

TEAM NOTICES

St Mary's now has Bibles available for use in services. Please ask a welcomer for one as you arrive in St Mary's.

All Things Bright and Beautiful takes place in St Mary's Church each Tuesday from 2.30pm – 3.30pm. A short service, which includes well known hymns, is followed by tea and cake. All Things Bright and Beautiful is particularly suitable for carers and those for whom they care and is dementia friendly. Is there someone who you could bring along or encourage to come? All are welcome.

T-Pot is held every Wednesday from 10am to 12.30pm in the Rectory Classroom. Come along for a cuppa and a chat. Everyone welcome!



Friday Fun Club – meets on Friday evenings 6.30-8pm, during term time, in the Rectory Classroom for 10-13 yr olds to enjoy food, games and chat. Led by Berno Vierbergen, our youth minister and supported by volunteers from St Mary's congregation.

Do you know **Carey's Secret Garden**? St Mary's choir are arranging a group visit for the church on Thursday 18th July. We will arrange shared transport as required and gather in the gardens with coffee from 10:30am with time to relax and chat, to enjoy a guided tour led by a member of staff, and to just wander and appreciate the amazing work which has gone on there. We have a special reduced price of £7.65 + whatever refreshments you choose. As the location of the Garden is a 'secret', we will only share this once the group booking is fully confirmed – but is just outside Wareham. An additional point of interest is the exhibition of artwork on slabs from the Berlin Wall which we can visit before leaving. If you would like to join us, please contact either Roni Clegg (roni_merison@hotmail.com) or Paul Baird (pauldbaird@aol.com).

The Salvation Army will be holding a service of thanks and farewell for Katrina Greetham, who is moving to Poole, at the Methodist Church on **Sunday 14th July from 3pm** followed by refreshments. Everyone is very welcome to come along and wish Katrina and Jonathan well.

Down on the Farm with the Studland Community Coffee Morning – Thursday mornings 10am - The Coffee Morning will be held at the Manor Farm Tea Rooms in Studland on Thursday mornings from 10am. Everyone is welcome: come and meet old friends – and make some new ones ... You will all receive a warm, countryside welcome and maybe, freshly baked scones!

Save the Date The Purbeck International Chamber Music Festival which, this year, includes a morning concert in St Nicholas Church, Studland, on 30th August from 11am.

REFLECTION

Ah – the dreaded curse of Isaiah again, a theme that runs right through scripture. If you've struggled to communicate your knowledge and love of God to people who are dear to you but they just don't get it - the joy and glory of it - how well you'll understand the frustrations of Isaiah, Paul and Jesus himself!

After Isaiah's vision, he understands God to pronounce a curse on those in Israel who reject him: they will hear but not *understand*, see, but they won't *perceive*. Mark Vernon's recent book, *The Secret History of Christianity* – is really about the development of human consciousness – and the final idea is about the way we need to be alive to the way our hearts perceive God through the imagination. Not imagination as in 'fantasy', but as in the way a lithe and living heart discovers *meaning* from what the mind admits as 'data'. Those whom Jesus was able to heal in his home town will have been that faithful few Isaiah anticipates – a 'tenth' – not the majority with 'fat hearts' and 'heavy ears' who shut their eyes.

Does God really curse people to make them so unresponsive in this way? Or is it Isaiah's way of explaining to himself the inexplicable - humanity's rejection of God? Either way, references to these 'fat hearts' abound in the New Testament writings. The rejection of Jesus by his own people is just a repeat of the prophets' experiences. They suffered the same rejection. 'Twas ever thus.

So eternal life can't be taught – only caught, as they say, and the gospel isn't moral teaching, still less Christian doctrine. It's new life experienced within, or it's nothing.

For most of us, dealing with the intricacies of family life, health, our parish church, our community, most of the time, our hearts are distracted by practicalities. That's one reason why so many of Paul's letters are dull and fractious. The Church of England's General Synod's business at the moment is necessary, but no one would suggest that it conveys Jesus's promised life in abundance. That's what you *live*, always as a gift and surprise, when you're singing a hymn in church, gazing at the sea or at a statue, reading a poem, praying with someone close to what we call death. That's the life that catches you up into paradise and makes the besetting thorns in your flesh bearable.

Revd Terence Handley MacMath

Team Contact details

Team Rector

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Parish Office

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Visit our Team website swanageteam.com