



Willingdon and Hampden Park & The Hydneye Parish Newsletter

#2 March 2026

Dear friends,

Somehow, six months has elapsed since I last wrote the inaugural parish partnership newsletter. The rhythm of weekly parish life combined with a busier workload now that we are a full-time priest down has meant that less urgent tasks, such as writing a newsletter, get put on the back burner.

When I last wrote we were coming to the end of the autumn and facing the dark months of winter and now as I look out of the window, I can see signs of spring in abundance. The vicarage garden is replete with primroses and birds are preparing themselves to nest and raise their chicks. There has also been a recent respite from grey skies and wet weather, and I can't be alone in being buoyed up by the increasingly brighter days and lighter evenings. That sense of renewal and anticipation of Easter makes spring my favourite season- even if lent means that I have chosen to forsake cake and biscuits!

Yet, in the midst of the delights of spring, we have seen shadows in the world lengthen. The drumbeats of a potentially protracted and widespread war reach our ears as the Middle East descends into heated conflict and the world feels an even more precarious place than it has before, in my lifetime at least. I suppose it was ever thus, it is why Jesus is recorded as saying:

Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. (KJV Matthew 24. 4-8)

The world is, and always has been, a precarious place to be. There have always been those in power that would see the world burn before them and yet ordinary people must continue to live their everyday lives despite them. I encourage you to hold firm in the faith that we have received and in the promises of God that speak of the ultimate victory of all that is good over the powers of evil through Jesus Christ. Though there is much to lament over in the world, and many people in desperate situations to pray for, we must always remember that love will have the final word, and that there is much peace, joy and comfort to be found in meditating on the deep and abiding truths that we find in Jesus Christ and trusting in Him for our salvation.

With every blessing,

Fr. Adam Ransom
Priest in Charge

Work is being carried out on the tower to repair several issues that have occurred over years of weather and squirrel attack. Much of the damage has only been made visible since having the scaffolding erected to sort out the issues of which we were already aware. This is a costly endeavour and there will be other works needed on other parts of the building over the coming years. If you want to find out more or wish to make a donation to the restricted **Willingdon Church Building Fund**, please visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/willingdonhcbf

Holy Week and Easter are just around the corner- it would be lovely to see our churches full of people during the various services that will be happening. Full details of these can be found by going to www.achurchnearyou.co.uk and searching for the parishes. Alternatively, you can keep an eye on the pew sheet which will have full details nearer the time, check the Facebook page/ group, contact Carl in the parish office or refer to one of the cards that Fr. Adam distributed in church a few weeks ago.

Both parishes are facing financial difficulties- not only from the ongoing needs of the building but in general running costs. The utility bills and maintenance costs grow ever higher, and we find that it is increasingly hard to make any money from hall hire and trading activities because of the significant costs of maintaining and operating our buildings. The PCCs are considering ways of decreasing costs where at all possible and increasing our income through fundraising campaigns, grant applications for specific projects, and other means. A big contribution to our income has always been from generous donations- whether monthly stewardship, one off gifts or legacies. We are thankful for all that we receive. Fr. Adam will be looking at running stewardship campaigns later in the year to help us all consider what we might be able to give to help our parishes continue to operate in a difficult financial climate.

Willingdon parish have been very glad to be able to host Jason, a lovely gentleman who was without a home. He has spent several weeks camping in the churchyard and has been offered a home by Wealden council in the Uckfield area. We wish him every success for his future.

Fr. Adam is thinking about running a short course later in the year for anybody who is considering being baptised, confirmed or just wishes to brush up on their faith. If you might be interested, please do be in touch with Carl in Willingdon parish office so that Fr. Adam might have an idea of numbers and of how to shape the content to suit.

A healthy church is one that demonstrates the priest and people working together for the common good. It has been heartening to watch how people have stepped up and taken on all sorts of endeavours in recent years and particularly since November when Fr. Danny left for Canada. Fr. Adam appreciates the support that he has been given and very much wishes to encourage people in their passions, skills and gifts so that all may flourish and the church grow more into a place of Christian love and grace. Should anyone have any areas of ministry that they would like to develop or any projects that they might wish to lead or co-ordinate then Fr. Adam would love to hear from them. Also, should anyone feel called to a particular area of ministry then a conversation could be had with Fr. Adam about training to become an authorised lay minister in a relevant area: please see the following website for more details www.chichester.anglican.org/authorised-lay-ministry/

The 3rd chapter of the epistle of James speaks at length about the trouble that our tongues can cause us; whether intentionally or by a slip of the tongue we can all find ourselves spreading gossip, rumours, discontent and even spite and malice. Churches can also be hotbeds of, what St. Benedict called, murmuring as people grumble and complain over the most trivial of matters and drain the energies and passions of priest and people alike. We must all be on guard and try to think carefully about what we say in all matters so that we might not discourage those around us.

Lent is a great time to reflect on the way that we interact with those around us and examine the true motivations that are at the heart of our words and deeds. Sometimes, it can be hard to be honest with ourselves about what we desire to achieve in our encounters with others.

This lent let us all do the very best we can to spend time in prayerful reflection on our speech and the ways in which we interact with others both in person and online. Let's do what we can to encourage one another and spread joy, peace and love in our church, in our communities and in our lives.