



# Under the Downs

## 3 Country Churches Nestling Under the Downs

May 2018

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### View From the Rectory

What a beautiful day!

I hope Louise does well in her exams...

John isn't very well, I hope it's nothing serious...

I wish I'd remembered to send Anne a birthday card...

It was so good to see Fred again...

We've just had such a wonderful holiday!

Life is full of those moments when we are glad, apprehensive, or regretful, when we have concerns for ourselves, or those we love. Life is full of prayers too, whether they are thoughts like those

above, or formal words, like the Lord's Prayer. It isn't necessary to use words at all - silence after all can speak volumes.

All through the centuries, people have found many ways of talking with God - after all he made each of us to be special, so it is hardly surprising that we each find different ways to communicate with him too. Some people like to go on long walks, or sit in a familiar place, play music or light candles, contemplate beautiful pictures, read printed prayers, or make up their own, be in church with others, on their own, or not at all. We

are all different and every way is a right way.

I'm reminded of the French peasant who sat quietly day after day in one of the great cathedrals, and when asked what he was doing, replied, "I look at God, and he looks at me, and we are happy together".

That's prayer too.

Every blessing

Linda

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### Midhurst Deanery and Churches Together 2018, Ten Days of prayer and worship!

The Diocese of Chichester has designated 2018 as a Year of Prayer, and there are various activities taking place across the diocese during the course of the year.

In and around Midhurst, we are focusing on the period between Ascension Day and Pentecost (10 - 20 May) with different activities, from quiet times to prayer walks, being led by different churches each day.

**Thursday 10 May 6:30pm** Midhurst Methodist Church, Ascension Day Holy Communion

**Friday 11 May** Harting, Elstead, Treyford Cum Didling (Please check notice board for more information)

**Saturday 12 May 11:00am** Midhurst Catholic Church, An Hour of Prayer, waiting for the Holy Spirit, Readings, Prayers, Times of Silence

**Sunday 13 May 6:00pm** St Mary's Easebourne, Deanery Evensong

**Monday 14 May 11am-2pm** St Luke's Linch, Quiet Prayer and Contemplation (feel free to wander in anytime between these hours)

**Tuesday 15 May 10am-4pm** St Mary's Easebourne, Deanery Quiet Day

**Wednesday 16 May** Rogate, Terwick, Trotton and Chithurst *Prayer walk around benefice*

**10.45** Meet in Rogate churchyard and set out towards the fields and woods leading to Terwick Church.

**11.30** Meet at Terwick Church for short informal prayers and light refreshment for walkers and car drivers.

**11.45** Walkers go in cars to Trotton Church

**12 noon** Meet at Trotton Church and set off walking across the bridge and over the fields to Chithurst.

**12.30** Arrive at Chithurst Church and find a picnic lunch waiting!

**Thursday 17 May Deanery Open Church day** As no specific community offers prayers on this day, we offer, as a deanery, 22 parish churches for quiet and reflection - 'come and find peace, come and rest a while!'

**Friday 18 May** St James Heyshott, Light a Candle- Say a Prayer. Drop in any time between 10 and 6. Readings/prayers on the hour every hour

**Saturday 19 May** Fernhurst, Lynchmere and Camelsdale, Celtic Prayer

**Sunday 20 May 6.00pm** Midhurst Parish Church, Pentecost 'Thy Kingdom Come' - Final Celebration Service



## Going Nuts in May by Michael Blencowe, Sussex Wildlife Trust

You could set your calendar by it. Around the first day of May our ancestors would step outside to find foamy white clouds erupting across the Sussex countryside; the hawthorn was blooming, spring was turning to summer. The sight was so visually stunning and so linked with the arrival of May that hawthorn became the only British plant to be named after the month in which it blooms. Well, the name hawthorn is derived from the Anglo-Saxon 'hagathorn' ('haga' meaning hedge). I'm referring to that other name for hawthorn; May.

Unlike the impetuous blackthorn, which flowers in March before it's even bothered to grow leaves, the hawthorn is more dignified. It waits until it has clothed itself in its lobed leaf undergarments before it dons a resplendent gown of exquisite white flowers. This stunning costume and perfect timing meant hawthorn took centre stage at May Day celebrations and it partied with Green Men, Morris Dancers, Maypoles and May Queens. 'Gathering nuts in May' actually refers to 'gathering knots of May' to make May Day garlands and decorations.

Then, in the middle of the eighteenth century, tragedy struck. I don't know about you but I get thrown into disarray twice a year when the clocks change. My life would have gone into meltdown in 1752 as our whole calendar changed from Julian to Gregorian and we lost an entire 11 days. In this new timeline hawthorn now found itself late for the party, blooming around May 12<sup>th</sup> on the new calendar.

It wasn't the first time hawthorn had been cast aside. Superstitions dictated that bringing hawthorn indoors led to misfortune – even death. This could stem from the fact that hawthorn blooms release trimethylamine, which gives the flowers that unpleasant smell of cat's wee and attracts pollinating insects. It's also a chemical formed in decaying tissue and reminded people of the smell of Black Death – and nobody wanted to be reminded of that.

Hawthorn folklore still continues. I remember at primary school being taught "Ne're cast a clout 'til May is out." I translated this gibberish into the fact that you should keep your warm clothes on until the end of May. I've only just discovered that 'May is out' refers to hawthorn blooming. My clouts could have been cast weeks earlier.

But the world has changed since I was a nipper – we're warming up. For a temperature-sensitive plant like hawthorn, the blooming times they are a-changin'. Hawthorn is responding by flowering up to two weeks earlier than it was three decades ago. It has crept back to bloom around May Day and is now more commonly seen flowering at the end of April. So this May Day get yer clout off, get out into the great outdoors and welcome the return of the real May Queen.

## Ascension Day

### Thursday 10 May

There will be a short service of Holy Communion at 9.30 am in St Catherine of Siena Church, Cocking

## St Mary's Bepton Summer Concert



On **Saturday 9 June at 3.30pm**

we once more welcome 'A Breath of Fresh Air' a wind quintet (Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Clarinet and Horn) who will be performing a selection of classical and lighter pieces to entertain us. Bepton residents Helen Hollowood (oboe) and Duncan Hollowood (horn) will be play a leading part in the Quintet. Do come along to support them. Tickets, including light refreshments after the concert, cost £12 (children 7 to 16 free) and can be obtained from Sheila Ryan, Bayleaves, Bepton, Midhurst, GU29 9RB tel: 01730 813971 email: [bayleaves@macace.net](mailto:bayleaves@macace.net).

## Palm Sunday

We began our Easter celebrations on Palm Sunday in Cocking, remembering how the people of Jerusalem welcomed Jesus into the city. You might have seen us in Mill Lane or Bumble Kite - why not join us next year?



## Church Service Times

This is the usual pattern, but occasionally there are changes - please check the church noticeboards. This is especially important at festival times such as Christmas and Easter

### St Mary Bepton

11.15am 1st Sunday of the month Matins BCP  
2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays Matins with Holy Communion BCP

### St Catherine of Siena Cocking

9.30am Every Sunday  
1st Sunday of the month Family Communion CW  
2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays Holy Communion CW

### St James Heyshott

11.15am 1st Sunday of the month Family Communion CW  
9.30am 2nd Sunday of the month Holy Communion BCP  
9.30am 3rd Sunday of the month Matins BCP  
11.15am 4th Sunday of the month Holy Communion CW  
6.00pm 1st 2nd and 4th Sundays Evensong BCP



On a 5th Sunday of the month, there is a joint service at 10.00 am at one of our churches - please check the notice boards or our magazine.  
CW - Common Worship is the modern language service  
BCP - Book of Common Prayer is the traditional service