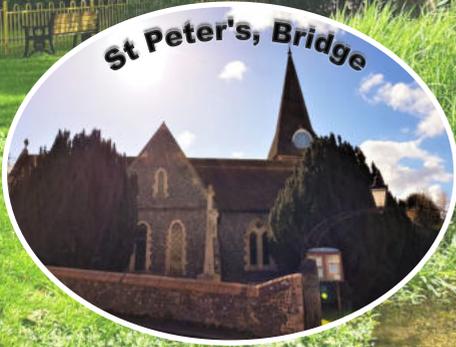




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February 2025

Dear Friends

It never ceases to amaze me how every Christmas can land differently, after all it's the same story and we often follow the same traditions, sing the same carols, attend the same church services year in year out and yet every year I find something different to marvel at and I wonder if you do too? For me this year, the particular joy has been having the longer part of the school holiday break after Christmas Day itself rather than before, time to really revel in the peaceful aftermath of a busy festival season. Since then, over the last couple of weeks, I have also enjoyed engaging with the season of Epiphany and through the weekly bible readings, seeing the ways in which the accounts of Jesus' life from birth and into his early ministry continue to reveal him as our Saviour and the bridge between us and God.

And now we reach February and again we have more space this year, as Easter is much later (almost a month later than it was last year!) so we don't have to hurtle headlong into Lent and preparations for Easter as we sometimes must.

February brings heart shapes everywhere – cards, sweets, ornaments, cushions - even heart shaped crumpets! St. Valentine, has become the patron saint of love and around his festival on the 14th we are inundated with symbols of love everywhere. Of course, once the 15th arrives all those symbols will have been eaten, recycled, discarded, or perhaps put away as keepsakes – and the remainder in the shops will be sold off at a discount.

Romantic love is a wonderful thing while it lasts, and can be the foundation for lasting, mutual care and relationships, but we must guard against making it something disposable like the cards and gifts, chocolate and crumpets. Love is very important: - love of family, friends, neighbours, all humankind, as individuals, as groups, love for creation, for all life on our planet, for ourselves. Without love, which gives us a focus, a passion, a reason to act positively for others we would miss so much that is good in our lives.

The Bible has much to say about love – asking us to love one another, to love God and to love ourselves. It tells us to love because God loved us first. God's love is unconditional – that love doesn't care who we are, what we look like, what we have done, whether we are rich or poor or have a GSOH (good sense of humour) it's never-ending and we can never do anything to earn it, or anything that will stop it.

For those of us who follow a faith, we are asked to share that love, to pass it on and follow God's example, that's not easy, and we often fail as we are human, not divine. If you find it hard to love, or feel you fail at times then let me encourage you to think back to the festival that we have just enjoyed, the moment when the God who so loves the world, sent his only Son (paraphrasing John 3:16) just so that we might know how much we are truly worth – each and every one of us.

However you feel this February, may you know just how much you are loved.

Yours in Christ

Estella Last

Revd. Canon Estella Last, Vicar,
The Parish of the Bridge Group

	February 2025
Mon 3rd	1pm-3pm BREW Bekesbourne Recreation Ground
Thurs 6th	9-11am Little Lambs Toddler Group, Bridge Pavilion
Fri 7th	8.45am Coffee, Chat and Prayer at Bridge Church
Mon 10th	1pm-3pm BREW Bekesbourne Recreation Ground 2.30pm Caring and Sharing
Weds 12th	10-11.30am Bekesbourne Coffee Morning
Thurs 13 th	9-11am Little Lambs Toddler Group, Bridge Pavilion
Fri 14th	8.45am Coffee, Chat and Prayer at Bridge Church 10 am Fish Scheme Coffee Pop in Bridge Village Hall
Sat 15th	10.15am-11.30am Coffee, Cake and Concert at St Peter's Bridge 4-5.30pm Messy Church
Mon 17 th	1pm-3pm BREW Bekesbourne Recreation Ground
Thurs 20th	9-11am Little Lambs Toddler Group, Bridge Pavilion- Half term break
Fri 21st	8.45am Coffee, Chat and Prayer at Bridge Church- Half term Break 11am-12.30pm Lower Hardres Community Coffee Morning LH Village Hall
Mon 24 th	1pm-3pm BREW Bekesbourne Recreation Ground 2.30pm Caring and Sharing
Thurs 27th	9-11am Little Lambs Toddler Group, Bridge Pavilion

Service details and readings for February 2025

26 th January	3 rd Sunday after Epiphany	Nehemiah 8.1-3, 5-6, 8-10; 1 Corinthians 12.12-31a; Luke 4.14-21	10am Benefice Communion at St Mary's Lower Hardres
2 nd February	Presentation of Christ in the Temple / Candlemas	Malachi 3:1-5; Hebrews 2:14- end; Luke 4.21-30	9am BCP Communion St Mary's, Nackington 10am Songs of Praise St Peter's Bekesbourne 6pm Evensong for Candlemas
9 th February	4 th Sunday before Lent	Isaiah 6.1-8,(9- 13); 1 Corinthians 15.1-11; Luke 5.1-11	10 am Parish Communion at St Peter's Bridge
Saturday 15 th February			4-5.30pm Messy Church at Bridge School
16 th February	3 rd Sunday before Lent	Jeremiah 17.5- 10; 1 Corinthians 15.12-20; Luke 6.17-26	9am Morning Prayer at St Mary's Nackington 10am Traditional Sung Holy Communion at St Mary's Patixbourne
23 rd February	2 nd Sunday before Lent	Genesis 2:4b-9- end; Revelation 4; Luke 8:22-25	10am Communion at St Mary's Lower Hardres
2 nd March	Sunday next before Lent	Exodus 34.29- 35; 2 Corinthians 3.12-4.2; Luke 9.28-36, (37-43)	9am BCP Communion St Mary's, Nackington 10am Songs of Praise St Peter's Bekesbourne
Wednesday 5 th March	Ash Wednes- day	Isaiah 58:1-12; Psalm 51:1-18; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 John 8:1-11	10am Communion with imposi- tion of Ashes at St Peter's Bridge

Bridge & District History Society

Thursday February 20th 2025 in Bridge Village Hall at 7.30pm.

The hazards of the Journey. Pilgrimage and Travel in the Middle Ages

Imogen Corrigan will explain why people were willing to trudge for hundreds of miles, often in appalling conditions and sometimes perishing on the way. She will also cover the shift from spiritual wanderings in the Anglo Saxon period to religious tourism in the days of Chaucer's pilgrims. From maps and motivation to souvenirs and shrines, this talk discusses travel in the round as well as for spiritual reasons.

No membership fee. £4.00 at the door to include refreshments.

More information at www.bridgehistory.org.uk

Bridge with Patricbourne Womens Institute

'The History of the Magic Circle' was the subject of the first talk of the year, given by Mike Davis, and members were enthralled by what they heard and saw!

The following meeting on **Friday 21st February at 2pm.** in the Village Hall will be the timely subject of **Herbaceous Perennials**, in preparation for Spring, when popular speaker Kevin Toohar will be returning to talk on this subject.

Our **Annual Meeting** will take place on **Friday 21st March**, so please put this date in your diary, and come along.

WI always welcomes new members. For more details, please contact the President Sheila Scrivener on 01227-831788,

Joan Hill

Jan. 2025

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Fish Scheme News

The February Coffee Pop-in will be on Friday 14th from 10 to 11.15 in Bridge village hall. Do come and bring a friend along.

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Budgeting for 2025

As a New Year begins the PCC and Finance Team have been looking at our financial situation and our budget for the year ahead. The cost of everything has gone up so all the bills we have to pay - utilities, insurance, ministry costs etc have increased.

We do appreciate that this is true for everyone but if you are able to increase your giving, make an additional one-off donation or (if you haven't done so already) are set up a regular monthly gift (of any amount!) using the Parish Giving Scheme this would make such a difference.

Every little helps as they say. Thank you for your support.



This church depends on regular donations from local people. If you would like to support your Church in the Bridge Group Parish this is the most simple and effective way to give

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For help and support contact
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Bekesbourne Village Hall winter Timetable 24/25

MONDAY	<p>8.30am - 4.30pm Private Hire</p> <p>7pm Bekesbourne Parish Council Meetings 11th Nov '24, 13th Jan '25, 10th Mar '25</p>
TUESDAY	<p>7pm - 8pm Circuits with Sarah. No Booking Required</p>
WEDNESDAY	<p>11.30am - 4pm Private Hire</p> <p>10am to 11.30 am Every 2nd Wednesday of the month BVH Coffee Morning + The Refill Van www.refillablevan.com</p> <p>Pilates with Marcela, Bring your own mat. 6.15pm to 7.15pm No Booking Required £7.</p>
THURSDAY	<p>9.15am - 10.15am Tiny Talk - Contact Deborah at www.tinytalk.co.uk/debh for more information. Booking required.</p> <p>6pm to 7pm John - Gentle Exercise Group. No booking Required</p>
FRIDAY	<p>9.30am to 10.30am - Jodie - The Tutor Experience - Booking Required at http://bookwhen.com/thetutorexperience</p>
SATURDAY	<p>enquiries4bvh@gmail.com</p>
SUNDAY	<p>Boxercise 9.30am to 10.15am with John no booking required.</p> <p>Pilates with Marcela 10.45am to 11.45am, bring your own mats. No booking required</p>

See Bekesbourne Village Hall Facebook page for upcoming events.
 To Book: enquiries4bvh@gmail.com



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£25 Daphne Hogben
£15 Hugh Pearson

January

£50 Charlie Chester
£25 Martin Fry
£15 Joanne Watt



If anyone would like to join the 100 Club for next year then please contact Steve Thomas. Email stevethomas91@gmail.com.

Membership is just £24 a year.

The 100 Club provides funds for the care and maintenance of St. Peter's Church in Bekesbourne. If you enjoy walking through the churchyard and its surroundings then please lend your support.



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