

Seek



October 2022

The Church and Parish of St Mark Cambridge

www.stmarksnewnham.org



**Welcome to the October 2022 edition of *Seek*,
the magazine for
the Church and Parish of St Mark, Cambridge.
Each year we distribute the October issue to every
household in Newnham.
We hope that you will enjoy reading it.**

The Vicar's Letter

As many of you will know, St Mark's Church has a long-standing tradition of close links with the wider Newnham community, the parish and it is good to be able to deliver all residents a copy of this our Parish magazine this month.

Your parish church seeks to be a place where all are welcomed and accepted and are given the chance to hear about, and meet, the God who loves them unconditionally. We welcome those who are sure and those with doubts and questions; those who know about church and those who don't; those who like quiet contemplation and those who like loud, joyful praise; those who are old, those who are young and anyone in between; those who struggling or sad and those who are celebrating. We aim to be a place of care and friendship as well as a place of faith. As well as the services and events put on by the church, to which all are welcome, our church building is also open all day for visitors to come and have a look, or a quiet pause and pray.

In a time of national and international uncertainty, I find myself increasingly grateful to be part of a thriving local neighbourhood, in an exciting city. St Mark's is committed to serving our local community and taking our place alongside many other groups, clubs, societies and organisations to help to make Newnham the place it is.

Like everyone, the people of St Mark's Church and Community have found the last two and a half years or so difficult, unsettling, bewildering – first with the impact of Covid and then just last month the death of our Queen. Her 70 years of reign have provided a kind of constant, steady security that I don't think we were fully aware of until it was gone. May she rest in peace.

As well as our church building, St Mark's is also pleased to have the Community Centre. The

Community Centre is getting back to being a busy place following periods of closure and restricted use during the pandemic. It is used by many local groups and classes and also by the church for Junior Church, Toddles, Messy Church meals – places where children and parents and carers are most welcome. We, as a church, also host lunches and social events throughout the year to which all are invited. We are very aware that this winter is going to be a real struggle for some with energy costs soaring and the cost of living rising. We are committed to staying open and being able to offer warm spaces for all. Look out for the dates and times of these and why not come along and meet some new neighbours?

St Mark's is a busy and welcoming place, with much going on. Please do see it as your parish church and pop in – perhaps for a regular Sunday, or midweek, service, or for a special occasion service. In addition, the church building is open every day during daylight hours if you want to drop in for a quiet moment. You are most welcome at any time.

These are just some of the activities and facilities that we offer to the parish of Newnham, and they are made possible not only by the church community but also through the ongoing support of many wonderful friends and neighbours. We are so grateful for all support that is given. As Vicar of two local churches, I don't particularly enjoy asking for help or talking about money, but we do rely on the generosity of our church members and the wider community to 'keep the show on the road,' so from time to time, I do ask.

If you feel able to make a financial contribution to the Church or Community Centre, it would be most gratefully received. Please do not send donations to me but to our treasurer, whose

details are in the front of the magazine, or use the QR code below. If you are a UK taxpayer, please consider Gift Aid to increase your donation's value to us.

Of course, the church, from time to time needs to spend money on the fabric and building but the church is about so much more than that. It is about people, from all sorts of backgrounds with a range of belief and understanding, meeting together to learn more and more how to love God and love each other. So whether or not you choose to support us financially, may we assure you that St Mark's, your parish church, and all it

offers, is always open to you. We also want to be generous and helpful, so if you are struggling and we can help, please be in touch.

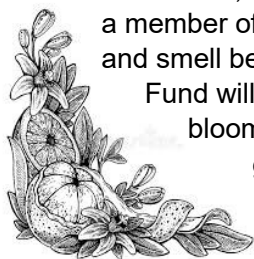
With best wishes,

Rachel

The Revd Rachel Rosborough
rachelrosborough@hotmail.com

Harvest Flowers

We shall be decorating the church on Saturday morning, 2nd October, at 9.30 am. Please come, even if you are not a member of the flower team, and make the church look and smell beautiful for the Harvest Festival. The Flower Fund will provide some flowers but if you have any late blooms these would be much appreciated, as would greenery and berries.



Wendy Walford

323519 or wendy.walford@btinternet

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Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



Many of us gathered at St Mark's on Sunday 11th September for a simple and moving Commemoration Service to the mark the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. The service included hymns, readings and prayers and was enriched by anthems sung by the choir and by the sermon delivered by our Curate, Andrew Hirst. Andrew has kindly agreed

that we may include some excerpts from his sermon in this edition of Seek.

"Neighbour" is a word that has been used a lot over the last few days, as people have shared their thoughts and reminiscences of Her Majesty the Queen. At Balmoral Castle on Royal Deeside in Aberdeenshire, the people spoke of her warmly in those terms. Balmoral sits just across the river from the busy Upper Deeside Road and is within easy distance of Ballater and Braemar. If you visit the shops there, they are full of photos of members of the Royal Family buying sausages: Local.

Likewise, in Windsor the same - the Chip Shop man opposite the Castle spoke of living next door (though he didn't say whether the Queen used to pop in for a late night kebab) : Discretion.

But let us be honest: the Queen was not quite the girl next door. She was our Sovereign, under whom we have been blessed in this country to have been godly and quietly governed for 70 years. And now the old order passes, and we proclaim, not in fear or apprehension, but rejoicing, Long Live the King....

The Queen not only served, but exemplified a life of faith. That too, has been said often over the airwaves the last few days. As Christians it has always been rather wonderful that, when we as a Nation have been stuffed with food and drink on Christmas Day, lying about on sofas semi-comatose, and surrounded by wrapping paper and presents, the Queen - without fail - made her broadcast, and always referenced her faith to what she did. She did not shy away from the bad times; she rejoiced in the good. But what was singular about her message was that, cutting through the Christmas Pudding, she was talking about God. She talked about faith. She was, in a steady and dignified way, an unapologetic evangelist...

At the moment we may be feeling a little disconcerted. The Queen has reigned for so long, and so well; she has been part of our Christmas and our calendar year. Whatever else may have been going wrong in the Country, however much we may have felt dismayed or let down in other aspects of public life and Government for whatever reason, the Queen has been above it all, has been constant and true.

We are a great country. We are battered; we need a lick of paint; we have some real problems, acute problems, some of which are egregious to face and resolve; we cannot be complacent. We have some real injustices, and there is war in Europe. But through it all and despite it all we have Institutions that endure in the name of the Sovereign; we have an ethic of service that still cuts through the opportunists and the greedy; we still know decency, fairness, respect, integrity and safety. We are not a defeated or a morally bankrupt nation. We are not in the thrall of despotism or corruption. We go on in continuity. We are strong. We can be proud, for more is right than is wrong.

So this is not a time for despair. We mourn but not grieve. This is a time for reflection but thanksgiving; for mourning and togetherness. And it is Sunday. We are in Church. We come to give thanks for the life of Elizabeth our departed Queen, and we come to worship God.

On Friday evening our Sovereign King Charles III pledged, as his mother did all those years ago, to serve. He re-affirmed his commitment and his love; and he re-affirmed his faith. If we can give one thing of which her late Majesty would approve this special weekend, it is that we too re-affirm ourselves in service, love and faith.

And if we are unsure of ourselves and our immediate future, then all we have to do, is to ask of God the questions to which we do not know the answers - and keep an ear and an eye and hand out for the answer.

Reigns begin and end on earth, but the reign of the Prince of Peace endures for ever.

Long live the King.

God save the King.

Desert Island Picks



Another in our occasional series of conversations
with members of the St Mark's community.

Jane Hellyer Jones and Mike Thompson
will be choosing favourite music and readings on

Friday 11th November

at 7.30 pm

HARVEST LUNCH



**The Harvest Lunch will be held
on Sunday October 2nd at 12.30pm**

Please sign up on the list in the narthex as usual

There will be no restrictions on numbers

We will be able to test out the new sound boards in the hall

The cost will be £5 but please bring your own drinks

All welcome

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coming to St Mark's Church on **Saturday 15th October 2022**
from 12.00 noon to 5.15 pm

The festival will give you the chance to see a number of new plays,
and explore ideas about faith and drama.

There will be three short plays before lunch ...

Ruth (Sean Lang)

Canaanite Woman (Jane Bower)

Counting (Nick Warburton)

After lunch there'll be the staged readings of the two winning scripts
chosen from a national call-out for new plays ...

Sphinx (Annie Fox)

Last Orders (Joe Laredo)

Tickets – £11.37 for the day – are available from Eventbrite. (See
Eventbrite – exploring-the-mystery-a-festival-of-new-plays.)

Lunch and coffee can also be booked through this site.

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Children's Activities at St Mark's

We would love for you and the children you care for to join us at St Mark's, whether for one of our regular services, or one of our groups or activities. Our children's activities take place during term time. Please email me, Natalie Lealand, at childrenandfamilies@stmarksnewnham.org for up-to-date information. All activities are free, although the church is grateful for any contributions made.

Toddles is our group for babies and children who have not yet started school (0-5).



Accompanying them, we welcome parents, grandparents, nannies, childminders, and carers. We have a lovely spacious hall in the Community Centre

behind the church, and this is where Toddles takes place. There are always a mat, rocker, and 'doughnut' laid out for babies, along with a selection of toys for them to explore, as well as tricycles and a trampoline for the older children. Our toy kitchen is popular, as is our colouring and craft table. We even have a little yard that we can use when the weather is dry. We always have windows open to maximise ventilation, but the hall remains comfortable and well heated. We meet Monday and Thursday mornings, from 9.30 until 11.30am.

Junior Church meets during Sunday services on the second, third and fourth Sunday of each month.



We begin in church with the rest of the congregation, before leaving to engage in our own worship. We use Godly Play, which is a method that has a Montessori foundation and honours the natural spiritual

capacity and curiosity of children. Our worship

involves telling a story using visual props and figures that the children are free to explore. There is some group response time, in which we wonder about what we have heard, and everyone is then free to respond individually in whatever way suits them best – for this, we have a range of craft, building and sensory materials, as well as the Godly Play stories remaining open for interaction. This is a valuable time in the lives of children as it offers space to think about the world and their place in it and we welcome anybody who would like to join us.

M&Ms is our youth group for older children (Year 6 and above). This is a joint group with St Mary and St Michael's in Trumpington. We meet twice monthly on a Sunday afternoon, once for a session of games and light discussion, and again for a sit-down discussion (we are currently looking at the Gospel of Mark). There are always snacks. Contact me to see a list of our meetings for this academic year. Young people are welcome to join us for however many or few sessions they would like. Opening with games means that any new arrivals should instantly feel like part of the group.

Messy Church takes place on the first Tuesday of each month, from 3.30pm (drop in after school!).



We are in the main church building for this, and we have an aisle full of toys, as well as several activity tables offering a variety of projects for the children to engage

with. When we have finished with our projects there is a short story, and anybody who wants to (parents and carers included) can then join us for a warm meal at around 5pm.

Natalie Lealand

Children and Families Minister

Memories of the Queen



Do you have memories of meeting or seeing the Queen?

We would like to put together a collection of readers' memories in next month's issue of Seek.

If you have a memory or anecdote you would like to share do get in touch with any of the Seek Committee. Don't feel obliged to put anything in writing. We'll be happy to listen and record it for you.

Jane Plows

Cambridge City Foodbank



“Demand is at its highest ever at Cambridge City Foodbank – they even ran out of baked beans!”

In the 12 years that Cambridge City Foodbank has been operating, they have never known a time when they’ve been short of baked beans. It’s a staple, go-to foodbank item that people frequently donate and which they always have plenty of – until now. This year, maybe for the first time ever, they ran out of donated baked beans and had to buy them in.

Sadly, this is a sign of the times; due to the cost of living crisis the numbers seeking emergency help are rising dramatically but fewer people are donating because they simply cannot afford to. A donations warehouse that is usually overflowing with food items is now piled high with empty food crates. And the situation is only going to get worse. Cambridge City Foodbank expects to support over 12,000 people in 2022.

How does the Foodbank work?

Food is donated at local drop off points, and taken to a warehouse where it’s sorted by volunteers and packed into boxes ready to be given to people in need. The Foodbank partners with a wide range of care professionals, for example, doctors, health visitors, social workers, to identify people in crisis and issue them with a foodbank voucher. Foodbank clients can bring their voucher to a Foodbank centre where it can be redeemed for 3 days emergency food. Volunteers meet clients and are able to signpost people to agencies to try and obtain more help and solve the longer-term problem.

There are eight Foodbank centres - three located in the city centre, and the others in Arbury, Chesterton, Trumpington, Northstowe and Cambourne. Cambourne and Arbury centres have been particularly busy this year, with numbers doubling compared to last year, but the reality is that across Cambridge there is an ever-increasing level of need.

Where You Can Donate in Newnham and Grantchester

St Mark’s Church – Drop it off in the Narthex on the First Sunday of every month (Oct 2, Nov 6, Dec 4)
1 Millington Road or 19 Kings Road, Thursday Oct 6, Nov 10, Dec 8, 9am – 4pm

Gough Way – Every Tuesday morning 11-13.00 at the Gough Way island with the postbox (contact sarah.smalley@ntlworld.com for further details)

Grantchester Reading Room - Thursday Oct 6, Nov 10, Dec 8, 9am – 3pm

Or use the donation box in most large supermarkets.

Most Needed Items

The most needed list changes frequently and the most up to date version can be found on the Cambridge City Foodbank website. However, some items are always in demand e.g.

Tinned Meat	Tinned Fish
Pasta Sauce	Tea Bags
Cooking Oil	UHT Milk
Tinned Fruit	Rice Pudding
Tinned Vegetables	Coffee
Snacks	Sponge Puddings/ Jellies
Clothes Washing Liquid	

The website also has details of how you can donate to their Fuel Poverty scheme, and how to become a volunteer.

Rosey Gardiner

Thursday Lunch Club

(Previously known as Newnham Seniors Lunch Club)

Do join us for lunch each Thursday

12.15 for 12.30 lunch

At Newnham Sports and Social Club, Hardwick Street

Two course lunch, including tea/coffee, £5pp (veg option available)

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Alison: 0772 0050 077



New members will be very welcome, as will volunteers who are needed to set up, serve, chat and wash up during lunches. Please phone Alison for further details.



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Sparks fly in Newnham

We were in the kitchen, pottering around ('multi-tasking') with half an eye on a TV programme on which someone was trying to sell an 'antique'. It was a big contraption made of cast iron holding two rollers that squeezed water from laundry. My mind flashed back in time to my grandmother's kitchen and what we called a 'mangle' that loomed large in the corner. On wash days it was rolled out and my



two aunts would argue as to which one of them was going to turn the handle and which one was going to feed the wet sheets between the rollers. Those with little fingers were told to go and stand in the corner well away! The sheets were then dried in the fresh air outside and the next day ironed with a heavy cast iron that was heated on the top of the Rayburn stove. Nowadays we have washing machines and tumble dryers and electric irons. Wonderful inventions that save a lot of our time and effort but need to run on electricity. Don't worry, I'm not going to go on about cutting down on our use of electricity as the media are doing a good job on that front!

It was when I was doing a bit of ironing (sorry, but nice crisp, ironed pillowcases on 'clean bed linen day' are a delight in this household) when there was a sudden sparking and a spluttering of rusty water over what I was ironing, which happened to be my husband's favourite but nearly worn-out shirt. He had been boiling the kettle to make us a pot of tea and twigged what had happened right away. The iron had caused a short circuit of the ring main and the circuit breaker had cut out. (The iron had 'blown a fuse' in old terminology!)

So, what do you do with a broken old iron? Well, if a washing machine goes wrong you ring up someone to come and mend it, but not before you have given credit card details to pay for an eye-watering call-out fee! The worst that can happen is that you are told it can't be repaired and you need a new one. The old one gets taken away and, hopefully, recycled. However, the iron goes into a 'black hole', a dark corner somewhere along with its electrical friends, a broken kettle and hair-drier, doesn't?

I must admit I was giving some thought to how to solve that particular issue when I came across an article in the Cambridge Independent newspaper,

'small old electrical items are one of the fastest growing waste streams in the UK. The number of old cables in UK households (140 million) is enough to circle the Earth more than 5 times. 450 tons of small electricals are disposed of in land-fill.' These items contain valuable metals such as copper and even gold in some cases.

'Anything with a plug or cable or a battery that can't be removed can be recycled at a recycling bank near you'.... and guess where our nearest one is? Lammas land car park! I couldn't believe it so I potted down to have a look and there it was! (See photo if you don't believe me).

Anyway, I duly packed up my wheelie shopping bag with broken electrical items that would fit into the bank and trundled over to deposit them. It gave me a great sense of satisfaction to hear them go 'plonk' as I dropped them in.



You may be pleased to know my husband's favourite shirt now functions as collarless garden-wear in preparation for a possible appearance on Gardeners' World.

Seriously though, please make use of this convenient recycling facility for small electrical appliances...Use it or lose it!

So, let's check out those dark corners hiding obsolete electrical stuff like:-

- First generation hair-driers and heated rollers (remember them?)

- Incinerating devices such as old toasters and tabletop grills

- A collection of old electrical kettles

- Sinister electrical shaving equipment

- Battery-powered tools and an assortment of chargers that no longer work etc

- There may even be a 'lava' lamp lurking there!

And as a 'reward' you could always treat yourself to a nice cuppa or ice cream at the café down at the corner of Lammas Land near the car park.

Best wishes

Rosemary Ley

Thank you, Marguerite

The eagle-eyed amongst our readers may have noticed that Marguerite Roberts's name no longer appears on the list of St Mark's clergy. Marguerite has now officially "retired" and it seems appropriate that we should mark her retirement. Many thanks to Hilary for writing this tribute.

When Sam Wells was leaving St Mark's for pastures new, he gave heartfelt thanks for all that Marguerite had done for him, our church and parish. He called her 'a saint' and I think he was right.

A saint is defined as a person who is believed to be a good example of how people should live or what people should do. A saint is thought to be kind, loving, caring, brave, compassionate, selfless and a good teacher.

We know that Marguerite was a wonderful teacher - and headteacher - in her first career. Her insight into children is always evident in her work with them, for example in her Messy Church food activities. Her table was always the most popular stop!

Marguerite can deliver words of quiet wisdom, always insightful, as we realised when listening to her preaching - she rarely used notes and spoke

always from her heart - and from her contributions to PCC meetings.

We were particularly grateful to Marguerite during the two interregnums. St Mark's still had a shepherd to lead our flock and many other congregations in our diocese have also benefitted from her help.

Wedding couples still count Marguerite among their friends. She married our eldest son and his wife in St Mark's and recently she was very much included in the baptism of their daughter in Ely Cathedral.

And families in distressing circumstances have been well cared for and comforted by Marguerite.

More recently, the Covid lockdowns have kept Marguerite busy supporting the many elderly and isolated people she has always cared for, by phoning them and keeping in touch.

Although we don't see Marguerite at St Mark's now, as she no longer drives and it is difficult for her to attend, I know she still thinks of us all. And we still think of her...with love.

Thank you, Marguerite.

Hilary Murray

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The Diocese of Gombe : Charity of the Month

We are used to looking at glossy charity brochures, with professionally taken photographs and encouragingly written texts. How different our impression is when we look at the photos we recently received from Gombe Diocese in Northern Nigeria! (Now on display in the Narthex.) What we see is a building site. Foundations have been dug and building blocks have been cemented. There are a few men casually at work, but no sign of building contractors' lorries and machinery.

Two years ago the diocese began the building of a College of Nursing and Midwifery in an out-of-the-way town called Kaltungo. This had been a vision of the previous Bishop, Henry Ndukuba, for many years. Land had been given for the college and building begun, but the project soon ran into difficulties. The roof of an accommodation block for students, (to whose construction we contributed), turned out to be unsafe in high winds. So more money had to be found to put that right.

The latest letter that we received from the diocese explained that the photographs they had sent were of the "Clinic of the College." Other completed buildings can be seen in the background. Thus the photos show the beginning of a clinic to be run in support of the students' training. If we can imagine into the future, we might see local expectant

mothers queuing there, grateful that they have somewhere to go when they need to, because there is nowhere else to go to locally.

I am reminded of the time that I visited Gombe over ten years ago and I saw the site of a diocesan secondary school that was planned in a rural area. It was a bank holiday and yet we discovered a few men digging foundations. They turned out to be the school's headmaster and a couple of his colleagues. They were working on what they hoped would be an accommodation block for the students. That block was eventually built and a secondary school, which offers boarding facilities, is now up and running. Bishop Henry's philosophy was that if one can get something going then people can gather round and make it happen.

So are we willing to continue supporting our Nigerian brothers and sisters who have taken on a project that could well seem hugely over-ambitious to them? I hope so. From the photos we cannot tell that local medical facilities are few, but we can see that the project is going ahead with as little expense as possible, and with the active support of local people.

Andrew Watts

From the Registers

Wedding 3rd September Jasper Attlee and Joycelyn Longdon

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A Day of Reflection at Clare Priory

Seventeen of us arrived at Clare Priory on a beautifully clear morning – one of the first mornings of late summer that could be described as decidedly chilly. Debbie Whitton-Spriggs guided us through the day, which began with an outdoor meditation where we were invited to close our eyes and consider our other senses. As the sun warmed us through, we could hear a variety of birdsong and the rustling of leaves in the wind. Debbie spoke about how the soil beneath our feet teems with life and reminded us that when we stand on God's creation, we stand on holy ground.

Times of group reflection were interspersed with time outdoors, and we enjoyed spending time really looking at things rather than offering only a cursory

glance to our surroundings. People gathered acorns, conkers, and fallen branches – signs of the changing seasons – and some of us spent time sketching or writing.

Clare Priory, which we visited last year, again proved a beautiful setting for reflecting on God, his creation, and our place within it. They also provided a tasty soup lunch. Several people mentioned how lovely it was to be among church family, and it was nice to welcome some onto their first experience of such a day. Thanks to Debbie for preparing such meaningful material. I think we will be reflecting for a long time to come.

Natalie Lealand

Land and Buildings News



Have you noticed that both our original church keys are missing? Maybe Eleanor and I discovered why on a recent visit to Aldeburgh Parish Church. There we read that in the past church keys were often borrowed as an aid to divination or to staunch bleeding! Clearly we have a medievalist among us.

On a more earthbound level we have just installed energy saving LED bulbs in the Narthex and the Community Centre large hall. There we have also redecorated and installed acoustic panels which should make conversation easier.

We have just heard that our Faculty for the restoration of the Newnham War Memorial is on its way. With that we can complete the formalities with the War Memorials Trust and the Planning Authority and start carving!

Alan Jones

The November Issue of SEEK

All contributions are welcome. Please send them by Sunday 16th October to Jane Plows at janemp@virginmedia.com (350120) or contact any member of the committee.

OVER 50s WALKING MOBILITY GROUP

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30am - 10:15am

Lammas Land

If you're looking to improve your fitness, come and try our new low impact, outdoor group exercise classes suitable for all fitness levels. We focus on MOBILITY, STRENGTH and BALANCE with plenty of walking in between. These relaxed and sociable outdoor classes are wonderful for both physical and mental wellbeing.

Please get in touch if you'd like to know more or book a trial via our website; <https://gocbc.fit> or text/call Lou on 07519 606591

Thank you to ONLINE shoppers



easyfundraising is an organisation which encourages major businesses to donate a small discount to charities registered with them. Online shoppers select which charity they wish to support.

Online shoppers have helped St Marks raise over £700 by using **easyfundraising** without it costing them a penny.

Over 6,000 shops and sites will donate to us, including all the big names like eBay, John Lewis & Partners, Argos, ASOS, Expedia, M&S, Just Eat, Uswitch and many more! This means you can raise FREE donations for us no matter what you're buying.

Please remember to use **easyfundraising** every time you shop online.

If you haven't signed up to support us yet, it's easy and completely FREE. These donations really help us, so it would be great if you could take a moment to get started!

You can find our **easyfundraising** page here: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stmarkschurchnewnham/

If you need any help in getting started, please get in touch with me treasurer@stmarksnewnham.org

Don't forget that you can also support St Mark's Church by using **Smile Amazon**

Thank you!

Stuart Lingard – Church Treasurer

Services at St Mark's Church, Newnham in October

Communion (BCP) at 8.00 am every Sunday

Sunday Morning Services

2nd October at 9.30 am	Harvest Festival
9th October at 9.30 am	Morning Worship and Junior Church
16th October at 9.30 am	Communion and Junior Church
23rd October at 9.30 am	Communion and Junior Church
30th October at 10.00 am	Joint Service with Grantchester Church at St Mark's a chance to hear about Rachel's Sabbatical

Tuesdays

Communion (BCP) every Tuesday at 11.00 am

Messy Church at 3.45 pm on 4th October

A Prayer for October

A prayer of King Alfred the Great

King Alfred died on the 26th October 899, aged fifty years. He is famed for defeating the Vikings, reorganising the nation's defences and thereby saving England from Danish conquest. But it is his other pursuits as king that earned him the epithet 'the great'. Alfred recognised that wisdom was key to ruling well (and successfully), and believed that wisdom was rooted in education. After defeating the Vikings in 878, Alfred embarked on his education programme by attracting to his court the best scholars in western Europe, with whom the king began to learn Latin (the language of the written word) and then to translate key books from Latin into English.

Alfred's bishops and earls were required to read these books, or have them read aloud to them, so that they might acquire the wisdom of the past. One of the books Alfred translated into English was *The Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius, written in 523 and considered a Christian classic. Alfred did not translate *The Consolation* word-for-word but sense-for-sense — not literally but loosely. This resulted in a great number of additions and alterations to the original text through which we can perceive Alfred's own words and thinking. One such addition is the prayer below, sometimes called 'Alfred's prayer'.

O Lord God Almighty, Maker and Ruler of all creation, in the name of Thy mighty mercy, through the sign of the Holy Cross and the virginity of Holy Mary, the obedience of Holy Michael and the love and merits of all Thy Saints, I beseech Thee, guide me better than I have deserved of Thee; direct me according to Thy will and the needs of my soul better than I myself am able; strengthen my mind for Thy will and the needs of my soul; make me steadfast against the temptations of the devil; keep foul lust and all evil far from me; shield me from my enemies, seen and unseen; teach me to do Thy holy will, that I may inwardly love Thee above all things with clean thought and chaste body. For Thou art my Maker and my Redeemer, my life, my comfort, my trust and my hope. Praise and glory be to Thee now and forever and unto the endless ages. Amen.

Alfred the Wise asked God for guidance and direction, strength and steadfastness, and protection and love. Our late Queen Elizabeth II was strong in her faith and received these

blessings from God. Let us pray that our new King Charles III possesses the wisdom of Alfred and asks for these blessings too. Indeed, Alfred's wise prayer may be said by all Christians.

Chosen by Ross Smythe

Regular Groups

Monday Bible Study

10:00am, alternate weeks – contact: Sue Wagner, 01223 563435

Tuesday and Thursday Home Groups

7:30 pm, weekly – contact: Andrew Watts, aa.watts@hotmail.co.uk or Mike Thompson, michaelangelot99@gmail.com

Prayer Meeting

11.00 am every Friday at 10 Stukeley Close – contact: Anne Howie, 01223 356140

Choir

The choir normally sings on the first three Sundays of the month at our 9:30 am service. Rehearsals are 6:00 pm – 7:15 pm on the first and third Fridays of the month and from 9:00 am on Sundays.