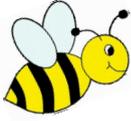


The Buzz From St B's  
Spring 2026

Online



St Barnabas Parish Church  
Woodfield Road Hadleigh

**Here For Everyone!**

[www.stbarnabas-hadleigh.org.uk](http://www.stbarnabas-hadleigh.org.uk)

St Barnabas Parish Church Church Road Hadleigh SS7 2EJ

[www.stbarnabas-hadleigh.org.uk](http://www.stbarnabas-hadleigh.org.uk)

Parish Office - 01702 558591 (Hall Bookings / Enquiries)

Messages left will be answered

Associate Priest  
for St Barnabas & St James-the-Less

Revd Mark Smeed

[mark.smeed@bth-group.org](mailto:mark.smeed@bth-group.org)



Churchwarden

Catherine

[churchwardenstbs@gmail.com](mailto:churchwardenstbs@gmail.com)



Churchwarden Sandra

[churchwardenstbs@gmail.com](mailto:churchwardenstbs@gmail.com)



Safeguarding Officer

Marion 01268 211009

## SUNDAY SERVICES

1st and 3rd Sundays 9.30am Holy Communion

2nd and 4th Sundays 9.30am Morning Service

### Mid-Week Service

Thursdays 10.30am Holy Communion

For more information please visit:

[www.stbarnabas-hadleigh.org.uk](http://www.stbarnabas-hadleigh.org.uk)



## Hello from Revd Mark Smeed

"As we move through February and into the summer months, something happens that you can feel as much as you can see: the mornings brighten, the evenings stretch out, and the world slowly leans back towards the light. The sun rises a little earlier each day, and with it comes that quiet sense of possibility – that fresh-start feeling that spring always seems to carry. It's a fitting backdrop for life at St Barnabas, because these months are about growth: in faith, in friendship, and in the life of our community.

Spring doesn't arrive all at once. It comes in small, steady signs – a bud here, a brighter sky there, the first flowers that somehow push through after months of cold. And in many ways, community grows like that too. It's rarely one big moment. It's the accumulation of small kindnesses: noticing someone new, remembering a name, sharing a cuppa, offering a lift, asking "How are you, really?", and meaning it. Over time, those simple things become roots – and those roots become a place where people can belong.

That's the kind of church we want to keep nurturing at St Barnabas: warm, welcoming, and genuinely connected. A church where you don't have to have it all together to walk through the door. A church where friendships form naturally, across ages and backgrounds, and where faith is explored with honesty and hope. If you've been coming for years, thank you for being part of that steady, faithful presence. And if you're newer, or you've been thinking about coming along, consider this your invitation: there's room for you here, and you're more welcome than you probably realise.

Easter sits right at the heart of this season – not as something distant or purely traditional, but as the clearest sign that God is always doing something new. Resurrection is, in a sense, God's springtime announcement: life can begin again. Hope is not wishful thinking; it's something God grows in us. And that hope isn't meant to stay inside the church walls. It's meant to shape the way we live, the way we treat one another, and the way we look to the future.

With that in mind, we're especially looking forward to beginning a course in April – a chance to take a simple, intentional step deeper. For some, it will be a way to revisit the foundations of faith; for others, a space to

ask questions, explore, listen, and reflect. Most importantly, it will be a place to build friendships as we learn together. You don't need to be an expert, and you don't need to have the "right" words. You just need to be open to the journey. Keep an eye out for the details, and please do invite a friend – sometimes the best way to start is to come alongside someone you know.

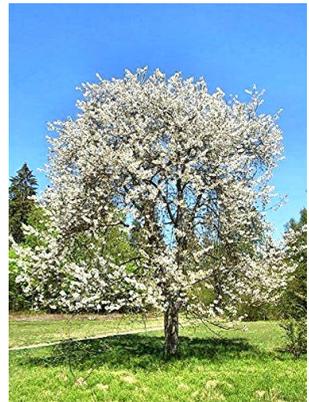
So, as the sun rises earlier and the days grow lighter, let's lean into what God is growing among us: deeper connection, wider welcome, and a hopeful vision for what St Barnabas can be in the months ahead. If you're wondering where you fit, the answer is simple: you fit by being here. And if you're ready for a next step, April's course might be exactly the beginning you've been looking for."

*Mark*

*Sylvia Jordan suggested this beautiful poem for Spring::*

## The Cherry Tree

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough,  
And stands about the woodland ride  
Wearing white for Eastertide.



Now, of my threescore years and ten,  
Twenty will not come again,  
And take from seventy springs a score,  
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom  
Fifty springs are little room,  
About the woodlands I will go  
To see the cherry hung with snow.

*From: A Shropshire Lad (A E Houseman)*

## COVER PICTURE



## SPRING COMES EARLY IN NORFOLK

December and January, two of the coldest months of the year, are the months when seals on the Norfolk coast give birth to their pups. I snapped this one, from a distance, with labrador Bina safely on her lead, on January 2nd this year. It was only a couple of days before heavy snow arrived - the pup would need all its protective fat, provided by the mother's super-rich milk

Surprisingly, the mums only stay with their pups for about 3 weeks before leaving them to fend for themselves. The pups develop a white coat that keeps them warm, but must be shed before they can swim again, hence they have to spend a lot of time lying on the beach. There is a very good seal-watch organisation which looks out for any in difficulty; they respond quickly to reports from the public - that's how we found out about seal pups a few years ago.

All babies, animal and human, need nourishment and care. Seal pups presumably, and human babies certainly, also need love, a need that continues throughout our lives. We are all given the love of God, some believe from the moment of conception. God gives us part of himself. However, it is essential that we recognise and accept God's love. St Paul, when he came to this realisation, was able to write his great chapter on love: 1 Corinthians 13. In spite of much mistreatment, Paul also said 'There is great gain in godliness with contentment' - no earthly possession can so provide.

## Joseph's Easter

“He’s gone,” says Joseph; and with Pilate’s leave,  
Eases the nails and lowers him from the tree;  
Wraps him in reverent and tender thoughts  
And lays him in the cave called ‘Memory.’

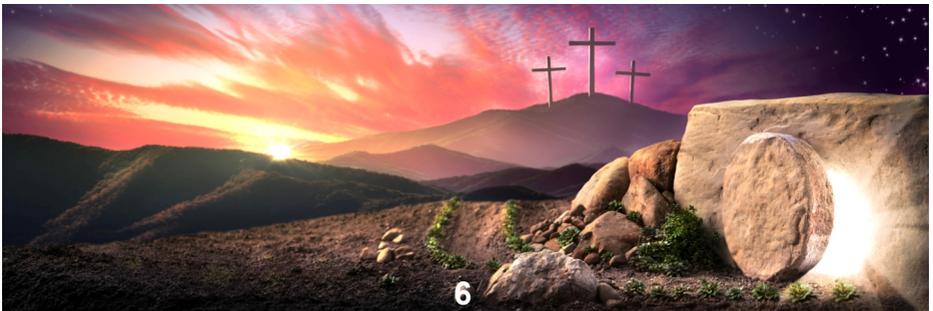
That cave is deeply hewn in Joseph’s heart,  
All that’s within will always be his own;  
In memory’s cave the treasure of his past  
Is safe for ever, walled and sealed by stone.

“He’s safe,” says Joseph,” safe in this cool place,  
And no one now can take my Lord away.  
In years to come I’ll still see his dear face  
As clearly as I’ve seen it on this day.”

“He’s gone,” cries Joseph at the empty tomb.  
But Mary says, “He’s left a word for you:  
He cannot rest content to be your past –  
So he has risen, to be your future too.”

*W H Vanstone (1923 – 1999)*

*W H Vanstone was a much respected Priest, theologian and author. The poem can be found in his final book, ‘Fare Well in Christ’ (1997) I particularly recommend his book ‘Love’s Endeavour, Love’s Expense.’ (MK)*



*An extract from 'The Thoughtful Guide to Faith': Thinking About Easter'(Tony Windross)*

## Christ is Risen!

The resurrection (of Jesus) is what gave birth to the Church, to the Gospels, indeed to everything that makes up Christianity ..... The proof of the pudding is always in the eating, and the Gospels bear witness to the fact that a beaten, dejected group of men and women, were somehow in some way transformed by something into bold proclaimers of this vision. We can't know what that something was, but it was obviously sufficient to open their eyes so that they came to see Jesus' life as a victory and not a defeat. It gave them a new window on the world because it showed that the power of love cannot be overcome. If God really is love, and it is surely impossible to be a Christian and not accept this, then the Resurrection is the story of that love being poured out into the world.

Unless the vision still 'worked', unless the reality underlying the Resurrection was still alive and well, Christianity would have died out long ago. But the fact that it didn't shows that the love and the joy and the hope and the peace that those first disciples felt had been unleashed into and onto the world is a force still very much to be reckoned with. But this will only be actualised if we make it happen. It is our responsibility to keep the reality of the Resurrection alive. If we say "Christ is risen", and then continue to be petty, and narrow and backbiting and judgemental and gossipy and critical, we're showing loudly and clearly that it hasn't got a lot to recommend it. If on the other hand, we find the whole idea mind-blowingly special and splendid, then that is bound to overflow into our lives, and we're going to be walking, talking, living and loving advertisements for Resurrection life.

*In this season of Spring, as always, it is encouraging to see the new green shoots in our gardens, early flowers, and crops growing in the fields. Jesus often used everyday examples that were easily understood in his teaching, typically in the following example:*

## Spring Growth - The Automatic Earth

In one of the Kingdom parables, Jesus says: *the earth produces of itself.*

(Mark 4:28).

The Greek word used means 'automate' so we might translate what Jesus said as 'the automatic earth'.



Many plants grow automatically, without our intervention – seeds may be spread from plants or trees, or dropped from the air by birds, no special treatment or fertiliser is needed, the automatic earth does the rest. Farmers and gardeners, may add nutrients to encourage growth, but they nevertheless rely upon the automatic earth.

I have heard this parable described as the 'parable of agricultural grace', the God given power of earth which mankind does not make or direct, but which is freely given of God. As the parable also says: the seed grows *'man knows not how'*.

I like the story about a patient in hospital who said to his surgeon: "I wouldn't mind being able to perform an operation, but what I could never do is visit the patient next day to see if they are still alive! - I'd want to be as far away as possible." The surgeon replied: "what we depend on is not just skill or technique, but 'medical grace' - the natural healing powers of the body."

The harvest of the Kingdom of God comes from the seeds of the Gospel of God's truth and love in the Lord Jesus Christ, sown by Christian believers in human soil.

Those seeds grow by grace too - the grace of God, the love that he gives but which we cannot earn, simply accept. If our kingdom seeds are to grow to maturity, we ourselves must trust completely in the Grace of God in our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is not medical grace or agricultural grace, but heavenly grace which enables us to grow, and to promote growth within the Kingdom of God.

Hopefully we can leave medical grace to surgeons, and agricultural grace to farmers, gardeners, and growers, but God's grace is entrusted to us, and it is for us to treasure and to share. I can think of no better summary than to pray: the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all ever more. Amen

*Mike*



## Listening

*(Submitted by Pauline Swenson)*

When I ask you to listen to me,  
And you start giving advice,  
You have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me,  
And you begin to tell me why  
I shouldn't feel that way,  
You are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me  
And you feel you have to do something  
To solve my problem,  
You have failed me;

Listen!

All I asked was that you listen,  
Not talk or do.  
Just hear me.

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## Doing

*(Submitted by Kathy Carrington)*

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and everybody was sure that somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but nobody did it.

Somebody got angry about that, because it was everybody's job. Everybody thought that anybody could do it, but nobody realised that everybody would not do it. It ended up that everybody blamed somebody, when nobody did what everybody could have done.



## **EASTER AT ST BARNABAS & ST JAMES THE LESS**

### **Palm Sunday 29th March**

St Barnabas 09.30am Holy Communion  
St James 11.00am Holy Communion

### **Maundy Thursday 2nd April**

St Barnabas 10.30am Holy Communion  
St James 6.00pm Holy Communion

### **Good Friday 3rd April**

St Barnabas 10.30am Hadleigh Walk of Witness  
2.00pm Last Hour at the Cross  
St James 10.30am Hadleigh Walk of Witness

### **Easter Sunday**

St Barnabas 6.00am Dawn Service at Hadleigh  
Castle  
09.30am Holy Communion  
St James 6.00am Dawn Service at Hadleigh  
Castle  
11.00am Holy Communion



## The Balsham Ploughmen

The Balsham Plough Monday Club consists of a group of men who live in or are connected to the village of Balsham in Cambridgeshire.

They raise money annually on Plough Monday and bi-annually at the Balsham Feast for charities in and around Balsham.

Plough Monday is traditionally the first Monday after Epiphany. It is a very ancient custom whose earliest history lies in the 16<sup>th</sup> century although it may have roots well before then. Documents tell of a 'plough candle' being lit in churches during January in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Plough Monday marked the beginning of the winter ploughing season when the farm workers returned to work from their short but unpaid Christmas holiday. For these men who had no money it was an ideal opportunity to collect both food and money. They would call on the village squire, farmers, shopkeepers, and their "better off" fellow villagers, in fact anywhere they could reasonably expect a donation.

Over the past 40 years the Ploughmen have raised over £48,000 for local charities. All in a good cause.

*Richard Ambrose*

*Plough on Richard! Thank you (Ed)*

# MOTHERING SUNDAY AT ST BARNABAS

10.30am Sunday 15th March

a Special Service to say

## THANK YOU MUM!

Posies of Flowers

Simnel Cake + Tea & Coffee



## MESSY CHURCH SPECIAL!

SATURDAY 4th APRIL 10.30am to 12.00



### MAKING EASTER GARDENS

&

### EASTER EGG HUNT



## MESSY CHURCH DATES

Monday 9th March

Monday 11th May

Monday 8th June

Monday 13th July

4.00pm - 6.00pm

**CRAFT - STORY & SONG - COOKED MEAL**

**ALL WELCOME**

Children must be accompanied by an adult

THE WAR YEARS 1939 - 1945  
WARTIME MEMORIES OF THE WATTS FAMILY

*Submitted by Pat Pedder*

I was born in July 1937 and spent the first three years of my life in a green and white clap-boarded house on my Grandparent's land at the top of Vicarage Hill, Benfleet, close to Boyce Hill Golf Course. Early in the war, a bomb fell on the golf course where a searchlight operated; this caused all our windows to cave in and my brother aged eight had a near escape when glass fell on his bed. After this, my parents (Bertha and Leslie Watts) moved to a bungalow the bottom of Essex Way where I grew up with my brother.

My cousin Ted lived in the farmhouse on the left of Essex Way. He told me recently that one of my uncles climbed up a tree near the bottom of Essex Way to remove a parachute which was attached to a bomb. His mother and several neighbours used the silk to make underwear. Another bomb was in the rabbit warren; the Police disposal team told Ted's family to open all their windows before the bomb was dismantled. His cottage was ok but several houses in Vicarage Hill lost their windows when the bomb was disarmed.



My father served in the 1914-18 war. In WW2 he was an Air Raid Warden and made sure all the blackout rules were observed in the local houses. My brother took great delight in watching dog fights in the sky from the bungalow which was high up in Essex Way. In Benfleet creek was a shipyard called Benfleet Slipway where boats were made for use in the war, they were often targeted by enemy aircraft. Luckily Benfleet Slipway survived throughout and only closed in the early fifties. My father and his brother worked there until closure.

I still remember sleeping under an iron bedstead on a mattress every night instead of going into the Anderson shelter in the back of the garden, mainly because the shelter was a dugout and would fill with water, making it uninhabitable, especially as we were at the foot of the hill in Essex Way. *(Thanks Pat Ed).*

*From Janette Newman  
Remembering Timothy James Newman*

**THANK YOU ST BARNABAS**

I want to thank all my friends at St Barnabas for their wonderful support, especially during the last year following the death of my son on 20th March 2025.

In the last three years of his life, Tim had to cope with serious health problems, including the failure of kidney and pancreas transplants and several strokes. Mum Janette lovingly supported him through all of this. A colleague from Chelmsford Police Station, where Tim worked as a Liaison Officer, wrote of him: "You showed all who met you, courage in the face of adversity, bravery, and humour through your darker days. You were always the one more concerned for others than yourself."

*Rest in peace, much loved and missed son, and loyal friend.*



## OUR SHOEBOXES

Our boxes brought Good News and Great Joy to children living in Eastern Europe.

**THANK YOU** everyone who provided gifts, packed boxes and donated money to help with delivery costs.



'KETTLE'S ON'  
Cuppa  
Refreshment & Chat  
at St Barnabas  
EVERY TUESDAY  
10.30 - 12.00



We are sorry that, except for some copies in church, The Buzz is no longer published in printed form - distribution became impossible. *Mike*  
[info@stbarnabas-hadleigh.org.uk](mailto:info@stbarnabas-hadleigh.org.uk)

Need a Hall for your organisation to use or for a special function? St Barnabas Church has a large hall with kitchen and toilets for hire. **Please contact the Parish Office & leave a message**  
**01702 558591**