

A Place To Serve Everyone

Years of planning came together late last year when St Paul's parish in Salisbury opened its new SP2 community centre and coffee shop.

Andrew Robertson, Associate Leader at St Paul's, who managed the building project, said:

“Getting SP2 off the ground was a huge job, involving serious planning and serious prayer. It is still a big commitment for us – 40 people volunteer over the course a month.”

Centre manager Lucy Duffy said, “Our products and environment compete with any coffee shop in Salisbury. Our growing band of lunchtime customers loves our sandwiches and wraps!

“But that isn't why we built SP2. We want to be a hub for the whole community. We provide activities like marriage and ante-natal classes for all.

“We also want to be a bridge to faith for the many people who find entering a Church intimidating.

“We don't proselytise at SP2, but we're open about being a Church project. That gives customers space to ask questions they couldn't in any other shop. We've had people come to chat when they've had a bad diagnosis or wanted to know what living as a Christian means.

“A really powerful moment was when a customer told me about breaking a solemn promise. He thought he was going to Hell, with no way out. I was able to reassure him that God forgives everyone who is sorry for their sins and turns to Him.”



Bishop's Letter

The Right Revd Dr Graham Kings
Bishop of Sherborne

Chartres Cathedral, in northern France, has a 13th century labyrinth on its floor. Unlike a maze, it has no dead ends.

As pilgrims follow the winding path, in and out, backwards and forwards, they are always walking towards the centre.

The twists and turns remind them of their journey towards God and their walking with God. It is not a mindless trick, but an ordered track.

For Lent this year, we three bishops of the diocese are going on walks: one together in the Woodford Valley, and each of us twice in other areas - a total of seven walks.

On **Thursday 27 March**, the three of us are journeying, with others, from Wilsford to Stratford Sub Castle in Wiltshire.

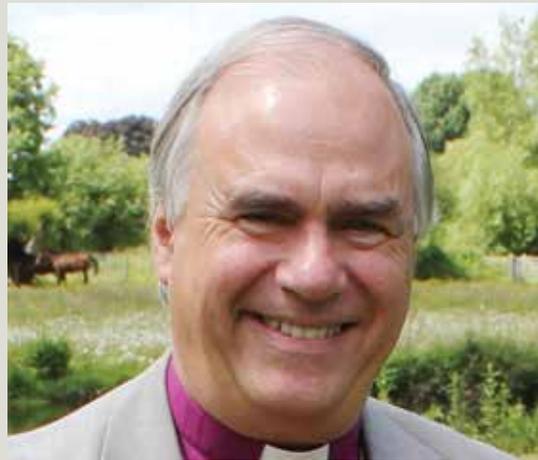
I was wondering what to do for my other two walks. While using a labyrinth in the garden of a retreat centre, the idea came to me to walk around the top of the ramparts of iron-age forts in Dorset, moving from the outer circles to the centre.

On **Tuesday 18 March**, I and other church leaders in Churches Together

in Dorset will be walking around Badbury Rings, near Wimborne, and on **Tuesday 8 April** around Maiden Castle, near Dorchester.

For both walks, we will meet in the car park at 10.30am for an 11 o'clock start, walk along the concentric ramparts for a picnic lunch and short service at the centre, and then outwards again, leaving at 3.30pm.

All these walks are open to anyone to join in, of any church or none, of any age.



School visits are welcome. Contact details for arrangements are on the diocesan website. Come and walk with God and with each other.

Pray For South Sudan

In December, fighting broke out in South Sudan between factions of the ruling political party. Thousands have died and half a million are displaced, including many children.

Our Diocese is working with partners around the world assessing needs and the possibility of launching an appeal. The situation is developing daily.

One constant request from South Sudan is prayer. Prayer requests and news directly from South Sudanese Anglicans can be found via the **'latest**

updates' box on the Diocesan website homepage or <http://goo.gl/gKcSSL>.

You can **inform your prayer** by following news online at the Sudan Tribune (www.sudantribune.com or [@SudanTribune_EN](https://twitter.com/SudanTribune_EN)) and BBC Africa (www.bbc.com/africa or [@BBCAfrica](https://twitter.com/BBCAfrica)).



Refugees in Juba. Photo courtesy UNHCR/ K McKinsey

Alderholt's Got Talent

St James' Church, Alderholt, played host to a musical evening on a bleak winter night. Seven local talents each performed a song during an 'Open Mic' first half.

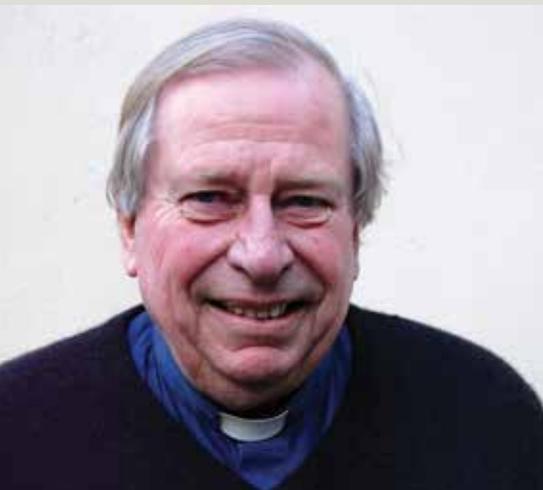
Helen Nicholson, a well-known Dorset folk singer, completed the first part of the evening. Bournemouth-based band Willowen took the stage after the interval and delighted the crowd with their unique blend of 'indie-folk' music.

Local vicar, the Revd Pip Martin, explains:

"Part of the purpose of a parish church is to celebrate God's gifts of talent and creativity in our local community. This event showcased home-grown talent and brought top-quality music to delight and inspire us."



An Unusual Net For Fishing



Nuclear sub captain, merchant banker, Royal British Legion welfare officer and parish priest - Michael Anderson has had a varied and exciting career. Through it all, he has been sustained by a passion for tennis.

“I don’t play well”, he says modestly, “but I’ve always loved the game.”

When Michael moved to West Dorset over 20 years ago, the only nearby tennis court, in Glanvilles Wootton, was in poor repair. He secured funding for a new surface and offered free youth coaching on Saturdays.

“We were overwhelmed. Within a fortnight 40 kids had signed up.”

Now aged 75, the Middlemarsh resident

is still part of the local coaching team.

“We produced five county players from kids who’d never picked up a racket before. Rewarding as that was, it was special to coach young people with low confidence or dyspraxia, and help them play competently for pleasure.

“For some, it was the first time anyone really had faith in them. It was a touching way to be a channel of God’s love, because God has faith in all of us.

“A really worthwhile aspect was helping break down the social barriers between local kids at independent schools and those at comprehensives.”

Some years later, Michael was ordained after a late vocation as a local vicar.

“I found myself marrying and baptising the children of men and women I had coached. That’s when I discovered how much they had taught me, especially about believing in people and relating to them at their own level.”

As Michael comes towards the end of his working life, does he have any advice for younger Christians?

“Be ambitious for God and His world. If you throw the ball high enough, you won’t serve too many double faults.”

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