

The parish magazine of
Hertford St Andrew

www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk

JUNE 2026



CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS AS OUR PARISH PRIEST

Here with you Here for you

HERTFORD ST ANDREW

Registered charity 1132540

Website: www.HertfordStAndrews.co.uk

PRIEST: Rev Alan Stewart 01992 582726 h.alanstewart1@gmail.com
Assistant Priest: Rev Bill Church 01992 410469 churchwj@hotmail.com
Associate Priest Rev Scott Martin 07766 295768 scottmar73@hotmail.com
Readers: Melanie Seward & Geoff Oates
Lay Leaders of Worship: Forbes Mutch, Maria Henriksson-Bell, Kath Oates,
Adrian Walter & Nick Hoyle
Pioneer Enablers: Kath Oates & Maria Henriksson-Bell
Pastoral Assistants: Carol Crowhurst 01992 509126 caroljoancrowhurst@gmail.com
Charles Ledsam 07771 841012 charlesledsam@hotmail.com
Kim Hamilton 07762 615453 hamiltonkl40@gmail.com
Lyn Paine 07790 831608 lyn.paine@yahoo.com
Children & Families Worker Lindsey Betteridge 07974 141083

Parish Administrator: Philippa Probert standrew.hertford@btinternet.com
Office Hours: 9am to 2pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Fridays 01992 504373
St Andrew's Centre: Bookings: standrewscentre@hotmail.com 07593 055223

Churchwardens: Julie Markey 07801 236003
JOINT EMAIL ADDRESS: churchwarden.hertfordstandrews@gmail.com
Lesley Self 07952 958963

Deanery Synod Members: Jenny Aitken, Renee Booker & Shirley Taylor

Parochial Church Council comprises the Clergy, Readers, Churchwardens, Deanery Synod Members and Treasurer plus the following elected and co-opted members: Jenny Mutch, Louise Cobb, Laura Ramsay, Catherine Sleath, Adrian Walter, Chrissy Barclay, Julie Frazer, Malcolm Fry, Julie Hollings, Dorian Kennedy and Jo Willis.

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Parish Magazine Editor: Richard Taylor 07703 197707
Ringling Master: Andrew Case afcase@gmail.com
Safeguarding Officer: Julie Hollings safeguarding.hertfordstandrews@gmail.com
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Assistant Treasurer Judy Sharman } 01992 423561

St Andrew's Centre - Hertford St Andrew Community Trust - Trustees:

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

The Health and Safety Policy, and the Safeguarding Policy of Hertford St Andrew Parish Church can be found at www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk/safeguarding

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.

BLIND FAITH

In the early hours of the morning of the 29th April, a statue was installed in Waterloo Place, London, by the secretive street artist known as Banksy. It depicts a man in a suit holding a large flag, which is blowing across his face obscuring his vision, as he confidently steps off the plinth he's standing on.

Surrounded by other statues celebrating British imperialism, this newcomer statue is for many a powerful social comment about the pitfalls of blind patriotism.

Blindly following any idealism, or religion for that matter, can easily lead to a fall.

To quote Socrates 'The unexamined life is not worth living'. It's essential therefore that we question everything in a world of 'alternative truth', A.I. and fake news.

That said, there are certain things in life that we cannot empirically prove. For some things we need faith.

Everyone puts their faith in something, but faith need not be blind. Religious faith asks for the eyes to see beyond the visible, what one character in the film American Beauty calls, 'the life behind things'

There's a famous scene in another great movie 'Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade', where Dr Jones has to set aside his rational logic and make a step of faith into what looks like a cavernous drop. That faith is rewarded as a previously invisible stepping stone miraculously appears. Sometimes we have to take a similar step



WELCOME!

Welcome everyone to St Andrew's, and in particular visitors and newcomers. Details of services are given on the next couple of pages and the last page of this magazine. If you wish to know more about anything mentioned, please see the website or get in touch with any named contact person or speak with 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.

of faith, based on spiritual conviction or trust in something bigger. Experience tells me that making those steps of faith doesn't lead to a fall, but to a stepping stone into a fuller, more dynamic life.

Alan

HERTFORD CHURCHES TOGETHER ECO-EVENTS

	6TH JUNE PLANT SALE/COFFEE/CAKES 10.30am - 12.30pm St Andrew's
	6TH-14TH JUNE PLANT AND ANIMAL COUNT-COME JOIN US All day - just turn up All Saints https://arocha.org.uk/churches-count-on-nature-26/
	8TH JUNE PEOPLE'S EMERGENCY BRIEFING FILM 6.30pm - 8.00pm Methodist church https://www.nebriefing.org/the-film
	13TH JUNE A SWIFT RECOVERY 11.30am coffee/lunch and talk at 1.00pm All Saints
	11TH JULY AFFINITY WATER - TALKS WATER RESOURCES 11.30am coffee/lunch and talk at 1.00pm All Saints
	18TH JULY GREEN WATCH ACTIVITY DAY 10.00am - 2.00pm All Saints
	15TH AUGUST BEES AND THEIR COUSINS 11.30am coffee/lunch and talk at 1.00pm All Saints

THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE **JULY/AUGUST** MAGAZINE IS **SUNDAY 21ST JUNE**.
Please send copy by email to hertfordsta@aol.co.uk

SERVICES AND OTHER EVENTS

Church Services

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

Junior Church

Children are welcome to attend Junior Church which runs during the 10.30am Parish Communion service on most Sundays during school term time, except during an All-Age service (see below), when the children stay in church for the whole service.

ALL-AGE SERVICE

SUNDAY 14TH JUNE at 10.30am

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

With organ and choir.

St Andrew's services on Zoom

Zoom codes for online access and access via a landline are available from the church office: standrew.hertford@btinternet.com or by calling 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.

On Zoom at 7pm
Sundays 14th, 21st & 28th June



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

IN THESE TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY AND WORRY ABOUT EVENTS HERE IN THE UK, IN EUROPE AND FURTHER AFIELD YOU ARE VERY WELCOME TO JOIN THE REV ALAN STEWART AS HE LEADS US IN PRAYER AT OUR MONTHLY PRAYER MEETING CALLED:



on Saturday 20th June
at 8.30am

Join us on Zoom or pop down to St Andrew's Church and join us in the Lady Chapel as we pray for ourselves, our churches and our world during these worrying times.

Once a month sees a different kind of service at St Andrew's called

Soul Sunday



Sunday 7th June

Held in the



St Andrew's Centre

behind the church, this is an opportunity to join us for an informal hour of gentle discussion, songs and prayers, along with tea and biscuits.

Please join us at

6.45pm for refreshments

Service begins at 7pm

Know the Story; Share the Story; Live the Story

SERVICES AND OTHER EVENTS

Mindfulness & Meditation

at St Andrew's Church, Hertford

*Mindfulness can help with wellbeing & stress.
Explore alongside the riches of Christian
meditation in a free 40-minute session.
Beginners especially welcome!*

Wednesdays (usually twice a month) 7.30pm

10th June in church & on Zoom

24th June on Zoom only

For details, including
the Zoom link, please
see our website:

www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk



FREE Mindfulness

WHEN

Fortnightly on
Mondays at

8TH JUNE

22ND JUNE

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

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is welcome**

just turn up!

WHERE

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Farm SG14 2DJ



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standrew.hertford@btinternet.com

STARTING 1ST JUNE

**A little
service for
tots & their
carers**

with familiar
songs,
instruments,
a story & snacks

God's Little Wonders

St Andrew's Church
Mondays, 10am

Contact Lindsey
07974 141083

lindseybett@icloud.com



www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk

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CHURCH FAMILY

FROM THE REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

We welcome into the Lord's family:

3rd May

Ezra John Hunt and Noah Robert Hunt

24th May

Sienna Willow Rose Don

BROTHERS IN BAPTISM



In front of a full congregation at the Parish Communion service on Sunday 3rd May and joined by family and friends, brothers Ezra and Noah were baptised by Rev Alan Stewart. Ezra and Noah are the sons of Becca and Rosco Hunt who had been married at St Andrew's. Ezra's Godparents are Lauren Mitchell, Mark Willis and Liam Hunt, while Noah's Godparents are Abigail Carwardine, Declan Hunt and Jolon Hunt. Celebrations continued with a party after the service.



FUNERALS:

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of:

13th May

Ronald (Ron) Roe aged 94

20th May

David Quantrill aged 87

22nd May

Joan Lee

David Quantrill



David was born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, in 1938, one of seven children. During the war, David was evacuated twice from Lowestoft. David was always into art and would have loved to go to art college, but

he had to leave school when he was 14 as he had to go out to earn money for

the family income. Later in life David studied at Lowestoft College of Art. Living in Lowestoft during the 50s and early 60s, when the fishing industry was at its height, David worked at sea as a fisherman. David married Angela in 1964, and they moved out of Lowestoft to the rural village of Carlton Colville, on the south of the town where they lived for 50 years. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary shortly before Angela's death in 2014. In the early

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CHURCH FAMILY

1980s David became self-employed and set up a very successful picture framing business, alongside doing his art. He rented a studio in the Old Station Waiting Rooms at Oulton Broad South Station. David loved having an art studio on the station. He would be painting away as the trains drew in. David later gave up his station studio, and had a garage built at home for his studio. The Suffolk landscape, and especially the sea, inspired much of David's artwork. David and Angela had two children, Tony and Sally. Tony and Sally have many fond memories, as children, of going down to London regularly with David, taking pictures to the Mall Galleries to exhibit at the Pastel Society. When Angela died, David stayed

for a short while in Suffolk, but it became a lonely place once he was on his own. So, David moved to Hertford in December 2015, to be near Sally. David lived in Hertford for 10 years, in Chauncy Court. His flat was virtually opposite Hertford East Railway station. David loved being near a station again, and his lounge became his art studio. While living in Hertford, David was a member of Hertford Art Society, winning the Lady Laming Award for abstract art in 2016. David continued to exhibit at the Mall Galleries in London during his time in Hertford. David lived in Hertford for ten years, living life to the full and became embedded in the Hertford community, and was a regular worshipper at St Andrew's.

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MARKING TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE



Twenty of years of service is something not just worth noting but celebrating. It seems amazing to think that Alan Stewart has served as priest to the people of the parishes of St Andrew's and St Mary's for two decades. That milestone was reached on 15th May, being the twentieth anniversary of his licensing and installation. It was celebrated with a surprise party held after the morning service on Sunday 17th May in the St Andrew's Centre attended by well over 80 people from the two churches. David Gorton, Churchwarden at St Mary's, presented Alan with a card and gifts from members of the congregations. The "20" cake shared by all was creatively produced by Michael Cracknell and there was a large spread of food for all to enjoy



Priest and from time to time by others including the Rev Wendy Sellers and Rev Scott Martin, together with the Readers and Lay Leaders of Worship. Nonetheless it is no mean feat to oversee the workings of two very different churches with varying demands. He has done so successfully with a light touch and a natural ability to work with and relate to people of all ages and backgrounds.

One of Alan's strengths is his love of children and he has baptised countless numbers of children and adults at the two churches. Alan has a natural way with children, and can add a theatrical touch which grabs children's attention and brings humour to the subject. This has extended beyond the churches to the primary schools of Hertford St Andrew and Hertingfordbury Cowper where he has



The fresh-faced fairly newly-ordained priest who arrived with his wife Rachel and two young children, Rosie-Beth and Elijah, from Stanmore where he been Curate, quickly came to terms with managing two churches and two

congregations. Alan has been supported in his ministry throughout the twenty years by the Rev Bill Church as Assistant



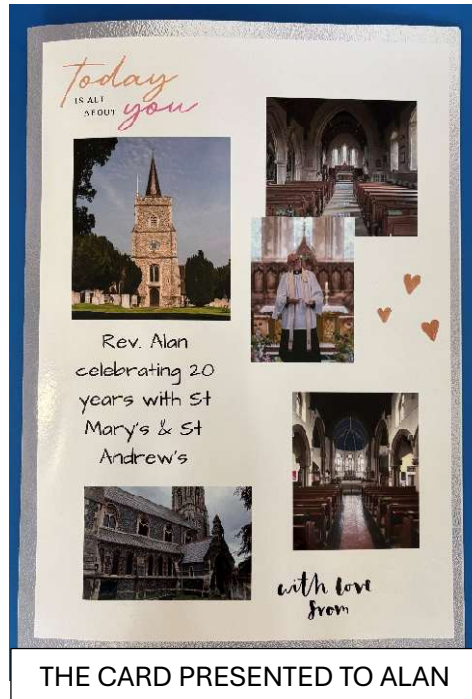
ALAN WITH HIS FIRST CHURCHWARDENS: (LEFT) JANE HOARE & ROBIN BISHOP (ST MARY'S) AND PETER RUFFLES & VIVIENNE THORNTON (ST ANDREW'S)

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MARKING TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE

been a regular at assemblies and other occasions, working first with Tracy and latterly with Lindsey, St Andrew's Children and Families Workers.

In his time as vicar Alan has overseen the construction of the Brace Room at St Mary's providing kitchen and toilet facilities for the first time, and the development of the St Andrew's Centre creating a bright and well-used hall with direct access from the church. Alan has introduced what are now regular elements of monthly services including mindfulness and meditation, Breathe prayer meetings and Compline, as well as adopting the use of Zoom for some services and maintaining, post-Covid, the regular



Sunday morning Zoom services run by Kath and Nick.

More recently, Alan has made an appearance on TV behind the counter of Rossi's Attic in an edition of the Antiques Road Trip, showing off his thespian side. Alan has also shared his love of music on

Three Counties Radio. He is an accomplished artist. In 2024 he held an exhibition of his drawings at St Mary's Hertingfordbury, with many finding happy buyers.

He is indeed a man of many talents.

Thank you Alan for all you have done for St Andrew's and St Mary's over the past twenty years and we look forward to the years to come as our parish priest.

How to talk to God



What is prayer?

How and why should I pray?

Does prayer change things?

Three evenings
exploring these
& other questions.
Everyone welcome!
No need to register
– just come along

**Mondays 1st, 8th
& 15th June 8pm
Hertford St Andrew's Church**

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Looking for something different?



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Dance Scottish
on Tuesday nights

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CHILDREN AT ST ANDREW'S

ALL CHILDREN ARE WELCOME

Children are never too young to come to church. You and your children are very welcome at St Andrew's. The Children's Corner at the front of church (to the right of the altar) is equipped with toys, books, craft materials and a space to call their own.

Junior Church

During the 10.30am Parish Communion on Sundays in term time (except when there is an All Age service) there are activities for children in the St Andrew's Centre. The children will begin the service with the congregation and then, after the first hymn, they leave to join Junior Church.

AND THEN THERE IS



Dive DEEPER into some of life's Big Questions!

FUN - GAMES - DISCUSSION – SNACKS

A twice-monthly Sunday morning group for those in Year 6 and above called Deeper

Usually on the 1st and 3rd Sundays in term time, during the 10.30am service, we'll meet upstairs in the St Andrew's Centre (behind the church) and explore questions like...

- 'What happens when we die?'
- 'Why do bad things happen to good people?'
- 'How can I feel less anxious?'
- 'How does prayer work?'

...or whatever you want to ask, because you set the questions!

There'll be time to chat, talk through some questions, play a game, enjoy some snacks and just hang out!

All-Age Services

These are monthly, shorter, child-friendly, interactive communion services with songs and prayers which are held once a month: usually but not always on the second Sunday of the month. Children stay in church for the whole of the service.

Hertford Children's Choir



Hertford Children's Choir

8-13 yrs



"An amazing experience."



Fridays 5:30-6:45pm @St Andrew's Church

JOIN US! | www.tinyurl.com/hertfordchildrenschoir

BEAM - Hertford Castle - St Andrew's - EcoFest - St Paul's Cathedral

A choir led by Rachel and Sam Chaplin for anyone aged 8-13 who loves singing and wants to develop their musicianship. Rehearsals are on Fridays 5.30-6.45pm at St Andrew's Church, Hertford and there are termly performances. See the church website for more information.

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- 24 hour service
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EVENTS AT ST ANDREW'S CHURCH



coffee morning

**SATURDAY
6TH JUNE**
10.30AM - 12.30PM
ST ANDREW'S CHURCH
HERTFORD SG14 1HZ

Plant sale
Marmalade stall
Live music
Fairtrade coffee
& Home-baked cakes

 RAISING FUNDS FOR
CANCER RESEARCH UK
AND ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk

JOIN US FOR OUR EVER-POPULAR MONTHLY COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 6th June: 10.30am to 12.30pm

The June Coffee Morning, with plant sale, is run by the WOW Home Group and half the proceeds will go to Cancer Research UK in memory of the late Julia Spring who was one of their number. She had a love of plants and contributed many of her own for this annual event in past years. In addition, the homemade marmalade is always very popular! There will be live music to entertain you while you enjoy good coffee and a delicious selection of homemade cakes and bakes. You can expect a warm welcome.



Hertford Children's Choir

SUMMER CONCERT

Special fundraising concert

Directed by Sam & Rachel Chaplin

With Take Note Choir

Sun. 14th June 6pm
St Andrew's Church | Hertford

 Tickets £12 adults + booking fee/ U18 free
www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk/hccsummerconcert

Hertford Children's Choir

(who rehearse at St Andrew's) is teaming up with Take Note Choir to bring you a Summer concert of joyous singing.

Directed by Sam and Rachel Chaplin, the choirs will sing a range of pieces, from the traditional medieval round 'Sumer is icumen in' to brand-new Summer songs written by Sam, and the 70s hit 'Love Train' by the O'Jays.

Bring family and friends along to enjoy the music and help support the running of Hertford Children's Choir here at St Andrew's. Tickets are £12 for adults (plus booking fee) and free for under 18s - available online via the 'What's On' section of the church website, or in person after church on a Sunday morning (no booking fee).



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EVENTS AT ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

Gryphon: 4th June

Back by popular demand after their sell-out gig at St Andrew's in 2025, Gryphon return with their progressive folk-rock mix of medieval and Renaissance sounds, creating music that feels both ancient and modern and adventurous. Have a beer, get in the groove.

GRYPHON

THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2026

Licensed bar available



Legendary folk band Gryphon return by popular demand to Hertford, bringing their unique blend of progressive rock, folk and early music to St Andrew's church



**7.30pm at St Andrew's Church
Hertford SG14 1HZ**

Tickets from

www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-andrews-church

www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk

Vikki Clayton: 2nd July

Vikki's UK tour takes in St Andrew's Church as part of her popular "Folk at the Church" series. The setting provides an ideal acoustic backdrop for her style, allowing audiences to fully appreciate the nuance of her performance. For local folk fans, it promises an evening of high-quality musicianship and timeless song.

"Crystal clear vocals"

- The Guardian

*"Peachy voiced,
enchanting"* - Mojo



VIKKI CLAYTON

THURSDAY 2 JULY 2026

Licensed bar available

**7.30pm at St Andrew's Church
Hertford SG14 1HZ**

Tickets from

www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-andrews-church

www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk



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EVENTS ELSEWHERE

Let there be Jazz - An evening with James Pearson

WARESIDE CHURCH: Friday 5th June doors open at 7pm for a 7.30 start



For one night only, James Pearson and friends from Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club play 'Let there be Jazz' in the intimate setting of Holy Trinity Church, Wareside.

From playing 'Encounters with Gershwin' at the Carnegie Hall, New York James comes to Holy Trinity, raising funds for the village church. We are in for a treat!

Please come and support. And bring your friends! Tickets £25: go to www.tickettailor.com/events/friendsofwaresidechurch/2184508



People's Emergency Briefing

If you care about:

- local flooding & nature loss
- cost of living & food prices

you might want to catch this.

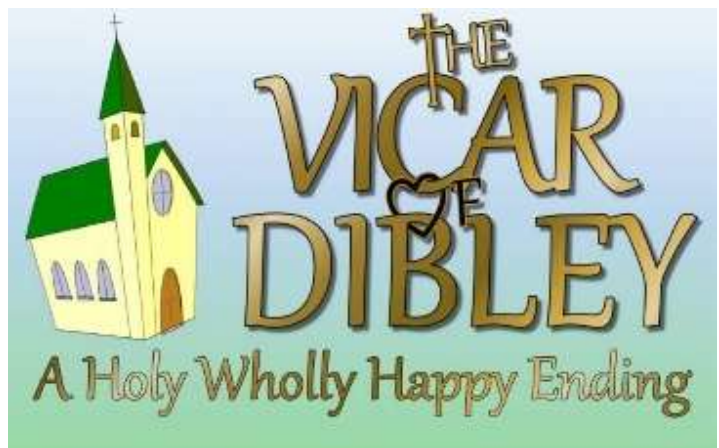


Free film screening followed by facilitated discussion.
Everyone 16+ is welcome. Bring a friend or neighbour.

Monday, June 8th at 6.30pm
Methodist Church, Ware Road, Hertford
SG13 7DZ

This 45 minute film is hosted by Chris Packham. It sets out the risks and threats that our communities face in terms of extreme weather, rising costs and impacts on health, food security, the economy, and national security. It highlights that solutions exist if we all act soon. Anyone aged 16 or over is welcome.

If you can't make this one there is another screening at St Andrew's Church on the 1st October.



**WEDNESDAY 10TH to SATURDAY 13TH
JUNE AT BEAM, HERTFORD**

Tickets £21 from
www.beamhertford.co.uk

Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society are excited to be bringing the final part of The Vicar of Dibley story to BEAM Hertford.

Come and catch up with your favourite quirky characters as they wreak comic mayhem once again on the Hertford stage. A stage play adapted by Steve Clark from the original TV series written by Richard Curtis and Paul Mayhew-Archer. Cast includes Julie and Jim Markey.

For more information on the People's Emergency Briefing:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/hertfordchurchestogogether/2175023> or go to the QR code above

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THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

Each year there is a meeting of all parishioners who elect 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 26th April.

CHURCHWARDENS

We are grateful that Julie Markey and Lesley Self offered themselves for re-appointment, and were duly elected churchwardens by the meeting of parishioners.

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, Chrissy Barclay and Julie Frazer were standing down having completed their three year term of office but both put themselves forward and were duly re-elected to the PCC for another three years. In addition Jo Willis and Dorian Kennedy were proposed and elected to the PCC. We are grateful to all members of the PCC for the time and commitment they give to the church in this way.

DEANERY SYNOD

Jenny Aitken, Renee Booker and Shirley Taylor have agreed to continue as Deanery Synod representatives for another year.

ELECTORAL ROLL

The Electoral Roll (the church's register of electors) contains a total of 128 people (up from 120 a year ago), of

whom 45 are resident in the parish and 83 non-resident.

REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

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

ALAN'S REPORT TO THE MEETING

A CHURCH THAT WELCOMES ALL

'The Church is the Church only when it exists for others'. Those are the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German pastor and theologian.



This is our call, not to be a member's club for the likeminded, but a community which exists for the good of those who are not

members, a people who help hold a space where all can belong, which all can call home.

This year's joint Parish Away Day in a few weeks will be focusing on what it means to belong. And during that day we hope to explore what it means to celebrate diversity, to disagree well when conflict arises, and to ask that hard question 'who are the people who may not feel they belong in our church, and why?'

We want to learn from those questions and where necessary, adapt and change; be accountable to that call, to be a church that exists for others, a church that welcome all.

ENTRANCE PORCH

And where better to start than with the entrance to our building. For those with

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THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

visual impairment or mobility issues, it's gloomy and a trip hazard. So, we hope to explore how we might make it safer, brighter and more welcoming. One idea is to make the entrance as level as we can and to replace the wooden box around the inner door with a glass box or something similar, which would provide a friendlier, brighter welcome, and also of course help insulate that door. We've received a generous donation to help with this but it is dependent of course on receiving the appropriate permissions.

We may not be the most culturally diverse church but we are broad and eclectic when it comes to theology and worship. And that, I believe is a great strength. But it's not always easy, because we cannot please all of the people all of the time.

CHURCH MUSIC

In recent months we've tried to expand our worship repertoire to offer something for those who like to worship in different ways. On certain weeks during communion, you'll have noticed that we've introduced two usually contemporary congregational songs, led by piano. This is to create a little more space for reflection and response during such a special part of the service. A reflective song is usually followed by a more uplifting one of gratitude for all that we've celebrated in bread and wine, where folk are welcome to stand only if they would like to. On other weeks we've been using Taizé chants; simple songs repeated over and over in the hope that these words might find their way from our heads to our hearts. And building on our choral tradition, we also

plan to introduce regular Evensongs here at St Andrew's.

As always, we're so grateful to our choir, musicians and especially our musical director, Jane Eldred who leads with such expertise and grace. A special thank you to Venetia Hardy and Keith Neat who are both stepping back from singing with the choir on Sunday mornings after over 50 years of faithful service.

HERTFORD CHILDREN'S CHOIR

We are also delighted to be the home of Hertford Children's Choir who bring such joy and life to those services in which they take part. I spoke to one mum recently who said that it's so much more than a choir, it's a youth group, a church, where together the children learn what worship is and explore the meaning behind sacred songs. We're so grateful to Rachel and Sam for their leadership, and their creativity in composing original songs for example for services like Mothering Sunday.

SCHOOLS WORK

Our work continues in three local schools where Lindsey and I lead weekly Collective Worship on Tuesdays with the whole school, and on Wednesdays with Early Years. Last year we welcomed the children of Hertford St Andrew into our church for an Easter themed story workshop and this year, we will do the same to Experience Pentecost. Another highlight has been the Big Questions Club, a lunchtime club for years 5 and 6 where the children set the questions; questions like 'What happens when we

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die?', 'Why do bad things happen to good people?' and 'How do I feel less anxious?'

DEEPER

Big questions will also form the basis for our new Sunday morning group for Years 6 and above called Deeper. It will meet twice monthly for games, discussion and snacks. That starts on Sunday 17th May. Thank you to Jules, Jono and Matthew who will help lead this. Please pray for this.

GOD'S LITTLE WONDERS

On 1st June we're launching God's Little Wonders, a little service for toddlers and their carers. It will include songs to the tune of nursery rhymes, a story from the Story Basket, birthday time and time to play and catch up. A huge thank you to Lindsey who will lead this. If it's something you think you might be able to help with, please speak to Lindsey. We haven't had a crèche for some time in the morning service. Those with small children and grandchildren, let us know if you'd value that. Thank you to everyone who leads and helps with all our work with teenagers, children and toddlers.

BLESSING OUR TOWN

Last October, we gathered with friends from All Saints to bless the River Lea and plan to do the same this year. We're also looking at other ways we can partner with All Saints' Church in blessing our town.

We are blessed to have Panshanger Park within our parish and a small working party from St Mary's is meeting soon to

explore how we might explore opportunities to meet and worship in the great outdoors.

ZOOM SERVICES

We continue to offer Zoom church on Sunday mornings which reaches far beyond any building and brings together people from near and far. Thank you to Nick and Kath who lead and create the liturgies each week.

COMMITTEES

Thanks to all those who serve on our various committees; Eco, Finance, Social, Events and Communications. Special thanks to Alex Nicholas who is stepping back from the Coms team after four years of designing our posters and fliers.

We are particular grateful to the relatively newly formed Events committee chaired by Forbes, which formed last year following the very sad death of the wonderful Chris Seward. Concerts and events continue to bring in much-needed revenue, help create community spaces for the arts and open the church to the much wider community in events like Beer and Carols.

PRAYER

Prayer is the oxygen of our church and I would encourage everyone to come along in person or online to our monthly prayer gathering, Breathe. It's a beautiful and powerful holding space and you're welcome to simply sit in silence. To deepen our prayer-life, we will also be holding three nights in June entitled 'How to Talk to God', where we'll explore and learn together about why and how we pray, and hear inspiring stories of how prayer has shaped lives.

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THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

EXPLORING FAITH

This past year we held two Exploring Faith courses and some of those who took part were among those confirmed here on 27th January. It's wonderful to see that members from those courses have gone on to Exploring Faith. Further, a fortnightly group exploring the Bible Course under the guidance of Maria Henriksson-Bell and Jane Chaplin. Small groups continue to be the place where deep church takes place and we're excited that two new groups have launched this year. If this is something you'd like to look into, please speak to me.

THANKS

There are so many other people to thank, and apologies if I miss anyone out – our priests Bill and Scott (who will soon be exploring a possible parish of his own), our Readers Melanie and Geoff, our Lay Leaders of Worship Adrian, Kath, Nick, Maria and Forbes, our Children's Worker Lindsey, Safeguarding Officer Julie, our wardens, PCC, Deanery Reps, Treasurers, Prayer Ministry team, Pastoral Visitors, Interior decorators Roz and Chrissy, our Servers, Sidespeople, Sacristan, Flower arrangers, Coffee teams, bell-ringers, Sound Team, Richard our fantastic magazine editor, school governors, Trustees of the St Andrew's Centre, home-group leaders, gardeners, readers, intercessors, our clock-winder Keith, those who open and close the church, and of course our incredible administrator Phil, supported so brilliantly by Carol Muhr. A special thank you to Phil for all she does with social media which reaches such a wide audience. I've heard of sermons being sent as far as South Africa and New Zealand!

TIME FLIES!

It's hard to believe that next month I will have been your priest for 20 years! I know, I haven't aged a bit! Where has the time gone? So much has happened and it genuinely continues to be a joy to serve alongside you. Thank you for your kindness, your support and your prayers. I'm excited for what lies ahead.

MEZUZAH

To end; you might have heard of a Mezuzah. It's a small enclosed scripture scroll usually attached at eye level to the outside doorpost of a house or building, which serves as a reminder for prayer that can be touched or glanced at when entering. To end, here's a Mezuzah prayer from the Northumbria Community.

'Jesus the Door, the Word and the Welcome, soften my step and still my mind; so may Your presence of peace be over me. Peace be here; my heart is open.'

DID YOU KNOW?...

that the Bible in Braille comprises 48 volumes! *Source: Desert Island Discs on BBC Radio 4 when Lauren Laverne offered the Bible to Gary O'Donoghue (Chief North America Political Correspondent for BBC News) to take with him to his Desert Island). Weighing more than 40 kilos, standing two metres tall the Bible in Braille is a huge production undertaking costing 50 times as much to produce as it does a print Bible. (source: the Church Times 2015)*

Editor's note: If you come across an interesting fact please let me know.

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BELONGING

A Day's Journey into What it Means to Belong and to Not Belong.

REFLECTIONS ON ST ANDREW'S & ST MARY'S JOINT PARISH AWAY DAY 2026

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right-doing, there is a field. I will meet you there.

On 26th May 2026 approximately 85 people from the churches of St Andrew's and St Mary's were warmly welcomed by a reception team at the beautiful All Nations' Christian College in Easneye, Ware. It was the start of the annual Away Day. Tea and coffee were on offer as we all settled in. Then a more formal welcome came from Revd Alan as he discussed the day ahead. Alan read a short verse from the poet Rumi '**Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right-doing there is a field. I will meet you there**'...An invitation to what that field could hold lay ahead of us as we were then led into an informal worship service by Sam Chaplin, who was accompanied by a small group of singers and musicians. The warmth and sense of fellowship at this service set the tone for the day ahead.

We then went off to our various workshops, while the children went with Lindsey and her small team of helpers for their activities.

The theme this year was **Belonging**, and this was explored through various deep and reflective workshops.

Workshop 1 was led by Kath Oates and Nick Hoyle, exploring 'Nobody belongs here more than you'. Questions such as

what helps us to feel that we **do** belong and what can we all do to overcome the barriers to that sense of belonging were explored, as well as why some might feel that they **don't** belong in church.



Workshop 2 was led by Juliet and Alistair Curry, exploring 'Home' and what it is that evokes that feeling of being at home, and what that might mean for our Christian pilgrimage throughout our lives.

Workshop 3 was led by Jules and Mick Donovan exploring 'Playing your part in God's Family'... this exploration used exercise, games, improvisation and acting out scenes from the Bible to develop a deeper understanding of belonging, through the joy of bringing Biblical stories to life.



Workshop 4 was led by Revd Alan and Jane Chaplin, titled 'Can prayer unite.' This was a creative exploration using senses to help us in prayer particularly thinking of places where there is disagreement and disunity.

Questions such as "how can prayer unite?" were asked and symbolic objects that remind us of belonging were used. It was a meditative and soul-searching workshop that led us into deep questioning of our own experiences with disagreement and lack of unity and how they might be resolved. A beautiful prayer written by Rachel Chaplin was read aloud by Jane.

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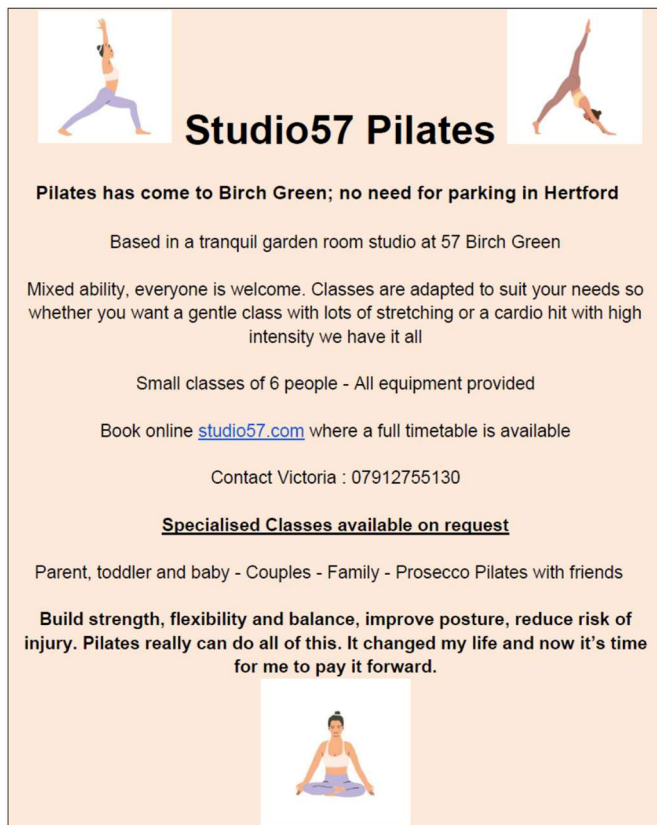



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BELONGING

A Day's Journey into What it Means to Belong and to Not Belong.

REFLECTIONS ON ST ANDREW'S & ST MARY'S JOINT PARISH AWAY DAY 2026

The Children were being creative (led by Lindsey, and her team) with beautiful flowers that had been brought from our local gardens. Each individual flower was given its 'own place' of meaning by the children, expressing through this symbolic placing, the beauty of belonging. They also made a beautiful work of art a 'Belonging Collage' which I'm sure all will be able to view at some point in the future. There were outside activities such as the Boat Game, where all had to try and stay in the boat as it became smaller; this signified making room for each other no matter what, and the children carried each other on their backs (piggy backs) and so on, a fun and very symbolic game. There were also musical chairs and a 'finding the lost sheep' game signifying the importance of each one of us to God.

After the workshops we all met up for a



JENNY MUTCH WITH ONE OF THE VASES OF FLOWERS CREATED ON THE DAY

two-course lunch with plenty of time to share our workshop experiences. During the afternoon we were given the choice of joining Chrissie Barclay and Julie Hollings, who invited us all to use our lexicography skills in compiling Bunting with a dictionary of

words attached describing our feelings of belonging. It was a beautiful, colourful and meaningful addition to the decor at the Eucharist. There were outdoor games for both children and adults. Adrian led the games on the football pitch, notably a game called Puddocks, a mixture of rounders and cricket. There

were also quiet meditative prayer walks in the beautiful surrounding woodland, or opportunities for quiet reflection and getting to know each other.

At 3pm we joined together for a Eucharist service where the day's events were discussed and brought together. Symbolic tying of yellow ribbons on a tree was used to remember those who feel that they do not belong, along with simple yet profoundly moving prayer. We were then once again led into worshipful music by Sam and the musicians. It was a joyful time as we prepared for the end of the day, reflective conversations were held as we enjoyed a lovely afternoon tea, with Lesley in charge of a bottomless pot of tea and delicious '**Nobody belongs here more than you**' fairy cakes made by Laura Ramsay.

Whether it was from Laura's scrumptious cakes; Lesley's Mary Poppins tea pot; Richards's sharing of a sense of belonging through his lifelong journey with the scouts organisation, whether from Sue Brown graciously sharing her feelings of belonging and healing through the symbolic gifts of love from St. Andrew's church that have helped her through difficult times; Adrian's sharing of his childhood journey from darkness to light or Chrissie telling of her mother's bedmaking for huge numbers during her family's time as missionaries in Afghanistan and Pakistan.....all of this and more helping us to grow on our Christian pilgrimages. Helping us to understand where and what that **field** that Rumi spoke of is about, and what it could feel like within us. The day gave a huge amount of love through the people...all the organisers and helpers as well as those participating as guests. It

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BELONGING

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REFLECTIONS ON ST ANDREW'S & ST MARY'S JOINT PARISH AWAY DAY 2026

gave an invitation to go to that **field**, that is beyond judgement, beyond what we see as right and wrong, to reach a place of connection with each person and not see the 'other'; a place to rest from intellectual concerns, it invites us to a place of spiritual peace, where all are welcome; to think about things that unite us all and to see the Light of Christ in all people.

From all at St Andrew's and St Mary's.... a huge **thank you** to Jenny and Melanie and all the teams of organisers, musicians, teachers, cooks, friends and spiritual advisors. It was a memorable day. **Gillie Georgiou**

Here is **Stella Walter's** experience of the workshop she attended:

"I am no thespian, but I decided to join the group led by Mick and Jules. Thirteen of us gathered to "Play our part in God's family." We began with sound and movement exercises to warm up, which helped us relax and enjoy some shared laughter.

The session then moved into more thoughtful reflections on what it feels like to belong or not belong. We acted out descriptive words for others to guess, which was a moving way to explore those emotions.

The highlight of the session was acting out three Bible stories: the Prodigal Son, Zacchaeus in the sycamore tree,



and Jesus healing the woman with chronic bleeding. These short, emotive plays brought the stories

to life through roleplay, moving us to both laughter and tears.

It was a fun and meaningful session that reminded me that while I may never be a professional actor, we all have a part to play in God's family."

Lindsey Betteridge, our Children & Families Worker, "enjoyed a wonderful few hours which, if anything, felt far too short. The morning was fun-filled, relaxed and full of joy but also gave some lovely moments of genuine connection between the young people.

Friendships were very clearly seen throughout the day, not only between the children themselves but also between the children and their leaders. There was much laughter during the "All Aboard" game as everyone tried to stay together on the shrinking "boat" and the children were especially amused during our Lost Sheep activity when we struggled to find a very well-hidden Melanie; indeed a surreptitious phone call was required to find her!

The morning also included the amazing and effective belonging puzzle, quiet reflection and some beautiful flower arranging using the donations from the congregation's spring flower garden. This all helping to reinforce the message that everybody matters and everybody belongs.

After lunch with thanks to Adrian, adults and children alike thoroughly enjoyed new bat and ball games in teams which I am sure will become firm favourites in the future.

A huge thank you to Hannah and Melanie for their support."

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Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust win national River Restoration Prize

*What a great local achievement and demonstration of care for our natural world,
writes Jenny Mutch*



Photo of prize award - photo courtesy of HMWLT

Each year the UK's national River Restoration Centre present worthy winners with an award to celebrate the achievements of individuals and organisations working to restore our rivers, floodplains and catchments.

This year the prize went to our local wildlife trust for their work on **Reviving the River Ash** on the Easneye Estate. I was lucky to be there in person and was able to cheer them on in Newport, Wales, along with nearly 600 other attendees!

The project

The River Ash is one of only around 260 chalk rivers in the world (with Hertfordshire and Middlesex home to 10% of this global resource). These rivers support some of our most vulnerable UK species, but despite this these chalk stream habitats have faced significant challenges from human activities.

The completed project is thought to be one of the most ambitious river restoration projects to have taken place in the south-east, with a seven-kilometre stretch of the chalk river restored to its original course.

The works included:

- Wiggles being reintroduced to the river
- Reconnection of the river to its floodplain
- Reconnecting relic meanders
- 3,000 tonnes put back in the channel to counter the impact of earlier dredging and support fish spawning
- Over 300 woody features put in the water to create shelter for fish
- The addition of 15 new ponds, backwaters and wetland scrapes.

Overall, the project has provided extensive new wetland habitats for vulnerable wildlife including the critically endangered Water Vole, wild Brown Trout, Kingfisher and dragon and damselflies to name just a few species.

HMWLT thoughts

Sarah Perry (the Trust's Rivers Recovery Manager) who collected the award said:

"It's incredibly rewarding to see our work on the River Ash recognised by the RRC and to highlight how this ambitious landmark project provides hope for



The team at Easneye (photo - Henrietta Buxton)

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nature's recovery. The scale and impact of the project is exciting.... Healthier rivers carry fresh water, protect us from floods, help to maintain the ecosystem balance that we rely on and they support our wellbeing.



A few of the new wetland ponds (photo - Jenny Mutch)

It's also been an encouraging journey to go on with the Easneye Estate, to have gained their trust and learnt more along the way. Together, within their farm cluster, we can demonstrate what other rivers in the county could be like.... I hope it can inspire further river restoration."

And so do I!

**For more information about what the Wildlife Trust do then go to:
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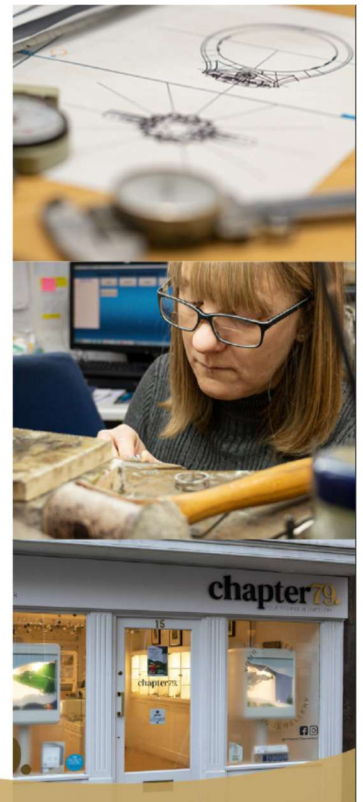
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Services at St Andrew's

June 2026



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	Date	Time	Service	Celebrant	Preacher
	Monday	1	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)	
	Wednesday	3	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Traditional) Rev Bill Church	
	Thursday	4	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)	
			10.30 am	Calton Court Communion Service Rev Bill Church	
SUNDAY	7	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)		Rev Scott Martin
<i>Trinity 1</i>		10.30 am	Parish Communion	with Junior Church	Rev Alan Stewart Forbes Mutch
		10.30 am	Morning Service on Zoom		Kath Oates Forbes Mutch
		7.00 pm	Soul Sunday in the St Andrew's Centre		
	Monday	8	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)	
	Wednesday	10	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Traditional) Rev Alan Stewart	
	Thursday	11	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)	
SUNDAY	14	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)		Rev Alan Stewart
<i>Trinity 2</i>		10.30 am	All Age Service		Rev Alan Stewart
		10.30 am	Morning Service on Zoom		Nick Hoyle HeartEdge Sermon
		7.00 pm	Compline on Zoom Rev Alan Stewart		
	Monday	15	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)	
	Wednesday	17	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Traditional) Rev Scott Martin	
	Thursday	18	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)	
			10.30 am	Calton Court Communion Service Rev Bill Church	
SUNDAY	21	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)		Rev Alan Stewart
<i>Trinity 3</i>		10.30 am	Parish Communion	with Junior Church	Rev Alan Stewart
		10.30 am	Morning Service on Zoom		Kath Oates Rev Alan Stewart
		7.00 pm	Compline on Zoom Rev Alan Stewart		
	Monday	22	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)	
	Wednesday	24	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Traditional) Rev Bill Church	
	Thursday	25	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (BCP)	
SUNDAY	28	8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)		Rev Bill Church
<i>Trinity 4</i>		10.30 am	Parish Communion	with Junior Church	Rev Alan Stewart Adrian Walter
		10.30 am	Morning Service on Zoom		Nick Hoyle Adrian Walter
		6.30 pm	Evening Prayer at St Mary's Hertingfordbury		Rev Bill Church
		7.00 pm	Compline on Zoom Rev Alan Stewart		
	Monday	29	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (Common Worship)	