St. Michael & All Angels
CHURCH IN THE PARK | LIVING, LOVING, SERVING

outLook

The magazine for the people of Hughenden Parish | **MARCH 2025** | FREE

INSIDE: ***Saint Dwynwen*** | Chiltern Arts Festival | **Bookends**

Welcome to **Your Church**

This magazine serves the parish in which our beautiful church of St Michael & All Angels is situated. Outlook aims to give you a flavour of what it is to live in Hughenden and to worship here.

There has been a place of worship and prayer on this site since the 12th century and today the church is open for anyone wishing to wander around or sit a while in its peace. We are an open, welcoming and inclusive church where there are many opportunities for fellowship, social activities and of course the possibility for spiritual growth.

Outlook is published monthly. Articles or comments can be submitted to mag@hughendenparishchurch.org.uk. The deadline is the 15th of the month. If you would like the magazine delivered then please contact Andrew Cole - 01494 305020.

We hope you find something here to interest, inform or enlighten you. We wish you well and would love to have the chance to get to know you.

From the Vicarage **2**

Hughenden PCC News **4**

Mothers' Union AGM Report **6**

Have You Heard of Saint Dwynwen? **8**

Chiltern Arts Festival **10**

Nature Quest **12**

Are There Wrong Reasons for Reading the Bible? **14**

Nature Note **16**

Flower Festival **18**

Did You See? **19**

Bookends **20**
How it All Began - Penelope Lively

Holy Days in March **22**

Sudoku **23**

March Recipe **24**
Tagine of Lamb

What's On at St Michael & All Angels **27**

March Lectionary **28**

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Grant us Lord, faith to believe and strength to do thy will

www.hughendenparishchurch.org.uk

Dear Readers

As this issue is being compiled, it is quite cold, with the touch of overnight frost having just been chased away by the sun which at last is out and beaming. Let's hope it stays a while. World news is so very concerning at the moment, we need to be able to look around to see good things still exist – and good people.

We have an abundance of nature around us, and, in these pages, we can read of the work done in the churchyard to encourage bird life; and also a run-down of bird calls we can hear. Which is your favourite, or do you struggle to identify them?

We could put links to bird calls in our on-line edition to help you (maybe another time) but in future years we might somehow provide a special means whereby to tap to make sounds from the paper edition? And maybe film clips? Science fiction or nearly science fact? Perhaps there won't be paper editions of anything in the future. We rarely buy paper newspapers anymore, occasionally write letters, but still read physical books at least. Perhaps they will last, although many friends use Kindle and similar contraptions even for long books.

So, protecting or observing nature can still distract and uplift in these troubled times, as can contemplating the good works done - for example by the Mothers' Union and by the organisations supported by this Church and the work done by the people in this Church.

The quote in Bookends that Susan reflects on struck a chord: as we get older maybe we worry more - perhaps not for ourselves but for the seemingly impossible problems facing those who come after.

Perhaps in Lent we could all take up Keith's issue of how to mark Lent by contemplating how we as individuals - and as a Church - could make the world a better or less worrying place. It could just be with a smile.

Jane and Christopher Tyrer
Editors

Our front cover shows our newish deluxe bug hotel, encouraging even more wildlife into the church yard. It awaits its first AA rosette, as does the (less photogenic) wormery installed outside Church Cottage.

from the Vicarage

Keith Johnson

Vicar

St Michael & All Angels, Hughenden

On Shrove Tuesday 4th March, our new Children & Families Minister, Chris, is organising a pancake party at Hughenden Church. Families with young children are invited to come along from 4.30 - 6.00 pm, for lots of fun and games, a short celebration, followed by loads of pancakes with your favourite toppings!

Christians have marked the last day before Lent for centuries, seeing it as an opportunity for one final feast, before entering the solemn season of Lent. Traditionally families gather up all their most indulgent food and eat it with pancakes. In many countries Mardi Gras (meaning Fat Tuesday) is carnival time.

The festivities were often accompanied by a time of penitence in church, the ringing of church bells, and the burning of last year's palm crosses, in preparation for the next day – Ash Wednesday, when we hold our first Holy Communion service of Lent, which is accompanied by ashing. (The signing of the cross on congregants with ashes from the palm crosses.)

With the welcoming of that following dawn, comes the first day of Lent, which has been observed by Christians for centuries, as a time for confession and inner self-examination.

In Matthew chapter four, we read:

> ***Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights.***

Lent has its origins in this time of personal reflection which Jesus spent in the desert. He ate no food during that time, spending extended periods in prayer and reflection for all that was to follow in his life. Despite being tempted by the devil to give into his hunger pangs, put God to the test by throwing himself off the highest point of the temple, and worshipping the devil, he fought back with scripture, the devil fled. Jesus emerged out of the desert full of faith and determination, ready to begin that journey which would lead from fishermen and tax collectors, to Pharisees and Roman Governors, as he fulfilled his mission on earth, to become the one perfect sacrifice, for the sins of the whole world.

I wonder, do you have any specific plans how you might mark Lent this year? In writing these words, I am conscious that I don't yet myself! Perhaps I will make a deliberate effort to find some quiet places to commune with our heavenly father, being sure to turn off my mobile for a while, open my bible, and listen to the wonderful sounds of nature which we enjoy in our parish.

PANCAKE PARTY

4:30-6PM on the 4th March

We will have lots of fun and games, a short celebration and then sit down together for pancakes with lots of toppings.

Just £1 per child.

A parent/guardian will need to stay for the party

sign up:

stmichaels.churchsuite.com/events/13stcuta

Hughenden Parochial Church Council News

The following is a summary of the business which was discussed at our last two PCC meetings:

14th November 2024

Colin Wilkinson presented a feasibility study of various options for replacing the heating in the Church;

With future funding projects in mind, PCC debated whether, in principle, it would be willing to apply for National Lottery Funding. The PCC voted as follows: 10 in favour 1 abstention;

An electrical survey needs to be carried out on Church House;

A review of Fire Safety in the Belltower is taking place;

PCC approved the installation of a newly manufactured replacement sign for the Mothers Union Family Garden, to be placed upon the stone wall, just inside the garden. The original was carved by Margaret Jaycock. PCC also approved the installation of a planter in the garden, dedicated to the memory of Joan Steel;

PCC are considering the creation of a lettings policy for Church House.

23rd January 2025

Brian Morley, our PCC Treasurer began his report by saying that he felt we had finished the year in a reasonably good financial state, all things considered. The autumn gift day raised over £9,000, which exceeded our expectations. Expenses from weddings & funerals were higher than we had expected, but so were our running costs and general expenses during 2024;

PCC had a tour of Church House Cottage. Keith then updated the council on recent developments – the cottage has been emptied and cleaned, and we are now taking some time to consider possible future usage of the building. We had initially contemplated using the building as a source of rental income, although some reservations were shared as to its suitability;

A team will be taking some professional advice to consider our options. Temporarily, Chris Coyston, our new Children & Families Minister has set up his office in the cottage. It is also used for Sunday Youth and Alpha.

Keith declared how delighted we are to see Chris in post, and how well he has been settling into his new responsibilities. He has spent some time in two local primary schools, and has led several assemblies at Great Kingshill Combined School;

An application has been made to install a new bench in our churchyard in memory of David Kirkwood. PCC have approved this application, subject to the granting of a faculty;

This year marks 150 years since Hughenden Church was restored and extended – incorporating an enlarged nave and new bell tower. How might be mark this event? We are considering a Tower Open Day and a family fun day. There will also be a Hughenden Flower Festival between Saturday 23rd – Monday 25th August 2025;

The cleaning and restoration of the Disraeli regalia in the Chancel was discussed;

Churchwarden Andrew Cole reported that the nave ceiling had been repaired before Christmas and the lightning conductor had been inspected;

Mission Support Group reported that some £2,900 had been given to the three Christmas Charities – Embrace the Middle East, Shelter and Wycombe Women's Aid'

Our mission focus for the first quarter of 2025 will be Growing Hope. We welcome a guest speaker to our morning services on Sunday 23rd February. Our financial support for Kevin & Jen Cable will cease once they leave Israel and move to their new parish in the USA;

Safeguarding update – four policies were accepted and approved by PCC: Photo and Imaging, Whistle blowing, Complaints, and Social Media.

PCC next meet on Thursday 6th March 2025

Our Annual Vestry Meeting & Annual Parochial Church Meeting take place on Sunday 23rd March 2025 at 11.30 am following a Combined Communion Service at 10.00 am.

We are looking for people willing to stand for election. Have you considered joining PCC? For more information, please speak to Keith.

Mothers' Union AGM Report

Hughenden Mothers' Union provides support to many other organisations -local, national and international - who work with families suffering from all kinds of stress and hardship, as well as providing support to families in the locality. Here is a summary of some of their activities in the last year.

We welcomed Rev. Keith Johnson to our February meeting where the accounts and reports on Mothers' Union Activities were presented and reflected on at a well-attended meeting. Locally we continue to support the Women's Refuge in High Wycombe particularly at Christmas time by collecting gifts for the residents.

Some of our members are part of the team for organising the Church Tiny Tots group which meets weekly during term time and all members are invited to help out with the catering for the annual Teddy Bears Picnic. The group continues to flourish and we enjoy seeing the children grow up and become confident! We also support the church by having a presence and giving a gift at Baptisms and giving a quick welcome to the bride and groom at wedding rehearsals.

We enjoy hosting our coffee mornings and annual Ploughman's lunch to raise funds for the Diocese-organised Action and Outreach activities. Our committee decides which activities we wish to support in the Diocese. We usually support the Literacy Fund which helps to support Mothers' Union Worldwide. The Away From It All Holidays Fund is operated by each Diocese to give families a much needed break: the High Wycombe area has often benefitted from this charity and this last year a family from the newly formed One Can Toddlers Group had a week at Butlins in Bognor. Please remember that anyone can put names forward for these holidays and the families do NOT need a link with a Church. Sadly, applications have dropped off since the pandemic so the Fund now welcomes applications for days out etc for young and old.

Recently the One Can Toddlers Group enjoyed our sponsorship for their Christmas Party at Play Train. Last Summer the Bucks Young Carers enjoyed an afternoon at the Escape Room in High Wycombe.

The funds raised at our coffee mornings also help provide toiletries and other supplies for the parents staying at Ronald Macdonald House at the JR in Oxford. Dianne Walker does a brilliant job

organising the sewing of the toilet bags and sourcing the contents.

For the last ten years the Diocesan group have found ways to support The Children Heard and Seen charity which was launched in Oxford by Sarah Burrows to help prisoners' children and their extended families. This is a black hole which has now been highlighted by recent publicity in Parliament. We have been able to help by providing food and helping with their Christmas celebrations and also their residential weekends in the Summer. Parents, grandparents and the children benefit from being able to talk freely about their problems.

Nationwide, we are encouraged to support prisoners at Christmas by providing cards for the prisoners to send to their families and we also send cards to the prisoners themselves: we are told that this is the only card that some of them receive. Our members are also well known for their knitting skills in making baby clothes, Christmas stockings and Easter Chicks for the children associated with the various charities. I had the pleasure of seeing the delight on the children's faces at the Children Heard and Seen Christmas Party on receiving their small stockings (plus chocolate)! The adults also went home with a gift. My husband came with me and we felt that the afternoon was well spent in talking to the Mums/ Dads/ grandparents and then helping the volunteers clear up!

If you have any questions about our different charities please do speak to a Mothers' Union member. We welcome people to join us at our meetings: we meet on the first Tuesday in the month in Church House at 2.00 pm. At the next meeting our speaker will be Jane Hopwood from the "Keep a Girl in School" Charity. We all thank our Church Community for their support of our fundraising events that help all the Mothers' Union Programmes around the World.

Barbara Willson
Action and Outreach, Oxford Diocese

Barbara Willson visiting One Can Toddler Group

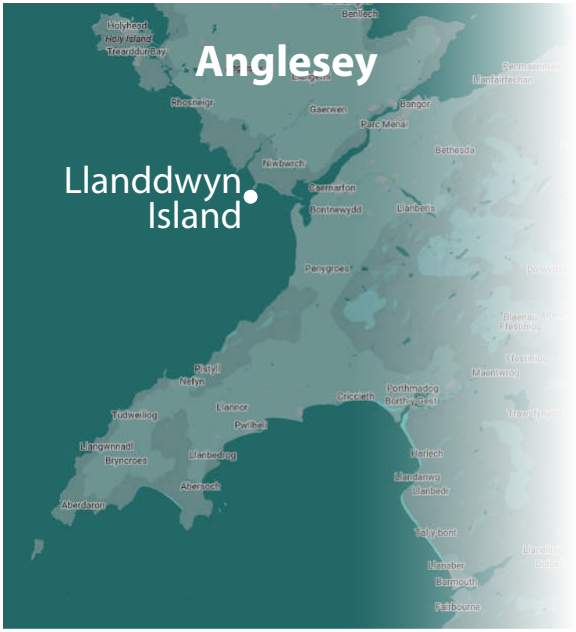
Have you heard of **Saint Dwynwen?**

On the 25th January, this year, I received a hand crafted card (courtesy of Mike) which was both a pleasant surprise but also a rather baffling gift. I knew it was Burns Night in the evening since we were celebrating the event with friends but knew of no other reason for a celebratory card. Reading the greeting on the front cover of the card wasn't much help either! It said "Happy St Dwynwen's Day (Dydd Santes Dwynwen Hapus)" I had never heard of Saint Dwynwen, have you? Thankfully, I discovered some very helpful information on the back of the card which was both enlightening and informative and piqued my curiosity to discover more.

Apparently, on 25th January, each year, Welsh people celebrate Saint Dwynwen's Day, the patron saint of lovers; the Welsh equivalent of Saint Valentines Day, hence the card. I gather that it is becoming a more celebrated tradition in recent years.

Her story is a rather melancholy one but with a happier ending. According to Wikipedia, she is believed to have been the daughter of King Bychan Brycheiniog (King of Brecon) who lived in the 5th century. I found this information very interesting since the Brecon Beacons are now called "Bychan Brycheiniog" and the old county of Breconshire was called "Sir (meaning shire) Brycheiniog."

According to legend, a young man called Maenon falls in love with Dwynwen but she cannot marry him because her father has promised her in marriage to another. Despairing, Dywnwen prays to fall out of love with Maenon. An angel appears with a potion which is given to Maenon and he turns to ice. God then grants Dwynwen three requests: that Maenon be released



from his icy fate; that God, through Dwynwen, watches over all true lovers; that she remain unmarried for the rest of her life.

All three came to pass and as a mark of gratitude to God, Dwynwen retreated to the solitude of a little island called "Ynys (meaning "island") Llanddwyn" off the coast of Anglesey, where she became a hermit until her death around AD 460. She devoted her life to God and established a monastery on the island. She studied the healing properties of local herbs, curing those who sought her help from across Wales. As well as looking after the spiritual and physical needs of people, she is also the patron saint of sick and injured animals. I wonder if that's only Welsh animals, otherwise she could be in competition with Saint Francis of Assisi!

Saint Dwynwen's church on Ynys Llanddwyn evolved into a major shrine during the Middle Ages and a holy well on the island, associated with Dwynwen, became a site of pilgrimage. Around 1879 a plain cross, approximately 14 feet high, was erected on the island in her honour.

How interesting that all this knowledge has been gleaned on the strength of one greetings card!

Gwen Hill

FRIDAY 9TH MAY - TUESDAY 20TH MAY 2025

Walk in the footsteps of Bach, discover the Venice of Vivaldi, cross oceans with Ravel… Journey along rivers, through history and into imagination…

Once again, it is Festival time: the eighth since we started in 2018. Once again there is a varied programme to suit all tastes, but nothing to suit no taste at all! We continue our journey bringing world class music and literature to the Chilterns.

We invite you to join us on a number of different kinds of journey, this year. We have listened to feedback – for which we are very grateful - and our events are designed to transport you to different destinations – both in time and in places. Escape to Bach's Leipzig, travel to the Venice of Vivaldi's time; see America through the eyes of Dvorak and Ravel and young, early settlers.

We trace the Thames to its source; our Thames cruise returns, as does our guided poetry walk; on one day visit three different venues on our "Dawn to Dusk" journey.

And, of course, we visit St Michael & All Angels, Hughenden for the eighth consecutive year, by the kind and generous permission and support of the Vicar, Churchwardens and the PCC. More of that later. Also – do you sing? Join the Festival Chorus!

Christopher Tyrer

For tickets and information:
www.chilternarts.com or call 01442 920303

Friday 9th May, 12:30 pm - 3:00 pm New Orleans | Hobbs of Henley
Violin & Accordion on the River | Lunchtime Cruise

Friday 9th May, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm - St Mary's Church, Henley-on-Thames
Clarinet Goes to Town | Emma Johnson Jazz Trio

Saturday 10th May, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm - Holy Trinity Church, Henley-on-Thames
Family Concert | Journey to the New World | Piatti String Quartet

Saturday 10th May, 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm - Henley Bandstand
Brass by the River | Free Event

Saturday 10th May, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm - St Mary's Church, Henley-on-Thames
Journeys in Love and Harmony | Wooburn Singers & Piatti String Quartet

Sunday 11th May, 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm - St Peter & St Paul's Church, Ellesborough
Sacred Cello Concert Part I (with optional guided poetry walk)

Sunday 11th May, 3:45 pm - 4:30 pm- Church of St Nicholas, Great Kimble
Sacred Cello Concert Part II (with optional guided poetry walk)

Monday 12th May, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm - St Mary's Church, Princes Risborough
Robert Burns in Music | Flute & Guitar

Monday 12th May, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm - St Mary's Church, Princes Risborough
Le voyage imaginé | Ravel: the man and his music

Tuesday 13th May, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm - Hughenden Parish Church
Piano through the ages | Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy & more…

Wednesday 14th May, 6:30 am - 7:15 am - Whiteleaf Hill
Beneath Brightening Sky | Huw Wiggin (Saxophone) & Oliver Wass (Harp)

Wednesday 14th May, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm - Holy Trinity Church, Bledlow
Midday Meet | Huw Wiggin (Saxophone) & Anita D'Attelis (Piano)

Wednesday 14th May, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm- St Dunstan's Church, Monks Risborough
A Dusk Gathering | Ferio Saxophone Quartet

Thursday 15th May, 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm - Berkhamsted Baptist Church
Renaissance to Today | Londinium Consort

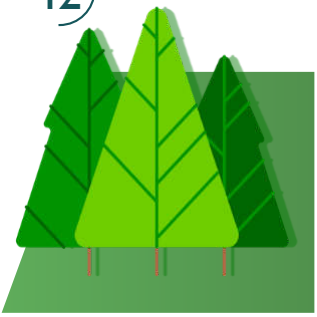
Thursday 15th May, 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm - The Gatsby, Berkhamsted
The Source of the Severn | Jazz, Cocktails & Dinner

Friday 16th May, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm - St Peter & St Paul's Church, Great Missenden
The Instrumentalist | A journey through colour & music…

Saturday 17th May, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm - All Saints' Church, Marlow
Bach: Sing the Cantatas | Festival Chorus with David Hill

Saturday 17th May, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm - All Saints' Church, Marlow
Bach: His Contemporaries and Influences | Music for choir & organ

Tuesday 20th May, 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm - Wycombe Swan
Renewal: The Lark Ascending | A Visual Spectacular



Nature Quest

Birds have been nesting for millions of years: blackbirds in nice round traditional nests, rooks just on a heap of twigs dragged together, seagulls on a dodgy cliffside, and penguins on bare ice. In more recent times some have discovered humans and found that our strange habitations might make useful nesting sites: storks on chimney stacks, ospreys on pylons, peregrines on church towers, swallows under the eaves, waterfowl on flooded gravel pits. And of course, humans helpfully feed them: by ploughing up invertebrates, spreading billions of nice seeds across fields, trawling fish from the depths, and squishing animals on the roads.

On the downside, we have spread some horrible chemicals deliberately and ignorantly, shot some species to extinction, achieved a decrease of more than 50% of insects across Europe, and cut down or ploughed up vast acreages.

Perhaps our troubled consciences cause us to take pity on our birds as we buy and put out around £500m of bird food each year and a few million bird boxes.

Around our churchyard, in the last two years we have installed 7 small bird boxes, one large owl box and two swift boxes. Recently Roger Grant and I inspected 6 small boxes (the 7th was only recently installed). These were installed in time for the 2024 nesting season. Neither of the two open fronted boxes had been used, but all four of the small aperture boxes had been used. For each of these the aperture had been pecked to make it a little larger, one of them considerably larger. We unscrewed the floor of each box, removed the nest materials, cleaned it and re-fitted ready for

RSPB online has

"Our ultimate guide to nestboxes"

www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/all-about-nest-boxes

the 2025 season. The nest materials were 1" to 2" deep, containing mostly moss underneath with some grassy stalks and other fibres (some man-made) on top. Fluffy down might be from the parent nest-building or later from the chicks.

One nest (see photo) had the skeleton remains of three chicks. Perhaps they died of disease, or more likely the parent(s) became dinner for some bigger bird, and the chicks sadly starved. The other three nests were empty, so we presume the birds fledged successfully.

Regrettably, nobody bothered to keep an eye on the nest boxes, so we don't know what birds used them. At this time of year the nest boxes are easily visible, but in summer they are part-hidden by the foliage. This year we'll try to observe more carefully and all of you readers can also look particularly at two of them: on your left as you enter the big gate at the bottom of church path, the big lime tree behind the red waste bin and about ten yards further, the next big tree, there's a nest box on each of these, about 10 or 12 feet up the tree trunk. All of our nest boxes are on the north or north-west side of the trees, so that chicks don't get cooked on sunny days.

The owl box was installed in January and is perhaps a bit late for this year. Owls lay their eggs very early in the year. The box is much bigger than the other nest boxes and is attached to the tree trunk right in the north-west corner of the churchyard and is easily visible from just outside the church porch. It's installed and being maintained by the Buckinghamshire Owl and Raptor Group.

The two swift boxes are installed high up in the church tower on the north side. Only the entrances are visible from outside, but the boxes can be accessed from inside the tower. We don't think any swifts came in 2024, but we are hopeful for this year. We now have the facility to broadcast screeches (which are typical swift sounds) to attract any passing homeless swifts. Swifts are in serious decline and on the Red List of conservation concern. This is perhaps due to loss of nest sites (cliffs, holes in old buildings, etc) and decline in numbers of insects. Swifts are regularly seen (in summer) locally but very rarely near our church. Maybe in 2025?

When you see birds at our nest boxes (or indeed any other interesting plants or creatures) please write them in the Nature Log Book (white ring binder kept near the font in church). If you take photos, please email them (address below) so we can print them and put them in the ring binder.

Mike Hill
nature@hughendenparishchurch.org.uk

Are there Wrong Reasons for **reading the Bible?**

Wycliffe Bible Translators

Peter Brassington, who has worked for Wycliffe Bible Translators in a variety of roles, writes on his blog:

After nearly 30 working with Wycliffe Bible Translators, I know that not having a Bible in your language is a pretty big barrier to reading it … but that it's not the only one. Asking why people read the Bible can make a good discussion starter for any Bible study group.

There are lots of answers, especially if you get beyond why they think they should to why they actually do. Some people have read it out of curiosity, some of a desire to know God better, some of a desire to become better people. Other people read in order to know more about God, some in order to know God relationally. At least one person started to read it in the hope of impressing a girl at church, another because she wanted to compete with her friend.

Initial motives can change over time. I wondered if there were any "wrong reasons" for reading the Bible and, before asking it of a group of people, I asked the AI chatbot, ChatGPT. Here's some of what it suggested:

- **To Prove Ourselves Right** – If we read scripture just to confirm our what we already think, we might miss its deeper lessons that challenge and transform us.
- **To Earn God's Favour** – The Bible isn't a checklist for earning blessings; God's love is unconditional, and reading scripture should be about deepening our relationship with Him.
- **For Superstition or Magic** – The Bible isn't a good luck charm; it's a guide for faith and life.
- **To Find Loopholes** – Using scripture to justify questionable behaviour or avoid moral responsibility distorts its true message.
- **For Quick Fixes** – While the Bible offers wisdom, it's not a self-help manual with instant answers, but a guide for lifelong spiritual growth.

The AI concluded: "None of these reasons make Bible reading 'wrong,' but they can lead to a shallow understanding. Approaching scripture with humility, curiosity, and a heart open to growth makes it far more rewarding."

Whatever you think about AI, that answer is really thought provoking. While we might like to reflect on our own reasons for reading the Bible, for one man in Eastern Cambodia, the wrong reason for reading however turned out very much the right one!

'When I was still a young man' Lohn says,' I didn't go to church much, I was not doing the right things, I drank and smoked a lot. I was rebellious and didn't have much faith. One day I was at my friend's house and noticed a Bible in Khmer (the national language of Cambodia) and read a little just to make me sleepy as I wanted a rest. I was soon in a deep sleep, and I had a dream. I heard a voice telling me: "You will do that work of translation." And I protested and argued and woke up from my sleep. I didn't comprehend. I wanted to cry because I didn't know anything about doing translation. Here I was a bad person, and I wasn't in the habit of reading the Scriptures.'

Many years later, Lonh remembered this dream. He remembered too all the ways that God had been at work in his life since, shaping him into the man of faith and

hope he is today. He now was indeed part of a translation team! Its work, along with the prayers and support of people around the world, will leave an incredible legacy for future generations of the Bunong people. The Bunong New Testament was completed in 2016.

Before I would persevere in reading the Khmer Scriptures, but it was difficult for me to really understand,' Lonh says. 'But now with the Bunong Scriptures, I can fully understand.' 'But only having the New Testament, I don't think it is enough. If we do not know about the things in the Old Testament (70% of the Bible) we will not understand the Bible clearly.' The Old Testament translation is now well underway.

There are 1 in 5 people in our world still waiting for the Bible in their language. Last year however at least one new translation was launched every week. This is life changing work. As another translator, in West Africa, says, 'How will my people know that God loves them if they do not have the message in their language?'

Read about people around the world accessing the Bible in their own language for the first time more at wycliffe.org.uk, and let us encourage each other to explore this treasure for ourselves, for all the right reasons!

Mission Support Group
Peter Brassington, 2025
Adapted from brassingtons.wordpress.com/2024/10/07/are-there-wrong-reasons-for-reading-the-bible/

Nature Note

"But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you.
Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind"

Job 12: 7-10

Wherever you look God's handiwork announces His awesome creative genius. Whether it's the grass under our feet - cut and trampled on but comes back for more … and more, or the night sky.

I was camping on Mull a few years back and, as one does, stepped out of our tent for a midnight call of nature and was instantly gobsmacked by the silent splendour of the Milky Way and countless pinpricks of light scattered across the heavens.

I called the others out, who stopped grumbling when they saw what I was showing them. I guess the constantly washed Atlantic air of those parts keeps the air pure and clear for such occasions. Yes the Lord knows how to take our breath away, and some!

Which leads me neatly to a subject I've "mulled" (pardon the pun) over a few times. What's your favourite bird song? Just t he one that you'd take a recording of to a desert island. I've got a fair list of candidates. I guess it depends where and when, what the context is, who you're with to share the experience and so on. In many ways a shifting target. A little like your favourite scripture passage, there's no such thing because they all link together to make one fabulous whole. Even so birdsong is similar to our music, there's a composer - the Lord - and a soloist, the bird. So here we go, a short list:

Song Thrush The Pavarotti of our countryside and gardens. With volume turned up to max and massive gusto he sings from tree tops, normally repeating phrases two or three times with a large repertoire of bird mimicry - you can tell what other birds are around from his song.

Mistle Thrush Sounds like a muted blackbird with a serious sore throat. Sings from the highest perch on the tallest tree, even in horrendous weather (hence its country name Storm Cock).

Robin A slightly sad warble from anywhere in your garden. Males and females sing during the winter and early spring until they pair up. Then he carries on while she deals with family matters.

Wren Can you believe the volume of this little bird? He sings from anywhere low down, his whole body shaking from his effort. A short punchy message, "I'm here, get used to it!"

Starling Maybe a surprise to you but yes he makes my list. I love the cheeky, flashy burble and chatter as he sits on a rooftop shivering his wings, neck feathers upright. And what a mimic! When I lived in West Wycombe one regularly took off the trim phone ring tone. I think it was to watch the confusion it caused!

Curlew The rising whistle that always takes me out to the lonely places, moorlands, seaside marshlands, mountainside.

Nightingale The metronomic, flutey purity of a master songster singing from deep thicket. Rare in our locale unfortunately. I've been fortunate to visit southern France where the nightingales outnumber all other songbirds put together! And in the late spring they sing round the clock. Whether they have shifts or all go for it all the time I don't know.

Blackcap My go-to warbler, that bubbling liquid melody brings vibrant colour to most gardens with any thick, bushy corners. Starting softly he accelerates then slows as he gets to a loud climactic end.

Of course there's a large number of also-rans: Tawny Owl, Goldfinch, Chaffinch, Cuckoo, Skylark, Yellowhammer, Greenfinch, Willow Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting, Green Woodpecker to name but a few of the Lord's Orchestra.

Number One

But you may say,
you've forgotten one,
the Blackbird.

Not forgotten, given
pride of place.

I know he maybe lacks
the precise accuracy of
Nightingales or the
bubbling intensity of
many of our warblers.
He doesn't care, no mimicry here to flesh out his song (is mimicry a bird's musical joke? A sort of flying Mike Yarwood?)

That beautiful, rich, flutey tone (has that in common with Nightingales) always grabs more than my attention - maybe twangs a heart string. He wins for musical quality, originality - no two phrases are ever the same, he constantly improvises without hesitation like a master bluesman (contrasting with the classical virtuosity of a Nightingale)

Yes, the blackbird is an old friend pouring out his heart sat in the corner of our garden to anyone who will listen, or no-one if needs be, just practising.

So that's my choice, *turdus merula*.

When my mum was seriously ill a blackbird struck up outside of her room, much to her delight. I played a recording of such to her continuously as she left us but it was some years later that we discovered this:

The Winter is Past
Come drown with me,
Drown with me in deep delight
For lighter mornings
Sounding bright with bird song
Frail at first, then growing stronger,
A pin point that from it's tiny throat
Dares to pierce the darkness,
A darkness filled with blanket hum
of noisy traffic

The blackbird and I relax and sing,
We startle the darkness,

He claims hopes of springtime
And so do I
He thrills with an outburst of
Song to the sky
May my heart so be filled with
Praise and delight
As I sing to the Lord of all
darkness and light

Isabel Bevan
1998

Mike Bevan

Flower Festival

Do you remember the last flower festival? Hundreds of people, fabulous flowers, bunting, great refreshments with wonderful cakes, laughter, good conversations … and sunshine, amazingly!

Well, we're doing it all over again this August. The theme will be holidays and it's going to happen over the Bank Holiday weekend. Please look at your diaries carefully as this is NOT the last weekend of the month but instead the 23rd, 24th and 25th August. (September 1st is a Monday!)

I hope you can come. Even better if you choose to take part. More information in a couple of months time.

Susan Brice

Did You See?

Well, our neighbourhood got a lot of coverage on TV in the last few weeks.

Firstly, the new series of Silent Witness opened with shots of a couple embracing outside the Dashwood Mausoleum (see Outlook issue November 2024) and thereafter repairing inside the Hellfire Caves to continue their canoodling (as my mother might have said). The entrance to the caves was dressed as being closed by corrugated sheeting and overgrown with trees. Of course, it being Silent Witness, they were in for an unpleasant surprise.

The following week's story opened with a scene in one of the new houses on Naphill Common.

On the day of the shooting (actually a stabbing I recall) word got out that filming was taking place, and quite a lot of locals, me included, ' just happened to be walking past the house'. There was no activity that I could see, and sadly I was not asked to be an extra! Anyway, the house was shown for approx. 10 seconds.

If that was not excitement enough, a series on 'Treasures of the National Trust' recently featured the refurbishment of Disraeli's gates at Hughenden. These were the ones into the park, not the ones into the walled garden, which had fallen into a state of disrepair, but are now regilded. There was quite a lot about the manor too.

So, all in all, the locality was well televised.

Jane Tyrer

BOOK-ENDS

How it All Began - Penelope Lively

Near the top of one of the floor to ceiling bookshelves in my bedroom is the Penelope Lively section. These shelves will always remind me of lockdown times when I was compulsively buying books and then manically reading them. The piles on my bedside table…and on the floor…became impossibly vertiginous and soon two tall bookcases arrived to basically house my habit.

If I don't have the complete P. Lively oeuvre, then I very nearly do. One day I will go through everything she has published and fill in any gaps that I find.

Anyway, I recently picked out 'How it All Began.' I hadn't read it for years and couldn't remember the story, which was good as it would be like coming to it anew.

The premise is that usually we don't notice the progression of events and how one particular incident, even if small and apparently not worthy of attention, ripples outwards and can cause many further narratives, fundamentally unattached and separate but all from the same starting point. 'How it all began' in this book is with an elderly lady being mugged on her way home. (I do hope the author was not writing from experience here.) She has to stay with her daughter and son- in-law when she comes out of hospital, and unexpected and unplanned relationships flow from this situation.

Part of the reason that I love Penelope Lively's writing so much is that it is a joy to read. It is skilled and fluid, nothing is stilted or awkward and the words flow from my eyes to my brain with a delicious smoothness. It always gives me a special sort of happiness. Also, I have great empathy

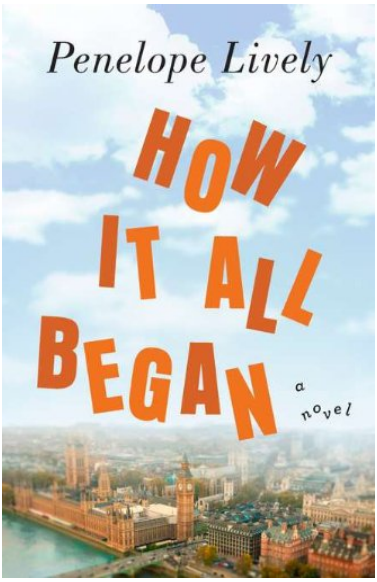
for the way she thinks and how she experiences life in general and family life in particular. She is twenty something years older than me and as I reread these novels, most of which were written in the last few decades of the twentieth century, I see how life is as an older person. I understand more than I did, simply by having lived my life.

I don't usually turn down the pages of books as I have a lovely collection of bookmarks but I do sometimes turn down the bottom corner of a page and this is my own code for: there is something here that I want to look at again or write down or ensure I remember. The Lively section of books is full of turned down bottom corners.

I offer you this example, Charlotte, the character who has been mugged, reflects:

"Old-age worry is its own climate. The assault upon health is inevitable, rather than an unanticipated outrage. You remain solipsistic - we are all of us that - but the focus of worry is further from the self. You worry about loved ones - that tiresome term, as bad as closure - you worry about the state of the nation, about sixteen-year-olds sticking knives into one another, about twenty-year-olds who can't find a job; you worry about the absence of sparrows and the paucity of butterflies, about destruction of habitats; you worry about the decline of language, about the books that are no longer read, about the people who don't read. All of which is entirely unproductive - self-indulgent, maybe. Leave the knives to the police, the habitats to the RSPB. If people don't read, that's their choice, a lifelong book habit may itself be some sort of affliction."

Oh my goodness, if only I knew the Islington garden square in which she lived, I would buy pain au chocolat and flowers and go for coffee. We would have so much to talk about. I agree with almost everything she writes!



I have read several books lately that have 'afterwords.' They seem to be a sort of reflection by the writer of what has gone before. I find them illuminating and interesting. In this book, the last chapter, number 18, takes this form although the author does not label it as such. It ties up the endings of each character's story, something many readers want from a novel. Penelope Lively does this with a nod and a raised eyebrow to witty, wry comedy and with powerful, astute observation.

'How it All Began' offers you stylish, engaging storytelling of the highest quality. Enjoy!

Susan Brice

Holy Days in **March**

9th March – Savio, the youngster who found God

A number of years ago the hit film Slumdog Millionaire touched millions of people with its story of a youngster triumphing against all the odds. Dominic Savio did the same thing. In fact, he is a good patron 'child saint' for children today who struggle to get anywhere in life.

Savio (1842 – 57) was born into a poor family in Riva, near Turin. There were 10 children. The father was a blacksmith, the mother a seamstress. Somehow, they managed school fees, and when Dominic was 12, he was sent to the famous school of John Bosco at Turin.

A strict Roman Catholic school wasn't exactly the set for 'Who wants to be a Millionaire', but Savio loved it. He responded with enthusiasm to the wise and moderate spiritual guidance of Bosco and began to grow. He was soon widely loved for his cheerfulness and friendliness to all. He was respected by fellow students for his mature, sound advice. Behind it all lay the key: Savio had discovered God for himself and had responded with all his heart: one story of him tells how he was rapt in prayer for six hours continuously.

Sadly, Dominic Savio contracted tuberculosis. He accepted his disease with dignity and composure. He did not fear death – his deep and radiant faith assured him that something far better lay beyond.

Savio died aged only 15. He had never been a millionaire; his riches lay in his faith in Jesus Christ. The memory of this lovable lad lived on, so deeply had he touched the hearts of the people who knew him. Over 100 years later he was still remembered – and made a saint by the Roman Catholic Church.

From the Parish Pump

27th March: Rupert the salty

Rupert is the saint for you if you like The Sound of Music – or salt with your food!

Rupert (d c 710) was bishop of Worms and Salzburg, and it was he who founded the great monastery of St Peter in Salzburg in the eighth century, thus firmly establishing Christianity in that city. True, it would be another 11 centuries before a certain young wanna-be-nun wandered about singing of her 'Favourite Things' and 'Something Good', but you have to start somewhere.

In the meantime, Rupert also helped the people of Salzburg by developing the salt-mines nearby. This was 'something good' as well, because it brought in an income. Though if salt became a too 'favourite thing', it would also have raised the locals' blood pressure.

Rupert's iconographical emblem is a barrel of salt, which makes sense, but is not as romantic as raindrops on roses, or whiskers on kittens.

From the Parish Pump

Sudoku

This courtesy of Parish Pump: its apparently a 'medium' rating.

Too hard? Too easy? Let us know.

Solution on page 25.

	5				2	8		
			6	1	5	9		
	4		8					3
3								7
1					7		5	2
		9	3	7	1			
		6	5				4	

March Recipe

At this time of year I always want food that is comforting and warm. This lovely tagine was prepared by a friend of mine, many years ago and one that I cook frequently for visitors. This was printed in the magazine 5 years ago when I first started writing the recipes, but this week my husband and I are heading to Brazil with family and so are busy packing so I offer it to you again!

It is one of my favourite recipes and is easy to prepare and can be adapted as you want using chicken or even vegetables to replace the lamb. This amount makes a large casserole but you can reduce the quantities as required, it also freezes well.

If you do reduce the quantity make sure you reduce the spices in proportion. Many years ago one of my children as a teenager decided to do some cooking for the family and somehow got the amount of spice wrong and added cayenne pepper, the result was not edible!

Julia Grant

Tagine of Lamb

INGREDIENTS

1 kg cubed lamb chump

1 tbsp ground ginger

1 tsp ground black pepper

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tbsp paprika

½ tsp chilli powder

1 to 2 tbsp olive oil

2 large chopped onions

3 cloves garlic

100 g chopped apricots

50 g sultanas

250 ml tomato juice

125 ml lamb stock

1 tsp honey

juice of ½ lemon

Topping

Mix together:

1 to 2 tbsp fresh coriander

Grated rind of lemon

50 gm chopped almonds

Salt and black pepper

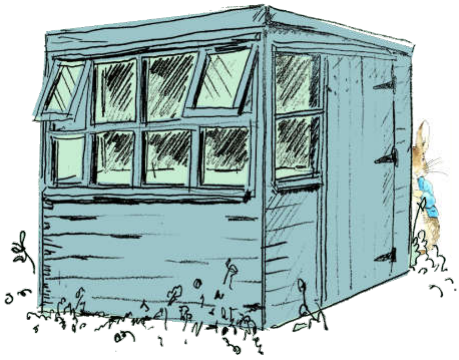
METHOD

1. *Pre-heat oven to 180c/375F/Gas mark 5.*
2. *Mix spices and coat the cubed meat.*
3. *Heat half the oil, and briefly brown the cubed meat, then add the onions and all the remaining ingredients.*
4. *Stir well and bring gently to the boil. Place in the oven for 1 to 11/2 hours until meat is tender.*
5. *Mix together topping and sprinkle on top before serving.*
6. *Serve with couscous or rice.*

Sudoku Solution

6	1	4	9	8	3	7	2	5
9	5	3	7	4	2	8	1	6
8	7	2	6	1	5	9	3	4
2	4	7	8	5	6	1	9	3
3	6	5	1	2	9	4	8	7
1	9	8	4	3	7	6	5	2
4	2	9	3	7	1	5	6	8
7	3	6	5	9	8	2	4	1
5	8	1	2	6	4	3	7	9

From the **Potting Shed**



Dear friends,

I'm enjoying the clumps of snowdrops that have been flowering and of course the early daffodils. Cheers you up doesn't it?

Some years ago we wouldn't be able to be confident that the worst of the winter was really over. I remember many Easter times in late March and in April when there has been snow on the ground. Nobody wears hats anymore have you noticed, even for weddings, except for those beanie things to keep your ears warm, but I remember Easter spring hats; very pretty they were; festive. My daughter bought her dad a beanie type hat for Christmas a few years ago. It's still in its plastic bag at the back of the cupboard in the boot room. His hat is vintage, battered and extremely precious. It's a waste of time thinking about replacing it.

Ruby went to a craft class in half term and had great fun making an Easter bonnet. (Bit early I thought as it's only just Lent but such things don't seem to matter these days.) Anyway, Ruby arrived for tea with her hat on. Sadly it was raining so all the colour from the crepe paper hat was running down her face onto her tee-shirt. Never mind, nothing a fondant fancy and a cup of tea won't make better.

Till next month my dears,

Yours (thinking of a flowery hat)

Cecily MacGregor

Jobs for March

1. Prune bush and climbing roses
2. MacGregor says I should tell you that now is the time to move a large shrub or small tree.
3. Have a check on your paths and steps. Do they need any repairs before plants start to grow over them? Are they covered with leaves? That's confusing these days I find. Some gardeners tell us not to clear up leaves, but, well, sometimes it can make steps and paths slippery. No help to anyone if I fall over and can't make my hubby his dinner. I can hear him finding the garden broom right now!
4. Take root cuttings from perennials such as phlox and delphiniums.
5. Any bulbs that have been flowering in your house can now be planted in the garden.
6. Give your containers a spring boost with a fresh layer of compost on the top.

What's On at St Michael & All Angels

March

1	8.30 am	Men's Breakfast: Church House
4	2.00 pm	Mothers' Union Meeting: Church House
	4.30 pm	Pancake Party: Church
5	7.00 pm	**Ash Wednesday** Holy Communion with Ashing: Church
8	10.00 am	Baptism Preparation: Church House
22	12.00 pm	Wedding of Fiona Murray & Darren Lewis: Church
23	10.00 am	**Combined Holy Communion**: Church
	11.30 am	Annual Vestry Meeting & Annual Parochial Church Meeting: Church

April

Holy Week and Easter services will be published in next month's edition

1	2.00 pm	Mothers' Union Meeting: Church House

1st & 3rd Sundays

9.00 am **Choral Communion**
11.00 am **Service of the Word**
6.00 pm **Evensong (Sung)**

2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays

9.00 am **Matins (Sung)**
11.00 am **Family Communion**
6.00 pm **Evensong (Sung)**

Tuesdays

11.00 am **Holy Communion (Said)**

One morning service is usually live-streamed on Sunday. Find it on our website, or on the church YouTube channel: youtube.com/hughendenchurch

Regular Groups

Hughenden Community Singers

Mondays from 7.30 to 9.30 pm. No need to be able to read music or to have sung before, and no auditions. Under-18s welcome with parents. Contact Liz on 07768 790029 or evmoseley@btinternet.com

Friendship Morning

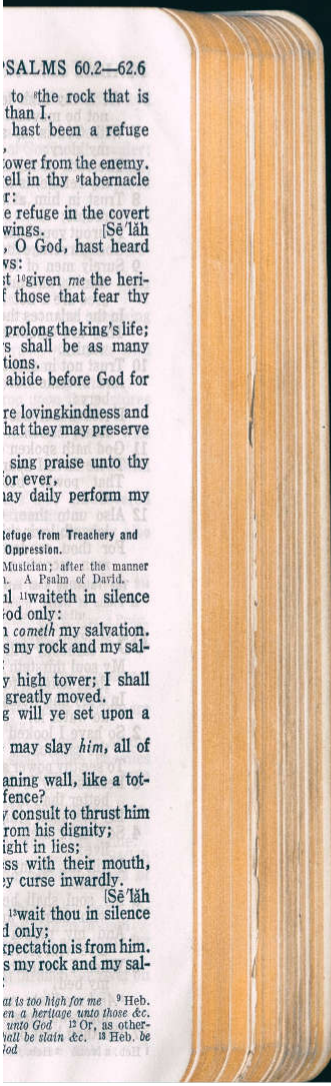
This is a get together in Church House on the third Thursday each month at 10.30 am. Primarily for those who are bereaved, who live on their own or who are lonely. The emphasis is on companionship and the atmosphere is light and cheerful. Contact Helen Peters on **01494 716772.**

Tiny Tots @ St. Michael's

Tiny Tots @ St. Michael's meets every Thursday in term time from 9.30 - 11.30 am in the North Room. Come for chat, play, craft and refreshments. Included, every second Thursday of the month, will be the Tiny Tots service, a time of fun worship in church. For details contact Helen Peters - **helen.peters@peters-research.com**

28

March Lectionary



2nd: Sunday next before Lent

Exodus 34: 29-35
2 Corinthians 3:12 - 4:2
Luke 9: 28-43a

Evensong: Psalm 89: 1-19
Exodus 3: 1-6
John 12: 27-36a

9th: First Sunday of Lent

Deuteronomy 26: 1-11
Romans 10: 8b-13
Luke 4: 1-13
Psalm at 9.00 am: 91

Evensong: Psalm 119: 73-88
Jonah 3
Luke 18: 9-14

16th: Second Sunday of Lent

Genesis 15: 1-12 & 17-18
Philippians 3:17 – 4:1
Luke 13: 31-35

Evensong: Psalm 135
Jeremiah 22: 1-9 & 13-17
Luke 14: 27-33

23rd: Third Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 55: 1-9
1 Corinthians 10: 1-13
Luke 13: 1-9

Evensong: Psalms 12 & 13
Genesis 28: 10-19a
John 1: 35-51

30th: Fourth Sunday of Lent

Joshua 5: 9-12
2 Corinthians 5: 16-21
Luke 15: 1-3 & 11b-32
Psalm at 9.00 am: 32

Evensong: Psalm 30
Isaiah 40:27 – 41:13
2 Timothy 4: 1-18

Who's Who
at St Michael & All Angels

Keith Johnson

Vicar

Home: 01494 257569
Mobile: 07772 642393

keiththevicar@gmail.com

Day off: Friday

Helen Peters

Associate Minister

Home: 01494 716772
Mobile: 07792 118357

helen.peters@peters-research.com

Day off: Monday

Chris Coyston

Children & Families Minister

Mobile: 07855 389998

chris@hughendenparishchurch.org.uk

Parish Office

Administrator: Ben Brice

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm

07928 536543
office@hughendenparishchurch.org.uk

Licensed Lay Minister	David Tester	563354	Safeguarding Officer	Roger Grant	07909 960938
Churchwardens	Frank Hawkins	565050	Captain of Bellringers	Verity Nicholls	07952 850760
	Andrew Cole	305020	Church Flowers	Sylvia Clark	07570 876530
PCC Secretary	Susan Brice	445899	Crèche Rota	Agnes Dodwell	07958 568538
PCC Treasurer	Brian Morley	528633	Social & Outreach	Antony Rippon	07747 643270
Organist & Choirmaster	Neil Brice	445899	Mothers' Union Parish Link	Louise Stallwood	712705
Servers	Andrew Cole	305020	Hughenden Village Hall	–	07815 163269
Friendship Morning	Helen Peters	716772			

All numbers are High Wycombe area code (01494) unless otherwise stated.

OUR VISION IS

to know God's love, and to share that love with everyone.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:16-19

Our aim is that all may know Jesus Christ, become his lifelong followers, and grow into mature members of the Church.

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

Our Church family will actively contribute to the life of our local community. Our Church activities & facilities will be accessible and we will welcome all with warm and generous hospitality.

www.hughendenparishchurch.org.uk