversation, do please talk to me. *[Please see the update below.]*

I'd like to end by saying how grateful I am to be your priest, and how thankful I am for your support and your care. Thank you to each one of you for all that are and all that you bring to the life and worship of this perfectly imperfect church we call Hertford St Andrew's. *Alan*

## **Prayers of Love and Faith**

The Prayers of Love and Faith are a collection of prayers of blessing for same-sex couples who love one another and who wish to give thanks for and mark that love before God.

On 12<sup>th</sup> December last year, the House of Bishops commended the Prayers of Love and Faith for use in regular public worship services.

At our May PCC meeting, I'm delighted to say that the PCC voted unanimously to use these prayers. At present, this can only happen within an existing service, but a time may come when we can consider stand-alone services. As a matter of courtesy to the whole congregation, we will let folk know in advance if this will be happening within a service. Anyone wishing to explore this, please contact Rev Alan.

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# chapter79.

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# ECO-CHURCH

We all need a good news story so here's a newsflash, just in:

## St Andrew's gains award for Eco-Church work

As many of you know, St Andrew's has been working hard towards achieving Church of England status as a parish recognised for its eco-friendly mission and values. This is not optional – like all Church of England churches (and those of many other denominations) nationwide, we are obliged to 'safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew life on Earth' by meeting eco-church standards under a scheme monitored by a Church-linked charity called A-Rocha.

There are three levels of recognition under the A-Rocha scheme – bronze, silver and gold – and we have recently been presented with the first-level award: we have achieved the bronze standard, and a plaque of recognition is on its way!



Achieving bronze has been due mainly (as examples) to:

- Understanding more about how we use our energy resources;
- Holding events such as coffee mornings that reflect our eco-church mission;
- Articles in the parish magazine and website about our eco work;
- Workshops about environmental schemes such as the one at Parish Awayday;
- Better use of Fairtrade and local products;

- Our effort to recycle and the use of rain butts.

### ***So far so good, but there's more to do!***

Our Bronze Award has been achieved through a collaborative effort within our congregation and is well deserved. But we can't sit on our laurels or our recycling bins. There is a long way to go to meet the next level of award, and the one after that. The diocese is encouraging us to go for Gold.

With this in mind, the PCC held a special meeting on the 18th May to discuss the next steps and I'm pleased to say that the ideas were plentiful. Watch out for an increase in environmentally-friendly measures appearing across a range of our work, including:

- Rethinking our energy arrangements for the church, St Andrew's Centre and other parish property;
- Increasing our recycling capacity;
- More publicity of what we are doing, including an eco-church information area in the church, with short, medium and long-term plans with a place for you to share your ideas;
- Building environmental prayers and study into all worship.

The PCC recognised that these measures are not optional – they are obligatory under the guidelines of the Church of England and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Like Noah's family, we all have to get on board with the eco movement and do what we can to protect the environment.

I think you'll agree, God's world and life on this planet is worth saving!

**Jenny Mutch**, Chair of the PCC Eco-Church Group. *If you are interested in getting involved, please get in touch with Jenny (forbes.r.mutch@gmail.com)*

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# A TALE OF TWO EASTERS

ADRIAN WALTER THROWS SOME LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT

If you were at church on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May you would have had the opportunity to taste some delicious Kozunak, a Bulgarian Easter cake baked for us by our friend Rifka.



Afterwards I was approached by a number of people asking why there were two Easters in the Christian tradition. The answer is, that it's mainly to do with calendars.

In 325 AD, after more than two hundred years of debate and confusion about when to celebrate Easter, the First Ecumenical Synod decided that Easter must be celebrated at the same time throughout the world and be separated from the Jewish Passover.

However the synod did not set a date. That was done by Constantine, the Roman Emperor of the time who decreed that it would be celebrated throughout the world on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox. If this full moon occurs on Sunday, then it will be celebrated on the following Sunday so that Easter would never coincide with the Jewish Passover. This was also convenient as most of the known world had pagan festivals at this time which the church attempted to "Christianise". The very word Easter is derived from the Saxon word *Ēostre*, a spring pagan festival. It will come as no surprise that here in Britain we used a completely different calculation to the rest of the world, devised by the Venerable Bede, until the Synod of Whitby in 664 agreed to adopt the Roman calendar.

However, the problem was that the calendar in use at the time was the Julian calendar, established by Julius Caesar in 45 B.C. and based on the solar cycle i.e. earth's revolutions around the sun. The problem with the Julian calendar was that there was an annual 11 minute miscalculation that, over the years, caused the actual seasons to become out

of sync with the calendar. This pushed Easter away from the spring equinox so, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII instituted the Gregorian calendar, adding leap years, to correct these inaccuracies in the Julian Calendar. The new calendar "fixed" Easter to the first Sunday after the full moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox.

Although the world came to officially recognise the Gregorian calendar the Orthodox churches, primarily in Greece, Cyprus, Russia, Romania and Bulgaria continue to observe Easter according to the Julian calendar and many only adopted the Gregorian calendar as their secular calendar as late as the 20<sup>th</sup> century!

The consequence of this is that the earliest Western Easter can be is March 22<sup>nd</sup> and that has only happened twice, in 1761 and 1818. It will not happen again until 2285 and 2353. The latest it can be is April 25<sup>th</sup> which last happened in 2011 and will not happen again until 2038. It is more common for Eastern and Western Easters to coincide, such as in 2017 and next year (2025). However, due to the errors in the Julian calendar continuing to move the dates of the Orthodox Easter, 2698 will be the last time the two Easters ever coincide. →

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# LATIN LINK & ANGEL TREE CENTRE

**Jenny Aitken brings us a further update from Julie Noble in Oruro, Bolivia on life in the country and her work at the Angel Tree Centre.**

*Julie Noble is part of the Latin Link American mission. Latin Link is an international community with a calling to love and serve God and our neighbour. Most members of Latin Link work in Latin American countries while some work with Latin Americans in other parts of the world. Angel Tree Centre works with prisoners' children and families.*



Julie writes 'It should be Day of the Sea today but events to remember the 145th anniversary of the loss of the sea to Chile in the Pacific War had to be brought forward because Saturday 23rd March was designated as census day. The last census was held in November 2012.

Across Bolivia the Population and Housing Census is being carried out by 845,000 volunteers visiting 5.8 million homes to fill in a questionnaire. To carry out the census efficiently, an *auto de buen gobierno* was put into place banning movement from midnight on Friday until midnight on Saturday. Everybody, except the press and those conducting the census must stay at home. It is forbidden to carry guns, sell or drink alcohol and use public or private

transport.

International borders are closed for the day.

Schools and workplaces were shut down on Friday afternoon and there were ridiculous queues of people stocking up food for the shut-in. People who have emigrated from rural areas to the cities were reminded by the Rural Workers Union of a moral obligation to return to their communities and many did but the National Office of Statistics encouraged them to remain in the place where they access health and education services so that the census results would not be distorted.

The children came to Angel Tree on Friday morning and the Bible study ladies managed to have their class in the afternoon.

The lady assigned to complete the census in the block of flats where I live knocked on my door at 8.30am. Together we filled in the 59 questions on the form. There were a lot of questions about housing and utilities, a question about whether anyone in the family had emigrated, a question about health provision and whether anyone in the household had died since 2019, questions about work, identification with an indigenous people and language, but no questions about religion. The only question I could not answer was what the roof of my building was made of!

## A TALE OF TWO EASTER

➡ There have been a number of attempts to reconcile the two views, the latest in 1997, but so far none have succeeded.

So who is right? That's an impossible question to answer and in my view an unnecessary one. What is important is **that** we celebrate Christ's death and resurrection not when we celebrate it. Personally, I'd have neither and follow the date of the Jewish Pesach (Passover) because it would tie the festival to the red thread of sacrifice running throughout the history of God's dealings with humanity, culminating in Christ's sacrificial death on the cross which opened the way to eternal life for us all.

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# TOP MARKS FOR PARISH AWAYDAY

Forbes Mutch reflects on a wholehearted day at St Joseph's in the Park School, Hertingfordbury

As if by divine design, the damp clouds of the wettest spring on record cleared as the guests gathered cheerfully in the school car park. They registered their attendance (for fire safety reasons) and made their way into the school dining room for coffee and biscuits. After careful planning by St Andrew's and St Mary's, the 2024 joint parish 'awayday' or get-together got underway and our enthusiasm was wholehearted, which was just as well, because that was the theme of the day.



A WHOLEHEARTED DAY BEGINS

Alan Stewart explained that the day was about wholehearted living, as defined by the American Christian philosopher Dr Brene Brown who once said that 'wholehearted living is about engaging with our lives from a place of worthiness. It means cultivating the courage, compassion and connection to wake up in the morning and think: *No matter what gets done and how much is left undone, I am enough.*'

After an all-age introduction with worship, the children and young people left for their own activities, led by John Wachter. The rest of us considered in a relaxed atmosphere what wholeheartedness meant in our daily

lives. Some interesting thoughts and opinions emerged, confirming that we are a diverse and eclectic bunch, and also how the annual awayday always creates a safe place for personal expression.



SOME GUESTS WEAR MAKE-UP!

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES AND WORKSHOPS



SAM CHAPLIN

LEADS THE SINGING WORKSHOP

After a coffee break, we split into groups and joined our selected workshops, which provided something for everyone. As one parishioner said at the start: 'I couldn't decide; I felt spoilt for choice'. I know what she meant, as the range of sessions included standing, lying and sitting in Judy Bunny's Pilates class; wholeheartedly discovering joy through singing with Sam Chaplin; enjoying the good weather outside with Nick Hoyle, producing artwork using natural materials – stones, twigs, foliage, blossom – or enjoying an interactive discussion led by Jenny Mutch about how communities around the world are engaging wholeheartedly with nature

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# TOP MARKS FOR PARISH AWAYDAY

Forbes Mutch reflects on a wholehearted day at St Joseph's in the Park School, Hertingfordbury

and how individuals and local churches can make a difference in the fight to protect God's creation.



NICK HOYLE FINDS ART IN NATURE

Lunch, prepared by Sharon and her team from the school, was a cut above the school lunches that we enjoyed when we were young. One guest described it as 'comfort food' and another as 'a bit too tempting'. Breaktime after lunch is a relaxed opportunity to chat and explore the extensive woodland around the school before an all-age eucharist service back in the school hall ends the day.



EVERYONE GETS THE MESSAGE

The joint parish awayday has become an annual fixture in the calendars of St Andrew's and St Mary's and was eagerly

anticipated by over 80 people this year. Previous locations have included High Leigh Christian Conference Centre in Hoddesdon (now only taking bookings for whole weekends) and Belsey Bridge Conference Centre in Bungay, Suffolk (now closed). While these venues might have offered more in the way of bespoke facilities, St Joseph's in the Park in April 2024, came top of the class for being



TIME TO CHAT AND RELAX

accommodating, local and affordable.

Well done to the organisers, workshop leaders, school staff and all who attended, for making it a memorable day.

FORBES MUTCH

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# OUTREACH

## HERTFORD WELLBEING CHURCH

is a ministry group that seeks to provide a community for young people in Hertfordshire, helping to disciple them, as well as shining a light on those who do not yet know Christ. Jim Thornton shares news of some of their activities:



**Games Night:** we are thinking and praying about how we use the new £30m Hertford Theatre (BEAM) which opens at the end of August, and one idea we are investigating is to have the Friday night Gaming one week in October in either one of the three cinemas or Stage 2, the small 150-Seater Theatre. We would publicise this for 18-30s through social media and invitations through local churches and clubs; one idea is to show an extract from *The Chosen* as part of a mixed programme. The aim would be to invite young adults to meet us and come to our regular activities.

**Football:** the teams decided to drop down a league and consolidate as one team.

**Weekend Away GoApe:** last July we took twenty young adults to the Diocesan Youth Centre at Chellington to do AirSoft (shooting plastic bullets at each other in a disused claypit in a thunderstorm). This year we are planning a weekend in September at a Youth Hostel and doing GoApe. We hope to take 30-40 this time.

**Bible Study:** the group has started a series on Hebrews, which is brave, and are now getting their minds round Melchizedek.

  
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# THE AURORAE

SANDY ROBERTSON THROWS LIGHT ON THE PHENOMENON

During the week leading up to Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May, there was a huge sunspot on the sun. This was so big as to be visible to the eye when viewed with eclipse glasses. The sunspot was about 15 times the size of our earth (similar in size to the sunspot that caused the "Carrington" event in the 19th century). The sunspot has been very active and casting much material from the sun into space. (the material is known as a "coronal mass ejection" or CME). This material took a few days to reach us here on earth and much



things look black and white or silver when lit by the full moon. When a photograph is taken, the camera can still "see" the colours of the display phenomena even with low light levels. The camera reveals to those looking at the picture the glorious colours that were previously unable to be seen with our senses.

Seeing such a display of colours and light on such a huge scale and being aware of the amount of energy involved to create it really emphasised to me how small we are on this planet in the context of our solar system, not to mention the universe as a whole.

Somehow there seems to me to be a parallel here to the description in 1 Corinthians 13:12 of seeing through a glass darkly, where what we now perceive with our own senses is a limited view and does not reveal the full glory of what is actually going on.



Looking north over the Meads. Thank you to Sandy for his photos as well.

of it arrived on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May. On arrival, it affected the earth's magnetic field and huge amounts of energy were released into the atmosphere causing the display of the aurorae throughout the sky. This display was probably a once in a lifetime experience. The aurorae were seen as far south as the Caribbean.

To the naked eye, here in Hertfordshire with lots of light pollution, the display was faint, and the colours could only just be made out. This is mainly because our eyes are not very good at seeing colours when it is dark. That is also the reason why



For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known.  
1 Corinthians 13:12 King James version

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# Services at St Andrew's

## June 2024



To attend a Zoom service please email the Parish Office at:- [standrew.hertford@btinternet.com](mailto:standrew.hertford@btinternet.com)

	Date	Time	Service	Celebrant	Preacher
<b>SUNDAY</b> <i>Trinity 1</i>	2	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Rev Alan Stewart	
		10.30 am	<b>Parish Communion</b>	Rev Alan Stewart	
		10.30 am	Morning Service <b>on Zoom</b>	Kath Oates	Rev Alan Stewart
		7.00 pm	Compline <b>on Zoom</b>	Rev Alan Stewart	
Monday	3	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)		
Wednesday	5	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Traditional)	Rev Alan Stewart	Scott Martin
Thursday	6	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)	Rev Alan Stewart	
<b>SUNDAY</b> <i>Trinity 2</i>	9	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Rev Bill Church	
		10.30 am	<b>All Age Service</b>	Rev Alan Stewart	
		10.30 am	Communion Service <b>on Zoom</b>	Rev Bill Church	
		7.00 pm	Soul Food in St Andrew's Centre	Rev Alan Stewart	
Monday	10	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)		
Wednesday	12	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Traditional)	Rev Bill Church	
Thursday	13	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)		
		10.30 am	Holy Communion Calton Court	Rev Bill Church	
<b>SUNDAY</b> <i>Trinity 3</i>	16	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Rev Alan Stewart	
		10.30 am	<b>Parish Communion</b>	Rev Alan Stewart	Geoff Oates
		10.30 am	Morning Service <b>on Zoom</b>	Kath Oates	Geoff Oates
		7.00 pm	Compline <b>on Zoom</b>	Rev Alan Stewart	
Monday	17	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)		
Wednesday	19	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Traditional)	Rev Bill Church	
Thursday	20	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)		
<b>SUNDAY</b> <i>Trinity 4</i>	23	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Rev Bill Church	
		10.30 am	<b>Parish Communion</b>	Rev Bill Church	Forbes Mutch
		10.30 am	Morning Service <b>on Zoom</b>	Melanie Seward	Forbes Mutch
		6.30 pm	<b>Evensong St Marys Hertingfordbury</b>	Rev Bill Church	
		7.00 pm	No Compline this evening		
Monday	24	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)		
Wednesday	26	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Traditional)	Rev Bill Church	
Thursday	27	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)		
		10.30 am	Holy Communion Calton Court	Rev Bill Church	
<b>SUNDAY</b> <i>Trinity 5</i>	30	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Rev Alan Stewart	Forbes Mutch
		10.30 am	<b>Parish Communion</b>	Rev Alan Stewart	Melanie Seward
		10.30 am	Morning Service <b>on Zoom</b>	Nick Hoyle	Melanie Seward
		7.00 pm	Compline <b>on Zoom</b>	Rev Alan Stewart	