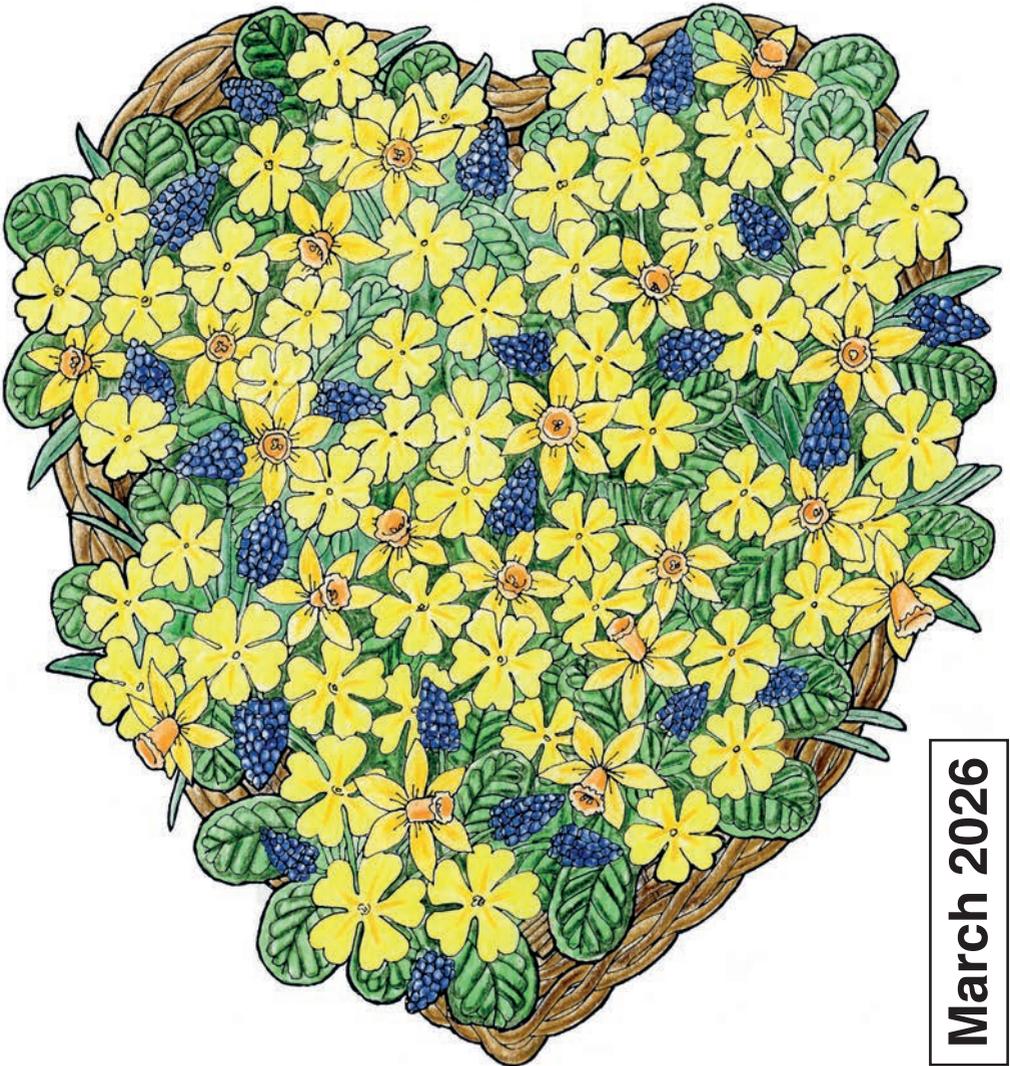


The Herald

50p

THANK YOU



March 2026

Reservoir Group of Churches



The Parish of
St Margaret, Downham with
St Peter, South Hanningfield and
St Mary the Virgin, Ramsden Bellhouse

www.downhamchurch.org.uk

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Keep up to date with events as they happen

www.facebook.com/downhamchurch

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www.facebook.com/ramsdensbellhousechurch

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What's on when and where

Sunday 1 March - Lent 2

10.00am St Peter's South Hanningfield Holy Communion

11.00am St Margaret's Downham Family Service

Note: No service at Ramsden Bellhouse

Sunday 8 March - Lent 3

11.00am St Margaret's Downham Sung Eucharist

Note: No service at Ramsden Bellhouse or South Hanningfield

Sunday 15 March - Mothering Sunday

11.00am St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse Group Holy Communion

Note: No services at Downham or South Hanningfield

Sunday 22 March - Lent 6

10.00am St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse Holy Communion

11.00am St Margaret's Downham Sung Eucharist

Note: No service at South Hanningfield

Sunday 29 March - Palm Sunday

Note: Clocks go forward today

10.00am St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse Group Holy Communion

Note: No services at Downham or South Hanningfield

The first Sunday of April is Easter Day

See 3 for full list of services during Holy Week and Easter

Other dates for your diary

Coffee morning in South Hanningfield Village Hall

Wednesday 11 March - 10.30am to 12.30pm

St Peter's Quiz Evening in South Hanningfield Village Hall

Saturday 9 May 7.00 for 7.30pm

South Hanningfield Flower Festival

Saturday 5 to Monday 7 September

(Make a note of the dates in your diary)

The Churches of
**St Margaret Downham with St Peter South Hanningfield
and St Mary Ramsden Bellhouse**

invite you to join one or more of our
Holy Week & Easter celebrations



Sunday 29 March - Palm Sunday

11.00am Ramsden Bellhouse

Holy Communion &
Distribution of Palm crosses

Thursday 2 April - Maundy Thursday

7.30pm South Hanningfield

Holy Communion

Friday 3 April - Good Friday

2.00pm Downham

Service of Reflection on the
events of Good Friday

Sunday 5 April - Easter Day

6.15am Downham

Sunrise Service

10.00am Ramsden Bellhouse

Holy Communion

10.00am South Hanningfield

Holy Communion

11.00am Downham

All Age Holy Communion

From the ministry team

Glorious mud!

Recently, in a brief lull in the rain, I went for a stroll. While I was out on my walk a children's song came to mind:

*"Mud, mud, glorious mud,
Nothing quite like it for cooling the blood.
So follow me, follow,
Down to the hollow,
And there let us wallow in glorious mud."*

These lyrics are from "Hippopotamus song" by Flanders and Swan. Hippos love mud - as do, I know, a fair number of dogs, (possibly much to their owners' annoyance!).

Mud does seem to be an everyday fact of life for us in winter. If we are lucky enough to have a garden, or woods and/or fields to walk around, mud will be involved. Particularly in this wet winter we have had.

Mud also reminds me of a quite remarkable story about Jesus. There was a man who was blind from birth. Jesus took some dirt from the ground and spat in it, turning the soil to mud. He placed the mud on the man's eyes, and his sight was restored (see John 9.1-12).

The church is currently in the middle of Lent - that season of preparation for Easter. It is six weeks of fasting (or at least giving up something we like), prayer, bible study, and almsgiving (giving money, if we are able, to either the church or another charity).

Lent can feel a little like wading through mud. But like the story of the blind man, mud is not just mud when Jesus is involved. This time of preparation can be a time of transformation, as we are reminded once again that Jesus died for each one of us, so that we may be forgiven our sins and our relationship with God restored. We are invited to see our lives through a different lens: through Jesus' sacrificial love for us.

Out of the mud grass will grow and flowers will bloom. Out of Lent the joy of Easter and the resurrection of Jesus Christ will burst forth!

Whether mud is a source of joy or annoyance for you, I pray you have a good month ahead.

God bless

The Revd Jacqui

PS in this edition of the magazine you will find details of our Lent and Easter services on page 3. You are very warmly invited to come and join us.

Mothers and children

This year Mothering Sunday falls on 15 March.

Whatever our childhood was like, it was formational. We learned from our earthly parents, good things ideally, although not everyone's childhood is great.

In the Bible, St Paul refers to the importance of up-bringing and of spiritual heritage. When he greets Timothy in his second letter to him, he calls him his 'Dear Son', praises his 'genuine faith' and then goes on:

"You share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you."

Timothy's childhood had been rooted in the Old Testament scriptures that he had been taught by his mother and grandmother. Their example had set him on the right path, until he was old enough to choose for himself to follow Jesus.

Physically, when we are young, we need nurturing by mothers and fathers. Spiritually it is the same. When we come to faith, we need spiritual mothers and fathers to help us grow into maturity as God's adopted children.

We also need spiritual sustenance: regularly reading the Bible, spending time in God's presence in prayer, and worshipping with the family of the Church.

God – our heavenly parent provides our personal nurturing through prayer and the Bible, but He also gives us each other, to encourage and share our experiences of his faithfulness.

However imperfect our earthly upbringing was, God is a good, good Father, a perfect parent who will only teach us good things. And gradually, as the fruit of the Holy Spirit ripens in us, we will become more like Jesus. We will gain more of the family likeness!

Is there someone in your life who has helped you to grow spiritually? This Mothering Sunday, thank God for them.

Is there someone in your life whom you have 'mothered' or 'fathered' along the way? This Mothering Sunday, pray for them.

From the registers

Downham

Baptism

8 February

Darcy James Hayes

Burial of Ashes

24 January Susan & Terry Pembroke
30 January Vera Joyce Tucker
12 February Jenny Mary Norwood

Funeral

10 February Stephen Wright

St Margaret's Downham

Family Service

The first Sunday of the month, 8 March, is our Family Service and we are pleased to be welcoming more families for this very informal service. But of course it is not just for those with children, all are welcome. We sit around tables with a cup of something to drink and a biscuit or two. We sing songs that are usually more modern and there are activities for the children to do. Sometimes we include audio visuals. If you haven't been before, why not come along and give it a try.

That said, the first Sunday in April will be rather different because it is Easter Sunday. We have two services at Downham that day. At 6.15am we have our sunrise service. Weather permitting this will be held in the churchyard, where we are ideally placed to watch the sun rising up over the fields. We also have a service at 11.00am, which will be an All Age Holy Communion. We think that the Easter Bunny will be going shopping before the service so that the children will go home with an Easter Egg.

Downham WI

Our Tuesday club is not just about tea, coffee and biscuits, we do enjoy art and crafts. The end of February we made an assortment of Birthday/Easter cards as demonstrated by our own Ann and Linda.

On 24 March we are having a "bring & buy" Easter themed event with proceeds to our local nominated charities. All are welcome to come along, 10.00am to 12.00noon with homemade cakes and refreshments.

We have received two thank you letters, one from St Luke's Hospice where we raised monies by not sending each other Christmas cards but donating to this good cause. We also received a thank you letter from The Ladybirds song group, as they entertained us over our Christmas lunch, and appreciated the donation to them.

Wendy

News from Downham Church of England School

At Downham Church of England Primary School, we will soon begin our preparations for our Easter Celebration service. This year we are taking a slightly different approach. Instead of each class retelling a section of the Easter story as they have done previously, our focus will be more on a whole school event with more opportunities for all the children to participate throughout the service through songs and prayers. At Easter, we reflect upon the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We consider God's immense love for us, sending his only son to bring about reconciliation between God and his creation. God's love has triumphed over death. God gives us new life in Christ, to live and serve him.

Over the next few weeks, we are also looking forward to welcoming some very special visitors to our school: we will be hosting some eggs which will (hopefully) hatch into chicks! This is a great opportunity for the pupils at school to witness first-hand the wonder of new life and, how fitting, that it ties in with our preparations for our Easter Celebration service at Chelmsford Cathedral.

We will also be encouraging our youngest pupils (EYFS and Year 1) who take part in our Forest Schools programme to watch out for other signs of spring – flowers bursting into bloom, leaves budding on the trees once more, and the sound of birds and the sight of squirrels around the school. The lighter mornings and evenings also bring warmth and, hopefully, better weather and more opportunities to spend time outside. As we do so, let's take our example from our youngest pupils and stop to watch, wonder and acknowledge the beauty of creation in all its splendour. Let's give thanks to our Creator and Redeemer.

Lynne Boyd

Humanities Leader at Downham Church of England Primary School

St Mary's Ramsden Bellhouse

We have three services at St Mary's during March. On Sunday 15 March - Mothering Sunday, we have the Downham Group service of Sung Eucharist at 11.00am. Sunday 22 March is our normal service of Holy Communion at 10.00am, then Sunday 29 March is Palm Sunday when we traditionally have a joint service for the three churches in the Downham Group, together with the Ramsden Bellhouse Baptist Church. This will be a service of Sung Eucharist with the distribution of palms at 11.00am.

We hope you will be able to join us for at least one of these services.

Ramsden Heath Social Club

Our regular monthly BINGO is on Friday 6 March at 8.00pm. Just £1.00 to play plus £2.00 for each book you would like to play. All welcome. FREE tea/coffee/biscuits at the half-time break, but please feel free to bring other drinks/snacks of your own.

The next event in March will be an INDOOR GAMES NIGHT on Saturday 21 March also at 8.00pm. Admission prices for this event are £3.00 for Members, £6.00 for Guests & £2.00 for Children. Teams of 6 to 8 maximum or come along & join a team on the night. An evening of not too serious indoor games such as darts, golf putting, etc. Please bring your own drinks & snacks to this event.

All our events take place in Ramsden Heath Village Hall, Dowsetts Lane.

For more information/tickets please contact:

Dave Quinney on 07950 309524 or Dave Charlton on 07940 540819

Community Cuppa & Cake afternoon

Tuesday 10 March 2.00 to 4.00pm

Ramsden Heath Village Hall

Dowsetts Lane CM11 1HX

Well as usual it was a great turnout in February and we were delighted to donate to Deacon Richard of St Vincent's Southend and St Vincent De Paul Society (SVP) £200 for this great charity. This charity supports homeless and vulnerable people with food banks, accommodation, education etc. Richard is taking on a strenuous walk to raise more funds. If you feel you would like to donate please go to www.justgiving.com/page/deacon-richard-53

Our next Coffee Afternoon will be on 10 March and we look forward to a full house yet again to enjoy a cuppa for 50p and a piece of homemade cake for £1.50.

Best wishes

Ramsden Cupcakes

Ramsden Heath Horticultural & Allotment Society

Our monthly meetings are held at Ramsden Heath Village Hall,

Dowsetts Lane, on the first Thursday of the month

Remember the new start time – 7.30pm

Now that the worst two months of the year are over – and it has been a particularly miserable start to the year weather-wise – we can start looking forward to Spring, and already there are green shoots on the shrubs, bulbs

are sprouting eagerly and daffodils are blooming on the green by the War Memorial.



Our AGM on 5 February was very well supported with 46 people in attendance. After the formalities everyone enjoyed a cheese and wine buffet. The Banksian Medal this year was awarded to Teresa Flannigan, who scored the most points in all the entries. Theresa was also awarded a Recognition Award presented by the RHS for her continual support of our Horticultural Society. Congratulations Teresa.

We now look forward to our Spring Show on Saturday 4 April. Keep an eye on the Unity Bulbs, to make sure they are either showing signs of life or, if they are too keen, put in

a dark corner to slow them down. Can't have them peaking too early! More information next month.

Before that we have a meeting on Thursday 5 March. Our speaker is Ruth Goudy, her talk is entitled 'Flower power – how flowers benefit our well being'.

There will also be our usual mini show. This will take place before our speaker starts at 8.00pm. The categories are vegetables, bulbs and flowers which gives you plenty of scope to find something in your garden or greenhouse which applies and is looking good.

The Horticultural Society is always happy to welcome new members. We have monthly meetings on the first Thursday of the month at Ramsden Heath Village Hall. If you are interested in joining a friendly group and enjoy gardening talks, garden visits as well as social evenings, please contact Sue Lowing, email: susan.lowing@btinternet.com.

St Peter's South Hanningfield

Please be aware that whilst we have five Sundays in March, there will be no fifth Sunday service at St Peter's on 29 March as it is Palm Sunday and

traditionally the three churches of the Downham Group have a joint service in Ramsden Bellhouse with members of Ramsden Bellhouse Baptist Church. This year it is St Mary's turn to host the joint service. We hope you will join us there.

Thank you all so much for supporting the Village Ball on 24 January. Read all about it below in news from South Hanningfield Village Hall. It was a great success and raised £4,687 which will be shared between St Peter's Church and the Village Hall.

The village coffee mornings are proving to be very popular, it is great to see so many people attend every month - to taste all the lovely home made cakes and have a good natter. Please do come along. The next one is on Wednesday 11 March.

We now have a date for the annual quiz night, Saturday 9 May at the Village Hall, 7.00 for 7.30pm start, £8 a ticket and tables of 6. Bring your own drinks and nibbles. There will be a raffle on the night. Thank you in advance to Paul and Paula but, please can we have some slightly easier questions this year!

Please call Cathy 01268 710926 for tickets.

Please note the Easter services on page 3

Best wishes

Mission Control

South Hanningfield Village Hall

South Hanningfield Charity Ball Thank you to everyone who supported the Hanningfield Charity Ball this January — we hope those who attended enjoyed the evening as much as we did. We are so grateful to the charity auction prizes from: Stockbrook Golf Club; John and Donna of Quattro Plant Hire and Julie and Lee Safe and Sound Vehicle Security Specialists. Raffle prizes included those from Catherine and Darren Bennett; Unitfour Hairdressers; Stephen's Bouquet; Sam Browne; Vita Bella Restaurant; Downham Hall; Whitegates Farm Butchers; Royal Tiger Restaurant; Old Windmill public house; Kirsty Baker; Tracy Nicholls-Bullock; Deirdre Loeber; Richard Munden; Bark Park; Spriggs Family; Sullivan Family; Barn Mews Well-being Clinic; Darcy Eleanor; Shepherd and Dog; FFS Nails; Sam at Rettendon Bell and generous donations from other supporters.

A special thanks to Emma Keeling for doing a great job organising the South Hanningfield Charity Ball. We are delighted to share that an incredible £4,687 was raised on the night through ticket sales, the raffle and the auction. The funds will be shared equally between St Peter's Church and the Village Hall.

Please save the date for next year's ball: Saturday 23 January 2027. We very much hope you'll be able to join us again for another fantastic evening.

St Patrick's Ceilidh Not long now until our Ceilidh Dance on Saturday, 14 March, the last remaining tickets are available! The Yardarm Ceilidh Band will be in attendance, with a caller to show dancers the steps to the music. There will be a cheap licensed bar and there will also be a Raffle. Tickets cost £8 per person, doors will open from 7.00pm. For further information and to book your tickets, email vallisc@aol.com or phone 07891 653238.

SOUTH HANNINGFIELD VILLAGE HALL

CEILIDH to celebrate St. Patrick's Day



Saturday, 14th March 2026

Doors open from 7pm

with The Yardarm Ceilidh Band

Ceilidh dancing with a Raffle
Cheap licenced bar open

For tickets or more information
scan the QR code or
Email: vallisc@aol.com
Phone: 07891 653238



**TICKETS £8
PER PERSON**

Céad Míle Fáilte

South Hanningfield Village Hall,
South Hanningfield Road,
Chelmsford, CM3 8HL
Registered Charity No. 301402



St George's Day We have booked Tom Carradine musical act for Saturday, 25 April, doors will open from 7.00pm. Tickets are £15 each and bring your own drinks and nibbles. There will also be a Raffle! To book, please call Sandra on 07396 546050 or email shvhall@gmail.com

Ladies Race Night on the evening of Saturday, 27 June. Further details to follow in the next edition of *The Herald*. To book, please call Sandra on 07396 546050 or email shvhall@gmail.com

Raffle Prizes Needed If anyone has any suitable items that could be used as Raffle prizes, please can you donate them to us which would be used at future fundraising events for the hall. The committee would be very grateful.

No Parking on Pavement by Hall South Hanningfield Village Hall Management Committee requests that vehicles don't park up on the pavement outside the village hall because of the health and safety risks. Please alert the volunteer committee if you see such vehicles parked in this way outside the hall on 07891 653238.

Mobile Library

The Mobile Library visit South Hanningfield Village Hall every three weeks. Day of visit: Tuesday Time of visit: 11.25pm to 11.55pm, Next visit dates are 3rd and 24th March.

Regular Activities

Coffee Morning - Wednesday 11 March

Second Wednesday of each month from 10.30am – 12.30pm

Please call the listed contacts below to book a place.

Pilates & Keep Fit

Monday 9.45am – 10.45am

Thursday 10.30am – 11.30am

Contact Hayley on 07758 427379

Puppy Dog Training Classes

Monday from 6.00pm

Dog training for puppies of all ages

Contact Rachel on 07484 706085

or email Rachel@PuppyPotentialDogTraining.co.uk

Minis/Pre-School Classes for 1-4 years

Tuesdays from 9.30am – 10.15am

3-week trials available! Phonics with Robot Reg

Contact Laura Dack on email 2lauras@robotreg.co.uk

or 01268 956859 for more information.

Line Dancing

Tuesday afternoons 12.30pm-1.30pm (beginners) and 1.30pm to 2.30pm (more advanced)

Contact Richard from the Super Troupers Line Dance Club email thesupertrouperlsc@gmail.com or tel 07740 360554.

Boxfit Personal Trainer

Personal Trainer available from 7.00pm on Tuesday evenings.

For more information, contact Rachael, Boxfit instructor on 07912 344560.

1-1 Ballroom and Latin lessons and wedding dance lessons

Available with Callie every Wednesday afternoon and evening from 3pm £30 for a 45-minute lesson. Please contact Callie on 07885 630241

Tai Chi Beginner Class

11.45am to 12.45pm Thursdays

Tel Sen 07853 239103 or email senfitness@outlook.com to find out more information.

Zumba and Yoga Thursday night

Zumba 6.30pm to 7.20pm and Vinyasa Flow Yoga 7.30pm to 8.30pm.
Pay as you go.

Tel: Charlene on 07772 443028 or email info@sakurayogastudios.co.uk

Upholstery Class

Friday morning 9.30am – 1.00pm Contact Fiona on 01621 776586 or 07887 507208

Wickford Board Game Club

On Friday evenings from 6.00pm - the club are a friendly mix of players of all ages and experience levels with a huge range of modern board games for those interested to come and try! For more information, contact Mike on 07958 456575 or look up the Wickford Board Game Club on Facebook.

Zumba and Yoga on Saturday mornings

Zumba from 9.20am to 10.20am and Vinyasa Flow Yoga 10,30am to 11.30am.

Pay as you go

Tel: Charlene on 07772 443028 or email info@sakurayogastudios.co.uk

If you would like to book the South Hanningfield Village Hall for any regular activities or events, please call Sandra Graves, our Bookings Secretary on 07396 546050 or email shvhall@gmail.com to check availability and prices.

Please continue to support our local village hall in 2026 and if there are any other ways you can help us, let us know. Please contact the Chairman, Clive Vallis for further information on 07891 653238.

Website <https://e-voice.org.uk/shanningfieldvillagehall>

Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/southhanningfieldvillagehall>

All in the month of March

It was:

300 years ago, on 26 March 1726 that Sir John Vanbrugh, architect and playwright died. Best known for designing Blenheim Palace and Castle Howard.

250 years ago, on 24 March 1776 that John Harrison, carpenter and clockmaker died. Known for inventing the marine chronometer, which enabled sailors to calculate longitude at sea.

175 years ago, on 11 March 1851 that the première of Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi's opera Rigoletto, was held in Venice.

150 years ago, on 10 March 1876 that the world's first telephone call was made. Alexander Graham Bell used his telephone to call his assistant, Thomas Watson, after spilling acid in his laboratory. The first words ever spoken on a telephone were: "Mr Watson, come here. I want you."

100 years ago, on 30 March 1926 that Ingvar Kamprad, Swedish businessman, was born. He founded IKEA, the furniture retail company, in 1943, when he was just 17 years old. (Died 2018)

90 years ago, on 4 March 1936 that the German airship Hindenburg made its first flight. It was the largest airship ever constructed, and was destroyed in a fire in May 1937, ending the era of airship travel.

80 years ago, on 11 March 1946 that Rudolf Hess, former Commandant of Auschwitz concentration camp, was captured by the British forces in Germany. At the Nuremberg tribunals in April, he admitted to being responsible for the deaths of the 2.5 million people who had been killed at Auschwitz. He was executed on 16 April 1947.

Also 80 years ago, on 25 March 1946 that London's Heathrow Airport first opened as London Airport. It was renamed Heathrow Airport in 1966.

75 years ago, on 15 March 1951 that Dennis the Menace first appeared in the British children's comic, The Beano.

70 years ago, on 23 March 1956 that Pakistan became the world's first Islamic Republic.

65 years ago, on 6 March 1961 that George Formby, the 'Ukulele King,'

comedian, singer and actor died. Known for his comic songs.

Also 65 years ago, on 8 March 1961 that Sir Thomas Beecham, British conductor and impresario, died. He had founded several major orchestras and transformed the operative and orchestral scene in Britain.

50 years ago, on 14 March 1976 that Busby Berkeley, American film director and choreographer died. Known for his elaborate musical production numbers, which often featured large numbers of dancing girls forming kaleidoscopic patterns.

40 years ago, on 3 March 1986 that Queen Elizabeth II signed the Australia Act, severing Australia's remaining legal ties with Britain and granting it full independence.

30 years ago, on 13 March 1996 that the Dunblane Massacre took place in Scotland. Thomas Hamilton, a former Scout leader, entered Dunblane Primary School, shot dead 16 children and a teacher, wounded 15 more, and then committed suicide. As a result, the private ownership of handguns was banned in the UK.

25 years ago, on 26 March 2001 that the UK Post Office was rebranded as Consignia, at a cost of around £2million. The name was so unpopular that the following year it was renamed The Royal Mail Group.

20 years ago, on 1 March 2006 that the Senedd – the National Assembly for Wales's debating chamber – was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in Cardiff.

Also 20 years ago, on 21 March 2006 that Twitter, the online social networking/micro-blogging service, was founded. Its website went live on 15 July that year.

10 years ago, on 31 March 2016 that Ronnie Corbett, Scottish films and tv comedian, actor, screenwriter and broadcaster (The Two Ronnies) died.

Have you found “St Faithful’s Havnot” yet?

If you are a follower of social media, you may have already encountered St Faithful's on Facebook. If not, then we recommend you go to <https://www.facebook.com/stfaithfulshavnot> and have a look.

A fictitious parish imagined by the Vicar of a church with a not dissimilar name, it recounts parish life that is maybe a little too close to reality. The content is generated using the AI program ChatGPT, from incidents experienced by the author in his own real parish.

Follow the thoughts of the fictitious Vicar Dr Tim Keen, the Curate Sandy Lintel, churchwarden Sally Tiredwell, the bellringers with their captain Maureen

Clapperton and enjoy the illustrations provided by Artie Fishal. The organist, choir, servers, flower arrangers, tea makers, PCC members, *et al* all have their part to play.

The Facebook site was launched on 24 January 2026, and, if their Vicar is to be believed, they had received 2.1 million views by early February. Facebook records them as having 6,600 followers so he's probably not exaggerating. Downham church, with 304 followers looks a bit feeble by comparison! Now how do we start using ChatGPT?

When women become mothers...

March brings us not only Mothering Sunday, but also the Annunciation of the Incarnation -when the angel Gabriel told Mary that she would become pregnant with the Christ child. (25 March, exactly nine months before Christmas).

Mary was overwhelmed with joy and love, as are millions of women when they realise their child is on the way.

Of course, Mary knew very little of just how her baby was growing within her. Today, modern science provides some fascinating details... here is one such description.

By end of the first month

Size: Quarter of an inch.

Development: The baby is called an embryo at this stage. The heart has started to beat, but so far it has only one chamber. There is a simple spinal cord, and the eyes and ears are beginning to show. The foetus is growing about 1/125th of an inch a day. (See Psalm 139: 11-14)

By end of the second month

Size: 1 and 1'8th inch

Development: The embryo is now technically a foetus, and its face and features are forming. The muscles are starting to move, and the limbs are starting to differentiate. The internal organs are starting to develop. (See Psalm 139: 15-18)

By end of the third month

Size: 3 inches

Development: The foetus has arms, hands and fingers, legs feet and toes. The ears appear, the eyes are developing, and the face begins to look human. The lips open and close. The doctor may hear a faint heartbeat. Blood cells are produced by the liver and spleen. (See Isaiah 49: 15-16)

By end of the fourth month

Size: 4 inches

Development: Distinct heartbeat, gristle changing to bone, ribs visible, eyes, ears and nose more human shape, eyebrows present. Foetus can frown, squint and grimace. (See Isaiah 44: 2-4)

At end of fifth month

Size: 7 inches

Development: Mother begins to feel first kicks. Eyes still closed, hair appears, ears nearly complete and baby now hearing the mother. (See Psalm 121)

At end of sixth month

Size: 11-14 inches.

Development: Eyelashes are forming, fingernails growing. Baby hears clearly and may move to the rhythm of mother's body. Also, the rudiments of language are being laid down. Can respond to music. (See Luke 1: 36-44)

The last three months are important in intrauterine bonding; the foetus may be able to feel the mother's emotions. Future baby's sleep patterns may be influenced by her sleeping patterns now.

At end of seventh month

Size: 14 -17 inches.

Development: If born now, it has a chance of surviving. Lungs maturing, eyelids separating and eyes open. (See Psalm 128:1-5)

End of eighth month

Size: 16-18 inches

Development: Baby growing and gaining weight. Very good chance of survival. By the 32nd week, the neural circuits in brain are as advanced as a newborn, so a great deal of conscious awareness. Sleeping and waking now distinct states. (See Philipians 4: 4-8)

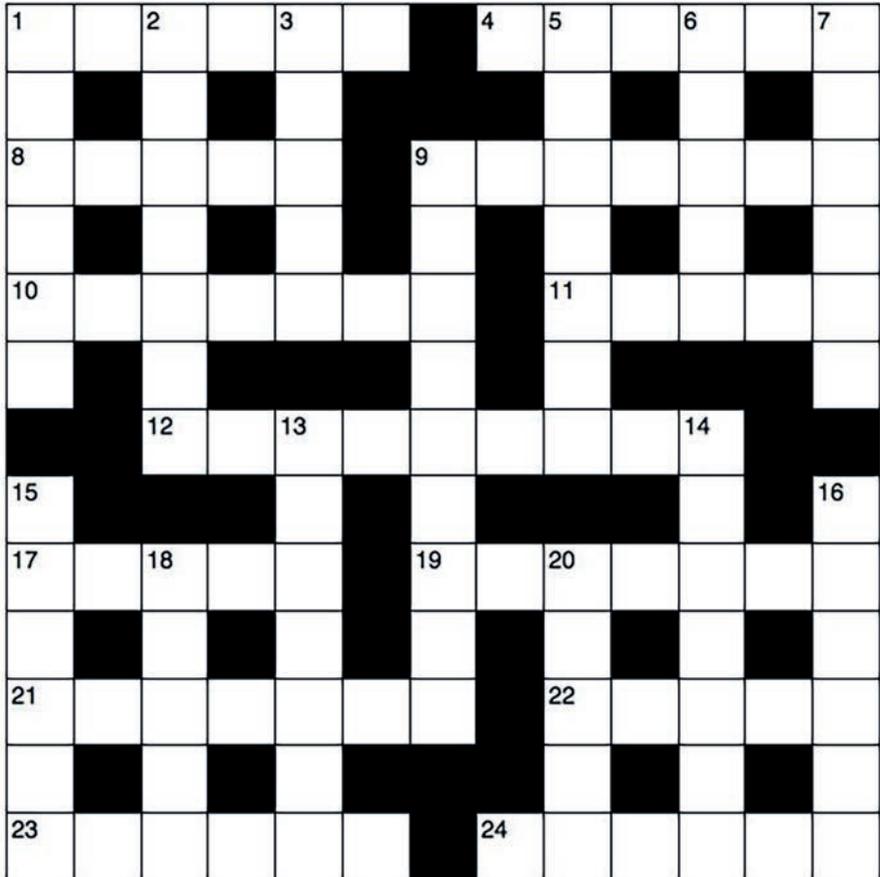
End of ninth month

Size: 20 inches on average. 7 pounds on average

Development: All systems are complete and growing. Now is a good time to pray that everything goes well at the birth. (See John 16:21-22, Matthew 18:1-5)

As it says in the Psalms, we are 'wonderfully made'!

Puzzle corner



Across

- 1 Arouse (Song of Songs 2:7) (6)
- 4 Extinguish (Isaiah 1:31) (6)
- 8 ““They — — ,” you will say, “but I’m not hurt!”” (Proverbs 23:35) (3,2)
- 9 Unhappiness (Nehemiah 2:2) (7)
- 10 Jewish (7)
- 11 Dirge (anag.) (5)
- 12 ‘A truthful witness gives honest — , but a false witness tells lies’ (Proverbs 12:17) (9)

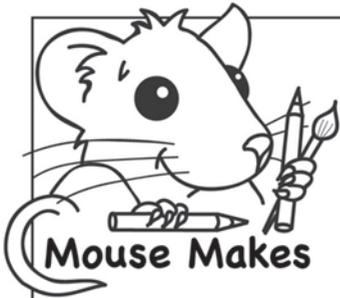
- 17 Paul quoted from the second one in his address in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:33) (5)
- 19 'Do not use your freedom to — the sinful nature' (Galatians 5:13) (7)
- 21 'As you can see, he has done nothing to — death' (Luke 23:15) (7)
- 22 Name applied by Isaiah to Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:1) (5)
- 23 'All the people — — one man, saying, "None of us will go home"' (Judges 20:8) (4,2)
- 24 Lazarus, who was carried by angels to Abraham's side when he died, was one (Luke 16:20) (6)

Down

- 1 Appalled (Job 26:11) (6)
- 2 'In an — to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea' (Acts 27:30) (7)
- 3 Expel (Acts 18:16) (5)
- 5 'But I have a baptism to — , and how distressed I am until it is completed!' (Luke 12:50) (7)
- 6 ' Of the increase of his government and peace there will be — — '
- (Isaiah 9:7) (2,3)
- 7 Hurry (Psalm 119:60) (6)
- 9 'For I desire mercy, not — , and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings' (Hosea 6:6) (9)
- 13 One of its towns was Sychar, where Jesus met a woman at Jacob's well (John 4:5) (7)
- 14 Shouting (Acts 7:57) (7)
- 15 Arachnid (Isaiah 59:5) (6)
- 16 One of Paul's first converts in Philippi was Lydia, a — in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (6)
- 18 Donkeys (5)
- 20 Raked (anag.) (5)

Answers on page 33

Children's pages



The Bible has many stories of mothers who had great faith in God. With their love, care, encouragement and prayers their children grew up to be great people of God.



Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?

Exodus 2:1-3 and 6:20

Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?
Genesis 17:19



Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?
1 Samuel 1:20

Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?
Genesis 4:1-2

Across

- 3. **Obed's** mother
Matthew 1:5
- 4. **John's** mother
Luke 1:57-60
- 7. **Reuben's** mother
Genesis 29:32
- 8. **Joseph's** mother
Genesis 30:22-24
- 9. **Jesus' mother**
Acts 1:14

Down

- 1. **Boaz's** mother
Matthew 1:5
- 2. **Solomon's** mother
1 Kings 1:11
- 4. **Timothy's** mother
2 Timothy 1:5
- 5. **Ishmael's** mother
Genesis 16:15
- 6. **Jacob and Esau's** mother
Genesis 25:21-26



Answer the questions then put them into the crossword

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Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Matthew 25: 14-30

Jesus told a story to help his disciples to be ready for the end of time. 'A rich man was about to go on a journey...'

He gave his servants money to look after, depending on what they could do.



He gave 5 bags of coins to the first, 2 to the second, and 1 to the third.

As soon as he had gone, the first two servants started to work.



The one with 5 bags of coins used them to earn 5 more,



and the one with 2 bags used them to earn another 2!

The third servant dug a hole and buried his bag.



When the master came back, he called his servants to him...



The first two showed him they had doubled his money, and he was very happy with them.



You are a hard man who expects us to work. I was afraid so I just hid it.

If you knew what I expected, why didn't you do it?



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Smile lines

How God works

A grandmother was taking her young grandson for a walk in the park. The daffodils were in bloom, and it was a beautiful Spring day. Wanting to encourage her grandson's spiritual understanding of the world, she said: *"Doesn't it look like an artist painted this scenery? Did you know God did all this?"*

Her grandson replied: *"Oh yes, and God did it left-handed, too."* In astonishment, the grandmother asked what he meant. *"Well, He must have done,"* said her grandson, *"because we learned at church last week that Jesus sits on God's right hand."*

Ask children about angels - and this is what you get!

- Angels talk all the way while they're flying you up to heaven. The main subject is where you went wrong before you got dead. - Daniel, age 9
- When an angel gets mad, he takes a deep breath and counts to ten. And when he lets out his breath again, somewhere there's a tornado. - Reagan, age 10
- Angels have a lot to do and they keep very busy. If you lose a tooth, an angel comes in through your window and leaves money under your pillow. Then when it gets cold, angels go south for the winter. - Sara, age 6
- Angels live in cloud houses made by God and His Son, who's a very good carpenter. - Jared, age 8
- All angels are girls because they gotta wear dresses and boys didn't go for it. - Antonio, age 9

How many church members does it take to change a light bulb?

What do you mean CHANGE??? That light bulb was given in memory of my grandmother! My father installed it with his bare hands! He donated his time AND the use of his ladder to do it, too! My family's been members of this church for four generations! And if you think you're going to come in here and make a bunch of changes all of a sudden, vicar, you've got another think coming!

Who'd be a mother?

Constant nagging didn't seem to provide any relief from having to clean up the bathroom after each of my three teenage children. After I cleaned it one day, I resorted to posting a sign that read: *"Please leave the bathroom as you found it."*

I noticed the bathroom was in the usual mess after my son used it, so I called, *"Brian, how did you find the bathroom?"* After a brief pause, he replied, *"Straight down the hall, first door on the right."*

Contacting The Herald

Contributions to the April edition

Copy for the next edition of The Herald should be sent by email to Robert Andrews at theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk by **Thursday 19 March**. Please send files in .doc, .docx or .rtf format. Because we wish to maintain a common house style please keep any formatting to an absolute minimum and do not embed photographs or other artwork. If you wish to include photographs or other artwork they should be sent separately in .jpeg or .pdf format. If you are unable to use email or are unsure about file types please telephone Robert on 01268 733817, but be aware that the telephone line has BT Call Guardian installed to deter nuisance callers, therefore you may have to announce your name and press the # key in order to be put through.

Advertising in The Herald

All general enquiries about advertising should be addressed to Mike Roome on 07770 795388 or email advert.theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk

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If you have existing artwork your advertisements should be emailed to advert.theherald@downhamchurch.org.uk preferably in .jpeg or .pdf format. If you wish us to produce artwork for you this can be arranged for a small one-off fee.

Answers to the Crossword puzzle

ACROSS: 1, Awaken. 4, Quench. 8, Hit me. 9, Sadness. 10, Semitic. 11, Ridge. 12, Testimony. 17, Psalm. 19, Indulge. 21, Deserve. 22, Ariel. 23, Rose as. 24, Beggar.

DOWN: 1, Aghast. 2, Attempt. 3, Eject. 5, Undergo. 6, No end. 7, Hasten. 9, Sacrifice. 13, Samaria. 14, Yelling. 15, Spider. 16, Dealer. 18, Asses. 20, Drake.

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