



CROSS KEYS



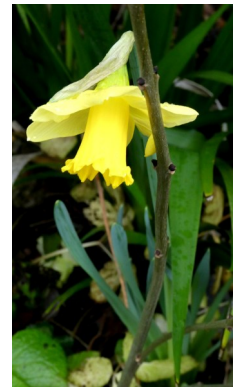
Spring is in the air



Out of the grey and gloom of rainy, windy January and early February, comes an afternoon of calm and bright sunshine on Seaford beach



Meanwhile, in the churchyard the first snowdrop and daffodil show their heads



**The Magazine of the Parish of St Peter, East Blatchington
February/March 2026 including news and articles from our sister
church, St Andrew's, Bishopstone**



The Rector's letter



As I sit down to write this edition of the Rector's letter and I look back over the last few months, it is with grateful thanks to all those in the benefice and beyond who enabled and facilitated the penitent and careful preparation of Advent and the joyous celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ during Christmastide. We celebrated what that meant at the time of its happening, means now and means for the future, reflecting with great joy on the light and hope that Jesus brings. It was fantastic to be able to welcome many people into St. Peter's church with a variety of services and celebrations of the Mass as we continued our journey of faith together.



At the time of writing, just before Candlemas, the season of Epiphany and Christmas is about to draw to a close. My Christmas tree is down, a relief to be honest as it was looking less green and more brown as the days passed. The warm white Christmas lights at the front of the rectory are back in the box, but I am still hoping for my preferred multicoloured ones to be back next year, but, as per my previous rector's letter, we will have to see how the negotiations go later in the year.

It is well known that for many, the dark post-Christmas months are a difficult time, with the anticipation of the festivities of Christmas long gone, it can at times feel there is not much to look forward to. To be honest it is probably my least favourite time of the year, but yet, as we move from the glow of Christmas into these sometimes-quieter months, I am reminded of the great comfort and sense of home that Jesus Christ offers us.

Also, this is the time of year when creation itself whispers of hope. The first green buds and shoots appear, quietly but resolutely defying the winter. In the autumn I planted some bulbs and forgot all about them, but yet now, as they push up through the cold earth, I am reminded nature is at work always, even though we don't always immediately see the results. The same is true with God and his kingdom; the Kingdom of God is always at work, often in unseen or surprising ways. We can have the faith that we and the whole of humanity are assured of new beginnings and growth, rooted in the warmth of God's love.

Just as we delight in spotting these signs of new life outdoors, so too are we called to open our hearts and eyes to the green shoots of God's kingdom among us, acts of kindness, seeds of reconciliation, and gestures of self-giving love.

Let us reflect on how each of us might be part of this quiet transformation. Where might you, in your own life, be a green shoot, offering encouragement, extending hospitality, or bringing hope to someone in need? As we journey together, may we be those bright signs of God's renewing presence, embodying Christ's home and hope for one another and for the world.

With every good wish and continued prayers,

Fr Simon

The Presentation of Jesus at the Temple

Wellcome Library, London
Wellcome images V0034651



Lent 2026 at St Peter's



The United Benefice of
East Blatchington & Bishopstone

Lent Course 2026

This year we will be
following the Diocese of
Chichester Lent Course

The Year of Matthew

reflections on the portrayal of Christ
in St Matthew's Gospel
by Rev'd Tom Robinson

2pm Monday from
2nd March for 5 weeks
St. Peter's Chapel Rooms

Please contact the office to book your
place 01323 899054 or email
officeebb.benefice@gmail.com



St Peter's Church
East Blatchington, Seaford

Join us for a delicious
**LENT
LUNCH**

from Feb 20th - March 27th
excluding the 6th March

Every Friday | After Stations of
During Lent | the Cross
12:30 | 12noon

Please book your place with
Linda or the Office.
01323899054



St Peter's Church
East Blatchington, Seaford

Stations of the Cross

Join us at St Peter's Church,
every Friday from
20th February at 12noon
excluding 6th March
Also in the evening on
20th February, 6th March.
and 20th March at 6pm



Editorial



Thank you to everyone who has sent in articles, photographs, reports and news for this edition of Cross Keys which I think you will find informative and, I hope, enjoyable. Topics this time take us from pancakes to badgers, problems for Christians in Syria and the commissioning of an icon of St Lewinna, a 7th century female Sussex saint for St Andrew's, Bishopstone.

As usual, there are photos and reports of recent happenings in the benefice and information about future events and services during Lent, in Holy Week, at Eastertide and beyond. Some of the regular contributors to our magazine have died in recent years or moved away, so please, do think about writing a piece about an interest, visit, experience, environmental concerns etc.

We shall struggle to cope without Kay, Reader Emeritus and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator who did so much for St Peter's and Liz, the kingpin of our Summer Fairs and in charge of our Planned Giving Scheme. To know, love, work and worship with them both was a joy and a blessing.

I look forward to receiving your contributions for the April/May edition of the magazine.

The next edition of Cross Keys will be published in early April, so please send in your contributions by 25 March or earlier, if possible.

Send them, preferably by email as a Word document attachment or as a jpeg, if a photo, to

christinecooke.xks@gmail.com

Christine



Member Editor 2026
Association for Church Editors

Prayers for the Sick

Please remember in your prayers:

Harry Anderson, Tina Bacon, Devon Baker,
Sheila Birch, Jeremy Brand,
Jennifer Cartwright, Carole Clarke,
Joanne Cooke, Paul Coles,
Alan Dempster, Stephen Dempster,
Susan Drader, Veronica Gabriel, Katie Gould,
Tony Gubbins, Fr John Harrington,
Annifer Hatcher, Beryl Henley, Gwen Huntley,
Kayleigh Ivers, Steph Lees, Christa Lindner,
Raoul Maher; Tom Mangne, May,
Noellie Montfort, Wendy Preston, Ralph,
Sarah Read, Ann Rix, Ian Rothery, Ruth,
Felicity Sirc, Valerie Skues,
Nicola Smith, Colin Tucknott, Hilary Warner.



Don't forget to put your
clocks forward an hour for
British Summer Time
on Palm Sunday,
29th March



World Day of Prayer Service

**Friday 6th March
10.45am**

**at St Peter's Church
followed by refreshments in the
Chapel Rooms**

**Prepared this year by Christian
Women from Nigeria**

If you would like your name or that of a relative or friend added to this list, which is also in the Parish Prayer Diary, then please let Christine know (christinecooke.xks@gmail.com or tel. 01323 490548).

All the people on this list are prayed for by name in church at Friday's 9.30am Morning Prayer.

Holy Week and Easter services at St Peter's



**Palm Sunday 29th March 8am Holy Communion BCP
10am Parish Eucharist**

Wednesday 1st April 10.30am Mid Week Eucharist

Maundy Thursday 2nd April 7pm Mass of the Last Supper

Good Friday 3rd April 3pm Veneration of the Cross

Holy Saturday 4th April 7pm Pascal Vigil

**Easter Sunday 5th April 6am Easter Dawn Eucharist
in the churchyard
8am Holy Communion BCP
10am Explore Easter Sung Mass**



He is risen!



Amelie

A Sunday morning mini Altar set up for Jesus and a Bishop to share communion.
- created by Amelie.

When we think they are 'only playing' children may be taking in far more than we think!

Anne Collison

Bon appétit!

In a way, this is a rather curious time of year, February and March. While we wait, patiently, for the worst of winter to shuffle away, taking with it the sharp cold and snow and ice, and wonder if the next month lives up to its traditional bother of sharp wind, there are one or two looming dates to be marked. Possibly.



February can involve Valentine's Day for the romantically inclined, though better not carelessly send out too many cards to too many people (!), while for art lovers there's a tempting exhibition, *Seurat and the Sea* at the Courtauld

Gallery in London. And for March? Well, there's the horse racing spectacular of the Cheltenham Festival (avoid the crowds, watch from a distance of track and bookies), also the Six Nations rugby, and near its end Palm Sunday, on the 29th, when also Summer Time begins (hooray!).

However, I can offer something tasty for February: Shrove Tuesday is on the 17th, because that can also mean, of course, pancakes. This is probably preaching to the converted, but I'll press on anyway: The word "shrove" means being absolved from sin through confession and penance, a time for Christians to prepare for absolution by fasting or renouncing comforts for the 40 days of Lent, starting on Ash Wednesday.

This is also known in the UK as Pancake Day, when many of us eat pancakes, or even, for those of a more athletic inclination, take part in pancake races. So why pancakes? Well, before the Lenten fasting, people traditionally used up ingredients they were not allowed to eat during the next 40 days, especially ingredients that will spoil, like eggs and milk - a great way to make pancakes, even if you prefer, waffles.



Mind you, we're not exactly trend-setters as we prepare this month's offering: there is evidence of pancakes dating back more than 5,000 years after the body of an Iceman, discovered in the Italian Alps in 1991, revealed that his last meal was in the form of a pancake-like flatbread.

(I don't know of any evidence that his demise necessarily had anything to do with his last meal; that's a relief).

A little later, in the first century, the Romans are believed to have eaten some kind of sweet pancake made from milk, flour, eggs and spices. And so a tradition was created.

Just to complicate matters, the actual definition of a pancake differs from country to country. In France, who usually tend to be a bit different, they refer to pancakes as crêpes, thin and made using plain flour and eggs, while in America, awkward lot, they are thick and fluffy, helped by the added ingredient of baking powder.

The popularity of pancakes can be credited to a number of different recipes and cultures, each offering their own twist on the original. Should you be so minded, your pancake could be accompanied with fruit, or maple syrup, banana, chocolate chip, Greek yogurt.

Or, like me, very thin, with just a sprinkling of sugar and a squirt of lemon juice. And plentiful, please.

As for the more energetic, a famous pancake race is held at Olney in Buckinghamshire, when people proceed (running is perhaps too athletic a term for their styles) over a course of over 400 yards carrying pancakes in a hot frying pan, flipping them as they run. Passing thought: could that explain the odd exclamation of "flipping heck?"



Oh, may I add one curious thought? You've no doubt heard of the Venice Carnival, which is held this month, and traditionally ends on Shrove Tuesday. Apparently (always a handy word, that, in case anyone alleges this is inaccurate), it goes back to the Middle Ages and the original aim was to eat up all the best food before Lent. That went on for several centuries until it was abolished in 1797. Carnival was revived in 1979, and the modern event now attracts approximately three million visitors.

If you're tempted to don a disguise and join it this year, it started on January 31 and continues until February 17, so you'd better hurry!

Alternatively, stay here, duly confess, and then indulge in a pancake or ten.

Roger Bing



Two new classes - Movement and Dance

Qi Gong
Slow, gentle, movement



To reserve a place for the upcoming
Tuesday morning class in Seaford
Please RSVP: audramarshall@icloud.com
T: 07971 296698

Supports immune function
A natural pain relief

Seaford January 2026!



DANCE CLASS

Nikki Bond, who leads the dance school based in our Chapel Rooms is excited to be starting an adult ballet class on Thursday mornings after half-term.



Sessions will run from 9.30 -10.30am and are ideal for complete beginners or for improvers. Why not try out a new skill and go along to her free trial on Thursday 12 February?

To book your free trial or to find out more information contact Nikki:
nikkib9@hotmail.co.uk

Questions of the day

1. What do these words have in common and suggest another to go with them:

- Avocado
- Agriculture
- Origami
- Sofa
- Parasol
- Umbrella

from ACE Ideas Forum

2. Two siblings live either side of a bridge. They can see everything except each other. What are they?

3. How do you make the number one disappear by adding to it?

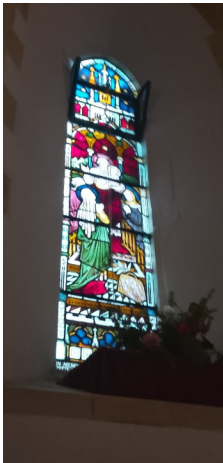
ANSWERS p.11



Lent, Holy Week and Easter services



* Bethlehem stable in place until 40 days after Jesus' birth when Mary & Joseph took baby Jesus to the Temple to be blessed



* Stained glass window at St Andrew's depicts baby Jesus being blessed in the Temple

Lent

Stations of the Cross - a weekly Lenten devotion 40mins approx. on Saturday mornings at 9.30am starting 21st February for six Saturdays.

Holy Week and Easter Services:

Palm Sunday 29th March 8am Said Eucharist and 10.30am Sung Eucharist

Maundy Thursday 2 April 7pm Eucharist service

Good Friday 3 April 3pm - An hour of devotion

Easter Vigil Saturday 4 April 7pm - Lighting of the Pascal Candle

Easter Sunday 5 April 8am Said Eucharist and 10.30am Sung Eucharist

* Spring is on its way - signs of new life and snowdrops in the garden next to the church



This lovely ancient Saxon church is open daily 10 to 4 - do visit to experience the peace within its building or outside in its churchyard.

Pictures - Tommy Glenton
Narrative - Chris Jennings

Weekly Services at St Andrew's

Sundays

8am Said Holy Eucharist

10.30am Sung Eucharist

(Second Sunday of the month Matins)

First Sunday in the month Sung Evensong - 4pm November to March

Wednesdays

10am Said Eucharist

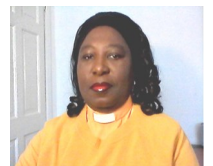
Saturdays

9am Morning Prayer online with Rev'd Elizabeth

First Wednesday of each month 10am Wholeness & Healing Eucharist

Last Friday of each month 'Breathing Space' 30 minutes of quiet prayer and contemplation 4pm November to March

Rev'd Elizabeth
Associate Vicar



Saint Lewinna

Bishopstone PCC (Saint Andrew's Church, Bishopstone, East Sussex) would like to raise £1,500 for the commissioning of a bespoke traditional Icon of St Lewinna inclusive of installation costs to be displayed in the porch at St Andrew's church.

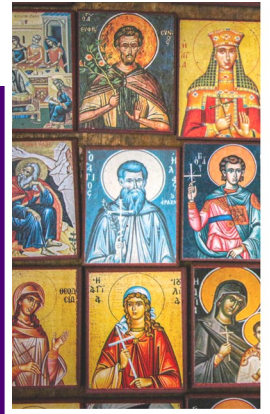
St Lewinna is Sussex's only recorded female saint. History relates that as a young virgin she was slain by a heathen Saxon due to her Christian belief. She lived and died in the late 7th century during the see of Archbishop Theodore. This makes her one of the first Christian converts and possibly the first Christian martyr in Sussex. Her feast day is remembered and celebrated on the 24th July. In 1058, a monk from Flanders stole the sacred relics of St Lewinna from a minster church near Seaford. The most recent archaeological and historical evidence and research now supports the probability that the minster church was our very own St Andrew's here in Bishopstone.

"Drogo" a monk and prolific scribe at the abbey of St Winnoc, near Bergues, Flanders, left us a fascinating and detailed account of the theft of her relics and their relocation to his abbey. Drogo records that parchment sheets detailing St Lewinna's many miracles of healing were pinned on the chapel walls of the minster church surrounding her shrine - very likely in what is now our current church porch. He also tells us that some of her relics were left behind at St Andrew's during the theft at the behest of St Lewinna herself. She was venerated for a long period here and in Flanders.

St Andrew's Bishopstone PCC, East Sussex, believes an Icon is the most fitting way for our local saint to be commemorated. Fine artist and iconographer, Merna Liddawi, has kindly accepted the commission to create the Icon of St Lewinna.



Once sufficient funds have been raised and the Icon is completed, it will be installed with reverence and ceremony -- in honour of her Christian witness and in memory of her holiness and martyrdom. For some people, an icon is more than an object of commemoration; it can be a focus for personal prayer and deeper spiritual connection.



Examples of icons



St Andrew's church porch

Donate today at our JustGiving page:
<https://www.justgiving.com/page/st-lewinna>

or BACS "PCC Bishopstone"
 Sort Code 30 - 95 - 01
 Account no. 01129707 (please ref: "SLMIA")
 or send a cheque made out to:
 "PCC Bishopstone"
 marked on the back "SLMIA" and send to:
 Saint Lewinna Memorial Icon Fund
 The Benefice Office
 St Peter's Church 85 Belgrave Rd,
 East Blatchington Seaford BN25 2HE

For children and families



JOIN US FOR XPLORE TOGETHER OUR FAMILY FOCUSED MASS

-  **Candlemas**
Sunday 1st February 10am
-  **Easter**
Sunday 5th April 10am
-  **Trinity**
Sunday 31st May 10am

JOIN US FOR XPLORE CRAFT STORIES FOOD AND FUN

-  **Xplore Lent**
Ash Wednesday 18th February 2-4pm
-  **Xplore Holy Week & Easter**
29th March 3-5.30pm





TREASURE HUNTERS

Join us for our Children's Group for ages 2-10, with parents and carers

- Sunday 18th January 3-4.30pm**
- Sunday 8th March 3-4.30pm**
- Sunday 10th May 3-4.30pm**

At St Peter's Church, East Blatchington
SEE YOU THERE!




N.B. Children need to be accompanied by a parent or carer at these events, please.



XPLORE LENT



Following in the Footsteps

Ash Wednesday,
18th February 2026,
2-4pm

St. Peter's Church Chapel Rooms
East Blatchington

Activity afternoon for children and families
Xplore how this season of Lent can prepare us for the great festival of Easter.




Crafts, games, activities, stories and songs followed by simple refreshments

For more details, or to book a place, contact Anne Collison
email: annexplore@btinternet.com
or tel: 07774003878




Palm Sunday, 29th March



Xplore Holy Week and Easter

8 Days that changed the World!

St. Peter's Chapel Rooms
3 - 5.30pm



Hands-on discovery fun for all the family.

Crafts, games, activities, stories and songs ending with a shared meal together

For more details, or to book a place, contact Anne Collison
email: annexplore@btinternet.com
or tel: 07774003878






For all


St Peter's Church
 East Blatchington, Seaford

Easter for All
 10.30am Friday 17 April



AN ACCESSIBLE SERVICE for All
 with Story & Song
 followed by refreshments from the
 Forget-me-Knot Cafe
 in the Chapel Rooms

Please note the date - yes, it's after Easter

Xplore Christingle afternoon December 2026



An enjoyable afternoon of activities for children and parents - crafts, games, stories, songs and light refreshments

Details of the Ash Wednesday and Holy Week and Easter Xplore Afternoons are on page 10

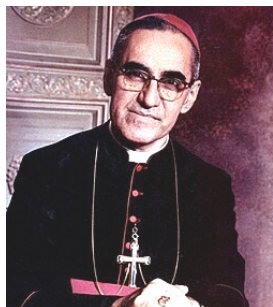
Answers to questions on page 7

1. They all end in the tonic sol fa scale words, so words like basmati or spaghetti will be next.
2. Eyes.
3. Add a G to make gone.

Thanks to Charles Nove on Magic Classical and his "elves"

'Aspire not to have more, but to be more'

On a recent train journey, Anne and I were surrounded by a lively group of youngsters, all wearing the uniform of the 'Oscar Romero Catholic School' in Goring-by-Sea. I found out later that their school's motto was Romero's words 'Aspire not to have more, but to be more.'



Oscar Romero was made a saint a few years ago. He had become El Salvador's Archbishop, 'a safe bet' when appointed. But thousands began to go missing. Teachers, nuns and priests were targeted. Then when a friend, one of his own priests was murdered, he confronted the nation's evil, wealthy men owning much of the land – and oppressing the poor. Romero switched from supporting the government to stand against injustice and became on national radio 'a voice for the voiceless'. He quickly developed 'a bias to the poor.'

He encouraged the armed forces to disobey their generals. He pleaded with US President Carter to stop arming the nation's military. Then it happened: a death squad came to the hospital by which he lived, an assassin came to the chapel where he was celebrating mass at the altar, and in front of everyone took aim. It was 24 March 1980.

'Aspire not to have more, but to be more.'

It's a tough motto to have on your school blazer. But it is the heart of the Gospel, it is from the heart of Jesus, and his 'bias to the poor.' It is radical, life-changing, sacrificial.

An article in the 'Church Times' (23 January) drew attention to the cost of discipleship for many of Christ's followers today. It followed the launch of 'Open Doors' 2026 World Watch List of the most vulnerable places to be a Christian. North Korea is no 1 on their list again, followed by Somalia, Yemen, Sudan, and Eritrea. The 6th most difficult place to be a Christian in the world is now Syria.

It was reported that many thousands of Christians have fled Syria in the last year. There are perhaps 300,000 Christians in the country now.



Before the bombing of St Elias Church in Damascus last June there were over a million

followers of Christ. The bombers killed 32, and more than 60 were injured. The next day there were prayers for the martyrs across the whole country.

So many have fled, many having fled already under the Assad regime. Amongst them was Aboud, a Syrian Orthodox, who with his wife Tomo and their young son George have come to our ancient church, and joined our congregation. We welcome them with open arms! At Christmas, George was baptized at St Peter's Church, as our photos show. We pray for George and his family, aware that his father's roots remain in Syria.



'Open Doors' ask us to pray with them in the words of Juliette, a Syrian Christian:

'We pray for peace and healing in Syria. We pray for comfort for those who suffer. Lord, please strengthen the faithful, and guide all of us towards a future of hope. We pray for all who have been sacrificed, asking for your protection and your everlasting peace. Pray that all Syrians will soon live in peace, and that God's hand will always protect them, finding their way to build their country again in peace.'

'Aspire not to have more, but to be more.' That's what God is calling us to in our Baptism and in the Holy Communion of the Eucharist. He may also be calling us to take up a bias to the poor, and pray for our fellow Christians (of many traditions) who suffer for their faith.

The baptism of little George Zen Mshaty

A very joyous occasion for all!



George's parents, Aboud and Tomo, are happy to share these photos of George's baptism with us.

Abul writes that they were delighted to feel the warmth of St Peter's church and the support of the community with George's baptism.



Fr Chris



PCC News

I am delighted to tell you that -

- 1) Work on the boiler room railings, which we have been talking about for several years, is to go ahead in the next few months. A design has been agreed, all permissions have been obtained and one of three quotes for the work, which also includes replacing the railings on the vestry steps and putting some on the steps from the rear fire escape door of the Chapel Rooms to the churchyard, has been approved by the PCC.
- 2) The PCC has also approved a quote for repair and repainting work on the upstairs exterior woodwork (windows, facias and soffits) on the front of the Chapel Rooms. The work is scheduled for just after Easter.

The Financial Statement for 2025 has been prepared and is with the auditor at present and the Annual Report for 2025 is being put together. Both will be ready for this year's Annual Parochial Committee Meeting on Sunday 26th April.2026.

To participate fully in this, vote or become a member of the PCC, you need to be on the electoral roll of St Peter's. Forms for this are always available at the back of the church and need to be returned to our Electoral Roll Officer, Debbie Phipps. Please ask me or any member of the PCC if you have any questions about this.

Christine Cooke PCC Secretary

Faith in the days of sorrow

Life is not balanced, can't be balanced, and would not be balanced, just like our human fingers are not of equal length. Life is going to deal with all of us one way or the other; we are going to experience the different shades of it—the joy, the sorrow, the happiness, the sadness, the betrayal, the solidarity, the sobriety, the ups, the downs, the lefts, the rights, and so on. Now, the question is, can your faith sing out loud in the days of sorrow? When life throws every bad thing it can at you, can you stand firm and say your hope is built on Christ, the solid foundation?

Our Lord Jesus Christ himself was a man of sorrow; he didn't live in palaces. He faced life challenges as a human, mourned, wept, felt sorrowful, and was killed too at a young age (he triumphed over all these). So, who are we to think that life will be kinder to us? Even if you have the whole wealth on earth and live in glamorous palaces, don't be foolish to think you are immune to life's adversity. Just take King Solomon in the Bible, for instance, who was regarded as the wealthiest and wisest man who ever lived on earth, who gave himself to all pleasures, and at the end loathed everything and called them 'vanity, a striving after the wind'.

Life adversity is going to deal with us in one form or another; our Christianity is not meant to immunize us. In fact, Jesus said, "...In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33, NIV). We can die or be killed before our time, fall to sickness and diseases, and fade away. We can be persecuted and fall into persecution; the enemies can gather around us and slaughter us with alarming success. Our finances/wealth can suddenly disappear, and we find ourselves scratching to make a living. Now, why does God often allow these to befall the faithful? Well, there are no definite answers; we can take courage in the knowledge that nothing ever happens to us behind God, and he declares to us in the Bible, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways...As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9, NIV). Here is where faith comes in—one of the most beautiful words in the Bible. One that totally defines your relationship with God; without which you cannot walk with Him nor please Him.

Have this in mind: this world is not our home. You become a stranger the moment you give your life to Jesus and bear the mark of Christ. The spiritual forces of wickedness have marked you as someone to take out in whatever way they can, or make life on earth super miserable. We have the supernatural grace to triumph over all these, but it does not always go according to our expectations. God can allow them to have their ways just like Job in the Bible, or He defends us according to His will. At times, our choices too come to play and put us in the snare of the spiritual forces of darkness.

Let your faith in Christ sing out loud at all times, especially louder in days of sorrow/adversity. Take courage in this that God's ultimate plan for you is to lie in prosperity in His heavenly kingdom. Your life on earth is just temporary, whether you live your days on earth in full or not, all is well, and all must be well in Jesus' name. Jesus Christ is the light and life we have come to know and follow, and by his grace we will fulfil our divine destiny on earth. Remain blessed.

Samuel Akinola

Samuel is a prolific and talented writer and media artist and a minister of the Gospel of Christ Jesus. He has built a career as a professional writer, content creator, graphic designer, web designer, photographer, videographer, and computer tutor.
<https://trilovemedias.com/samuel-olusegun-akinola/>
 Article Source: <http://www.faithwriters.com-CHRISTIAN WRITERS>

Article from ACE Ideas Forum

With the sudden, unexpected deaths of Kay Blackburn and Elizabeth Pay in January 2026 and the loss of several longstanding, faithful and much loved members of our congregation in 2025, including Angela Chalkley, Moira MacMillan, Jean Till, Barbara Prendergast and Bert James amongst others, I thought it appropriate to share with you this article which seemed to stand out to me in the March edition of the Association of Church Editors Ideas Forum.

Christine



Events

Open Gardens 2026

this popular summer Saturday afternoon event will take place three times this year.

June 13th at Sylvie Aston's

July 11th at Christa Ovenden's

Aug 29th at Tina Bacon's

Have a look around someone else's garden and enjoy a cup of tea and cake while chatting with friends and visitors.

Gardens will be open 2-4pm

Entry by donation



Further details will be published nearer the date of each event in the Bulletin.

EAST BLATCHINGTON LECTURES 2026



The first of this year's lectures will be an illustrated talk on

Seaford's Swifts

by Sheila Lothian of Save Seaford's Swifts

on Tuesday 3rd March 2026
at 2.30pm

in St Peter's Chapel Rooms,
Belgrave Road, East Blatchington,
Seaford BN25 2HE

Admission £7

including light refreshments

Tickets available from Newbury & Tully,
Estate Agents in town or by phoning the
church office 01323 899054 to leave a
message to book and /or pay at the door.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Here's the link to the January Churchyard Slide Show:

<https://youtu.be/MqpBtPFS3f0>



Diana Hitchin writes:

I took the last lot of photos in the Churchyard this afternoon, the 24th January. I've been fascinated to look at the different patterns in the Churchyard this time and it's really made me look a lot more closely at things. Even something as simple as a Church bench has such colour and pattern in it, as has the lichen on some of the Gravestones. It's really been good.



Lichen
on the
gravestones



A stone on the church tower which
looks like a dinosaur's head

A Badger's brand new world



Small Badger
© Hugh Clark
FRPS



Badgers
© Darin Smith

The Badger is a UK icon. Our largest predator, this monochrome mustelid is a star of the classics; *Wind in the Willows*, *Beatrix Potter*, and a certain well-known charity's logo. Often misunderstood, they are also loved by many, and some would argue there's not much better than a Badger, except perhaps, a Badger cub.

Deep in the sett, the Badger burrow, cosy chambers are lined with vegetation collected by the females. Cubs are born around February, but tiny stripey noses don't peek out for 12 weeks, when they emerge in spring. It's a big new world to explore, and stranger than it once was.

Their ancestors would have trundled about acres of ancient woodland; towering veterans and thick, sheltered understorey. Ventures into wildlife-rich farmland would have been commonplace for plentiful omnivorous feasts of insects, fruits, and juicy worms slurped from thick, fertile soil. Without trying, children may have spotted these Badgers for real, on summer evenings humming with biodiversity.

For these new cubs, it's a different story, where invertebrates are often scarce, soil hard, and movement restricted. Seasons have shifted, weather is more erratic, and precious habitats rarer. It's a story where thousands of their kin come to undignified ends on our busy roads, pesticides kill off much of the food, and the future of the family sett is unsure.

But the former isn't a fable, it's a reminder.

It is possible that these cubs, tumbling unexpectedly out of woodland boundaries, might not be met with hot, confusing concrete, but buzzing wildflower road verges; a heads up for the danger ahead. They might cross these risky highways via green wildlife bridges. They could travel with confidence through well-connected gardens and urban green spaces, staying safe along dense hedgerows and taking respite in deliberately dark nocturnal pockets.

They might once again take advantage of a bulging buffet, in our unmown and pesticide-free parks and lawns, in deep field-side buffer strips and in reinvigorated sickly-sweet native Bluebell woodland. We could better appreciate and understand Badger behaviour and needs, engage and connect communities, and inspire a younger generation. Their habitats could be fiercely protected, and their setts saved.



Badger in the Bluebells
© C Tomlinson

It sounds idyllic, but it doesn't have to be fiction - it's achievable and in reach. We can reset our expectations, recreate those lost habitats, and rewrite the story for our Badgers.

By Kerry Williams: Communications Officer - Conservation, Sussex Wildlife Trust March 2026 sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk

Sussex Wildlife Trust has over 38,000 members who are helping us to protect the rich natural heritage of East and West Sussex, and Brighton and Hove. We exist so that future generations can experience the joy and well-being that comes from connecting with nature in Sussex. We are for everyone who cares about nature in Sussex.

Groups

EAST BLATCHINGTON CROCHET CIRCLE



A lovely friendly crochet group, for those who are experienced, just beginning or inbetween! Upstairs in the St Peter's Chapel Rooms Monday evenings at 7-8.30pm.



Scan the QR code for our Facebook Group or ring Linda 07747 533064 for more info

LIGHTHOUSE




OUR GROUP FOR 11 - 18 YEAR OLDS MEETS ONCE A MONTH EVERY MONTH
A FUN AND FRIENDLY FAITH LED GROUP FOR FRIENDSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, FUN AND FOOD

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR THE WHATSAPP GROUP AND FIND OUT WHERE WE WILL BE NEXT.
OR EMAIL ANNEXPLORE@BTINTERNET.COM
OR CALL ON 07774003878




THE ART GROUP



The group is not meeting at the moment but it is hoped to re-start in the Chapel Rooms soon, on a different day.

Please keep an eye out for news of this in the Bulletin or E-news.

Forget-Me-KNOT Memory Cafe

10.30am until 12.00 noon Chapel Rooms, St Peter's East Blatchington

A Place for those experiencing memory loss and their carers offering a safe space conversation, tea and cake.



01323 899054
www.ebbchurches.org.uk/memory-cafe



There are two new groups/classes for adults starting in February - **Ballet** and **Gentle Movement**

Details are on page 7



Bible Group - Monday 2 pm to 3.30 pm, in Chapel Rooms Hall
Come and join us as we look at Scripture and grow closer in our relationships: with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and with each other, as we see things from each other's point of view. We look back at passages from the previous Sunday's service and ask how they are relevant to ourselves and our times and then we try to apply them to our lives. Please bring your Bible.



Please note:
During Lent the Lent Course will take the place of the Bible Group.

Aileen Rickard



St Peter's at prayer in February & March

Weekend Services

Saturday 9am Morning prayer with Rev'd Elizabeth (online on Facebook Live only)

5.30pm Parish Eucharist (1st Saturday of the month - Wholeness and Healing Service, 3rd Saturday - Taizé Mass)

Sunday 8am Holy Communion BCP

10am Parish Eucharist CW This service is live-streamed on YouTube and on Facebook which can be accessed through our website:-
www.ebbchurches.org.uk

Sunday 4pm Evening Prayer BCP (not 1st Sunday in the month when there is Evensong at St Andrew's)

Weekday Services

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

9,30am Morning Prayer also on *Facebook Live*

Wednesday 10.30am Midweek Eucharist

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8pm Compline (online only)

These weekday services are streamed live at www.facebook.com/StPetersEB



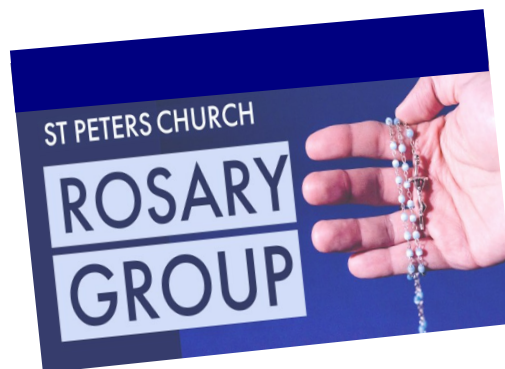
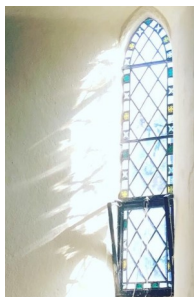
'HOLDING THE SILENCE'

our silent prayer meeting, takes place in the church and online ... on Zoom

5.30 to 6pm every Monday

You are invited to come and keep this space of contemplation and peace within our complicated and busy world.

The Zoom link is available from our website, www.ebbchurches.org.uk



This group meets in the church every 2nd and 4th Tuesday afternoon at 2pm.

Meeting ID: 851 6436 0499 Passcode: letmein

New people are welcome to join the group. Curious? Just come along.

PARISH PRAYER DIARY

Our monthly prayer diary is available on the church website – www.ebbchurches.org.uk Printed copies are available in the church porch. This is a valuable resource for those who are currently participating in the life of daily prayer in this parish and is like throwing a lasso of prayer around the church - globally, nationally, diocese-wide and here in our own community. It includes the Cycle of Prayer for the Worldwide Anglican Communion, Chichester Diocesan Intercessions, names of the roads, schools and care homes in the parish, names of individuals and groups who work and worship at St Peter's and the names of those who are sick and have asked for our prayers.

If you would like a copy sent to you individually by email, please let Tash Tansley know.

tel: 01323 899054 email: officeebb.benefice@gmail.com



St Peter's Church

East Blatchington, Seaford

Open hearted, Open minded, Open to God, Open to all every day

RECTOR *Rev'd Simon Earnshaw 01323 555026 / 07596 485157*

email: simonjearnshaw@outlook.com

ASSOCIATE VICAR *Rev'd Elizabeth Jinks 07902 715423 email: associatevicarebb@gmail.com*

HONORARY ASSISTANT PRIESTS *Fr Eric Pollard 01323 492312,*

Fr John Harrington 01323 351816, Fr Chris Collison 07931 646745

CHURCHWARDENS *Anne Collison 07774 003878 email: annexplore@btinternet.com*

Neville Chalkley 01323 891921 email: neville.chalkley@btinternet.com

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER *Position vacant For all safeguarding matters contact the Rector - details above*

BENEFICE ADMINISTRATOR *Natasha Tansley 01323 899054*

email: officeebb.benefice@gmail.com

Website: www.ebbchurches.org.uk

Twitter: www.twitter.com/StPetersEastB **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/StPetersEB

Wedding, Baptism and Funeral enquiries: *contact the Rector 01323 555026 / 07596 485157*

Pastoral care: To request and seek any support, spiritual or practical, please contact *Geraldine Hedgecock 07811989510*

email: geraldine.hedgecock@gmail.com

Festivals, Holy Days, meditations, study groups and prayer vigils as announced.

The church is open every day for **private prayer from** 10am Monday to Saturday,
12pm Sunday until 4pm from Nov. to March.

Details of all services in church and online are on page 18.

PCC SECRETARY: *Christine Cooke 01323 490548 email: pccstpeters@gmail.com*

PCC TREASURER: *Chris Reynolds 01323 490944 email: cjr911@mac.com*

PLANNED GIVING SCHEME: *Position vacant*

ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER: *Debbie Phipps email: dehipps1985@gmail.com*

CROSS KEYS EDITOR: *Christine Cooke 01323 490548 email: christinecooke.xks@gmail.com*

HALL BOOKINGS: *online: <https://www.ebbchurches.org.uk/chapel-rooms>*

Enquiries: contact the benefice office, 01323 899054 email: officeebb.benefice@gmail.com

WEEKLY BULLETIN: *Neville Chalkley 01323 891921 email: bulletinstpeters2015@gmail.com*

ART and CRAFT GROUP: *Vacant at present*

St Peter's reg. charity no.: 1173506

Photos by Christine Cooke, Anne Collison, Linda Stratford, Diana Hitchin, Natasha Tansley, Phil Sutters, magazine contributors, and from the Internet: (Creative Commons, Wikipedia.org, Wikimedia Commons, Commons Media, Clipart).

Should you need another copy of this magazine, there are usually spares in the church porch. If you cannot get there, please let me know and I will deliver one to your door. **Christine** 01323 490548

This Cross Keys can be viewed on the benefice website:- www.ebbchurches.org.uk

Looking back to December 2025



Explore Christingle Afternoon



Christa and Linda decorating the Christmas tree



A wonderful total of £970 was raised at our Christmas charity collections and shared between this year's two chosen charities; a local one, **'Family Support Work'** and **'Embrace the Middle East'**, an ecumenical Christian charity working to help marginalised and vulnerable communities in the Middle East.

Appreciative letters of thanks were received from both charities.

Take care, keep warm and stay safe.