

MARCH · APRIL 2025

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# Bengeo Parish Magazine and Community News



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## Change is in the air!

Bridget Hersant has heralded the changing seasons with spring bluebells. As she says, the woods around Bengeo are a wonderful sight. Ben Crystall has also told us about forthcoming changes to our local council administration so make your voice heard by contributing to the debate.

There is plenty to visit at the theatre, concerts and art shows in Hertford, but why not think about making your own music with Just Love to Sing and joining in Art classes at Courtyard Arts?

Our local charity CHiPS, Children’s Integrated Play Schemes, has been chosen for the Holy Trinity Lent appeal. Do consider giving to this worthwhile cause. Details are on page 13.

### The Editorial Team

*The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the Editorial Team or the PCC. Whilst every care is taken, we cannot be responsible for the action of any of the contributors or advertisers in this magazine.*

### Editorial Team

Items for the magazine should be sent to [mail@bengeomagazine.co.uk](mailto:mail@bengeomagazine.co.uk)

### Copy dates

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### Advertising

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**Front cover: Mothering Sunday in Holy Trinity Church. This year’s service is on Sunday 30th March at 10am. All welcome.** Photograph by Bridget Hersant.





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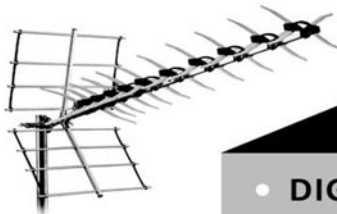


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# Love Bengoe Community Group



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local volunteers and Bengoe Residents Associations, focusing on two areas:

1. reviewing and responding to key planning proposals in Bengoe on behalf of residents' Bengoe Neighbourhood Area Plan (BNAP)
2. driving and supporting local projects and initiatives through smaller working groups of volunteers

We would love to hear from you if you are interested in supporting one of the Love Bengoe projects below. We would be also keen to work with you or build on work you may be already doing or planning to do.

Love Bengoe Community Group projects and initiatives include:

We are delighted to share that the Bengoe Neighbourhood Area Plan Committee has adjusted its status and approach.

We are now established as Love Bengoe

Community Group and we aim to bring together

1. Bengoe Community Garden project [www.facebook.com/groups/bengeocommunitygarden](https://www.facebook.com/groups/bengeocommunitygarden) – currently focused on improving the iron fence, and renewal of the garden maintenance in 2025
2. Bengoe Walking Trail project – promoting interesting places and views in Bengoe
3. Bengoe Mosaic project – creating a tailored Bengoe mosaic
4. Bengoe Welcome/Connect project – promoting connections with neighbours (especially elderly) and welcoming new neighbours.

Some good news: we have applied to EHDC to request that the Bengoe Field Footpath is registered as Asset of Community Value. We have now heard from EHDC and were advised that the path has been awarded the requested status and will be registered as an ACV on East Herts Council's register of ACVs for five years until 14th November 2029.

You can find more information on Facebook 'Love Bengoe' or [www.lovebengoe.org.uk](http://www.lovebengoe.org.uk). Please get in touch if you are interested to get involved in any of the above, or if you have any other project suggestions! Thank you for all the support and engagement. [askawp@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:askawp@yahoo.co.uk).

## 2nd Bengoe Scouts

2nd Bengoe Scouts have had a great start to 2025 with some brilliant activities!

Both Beaver colonies have been very busy this half term learning basic first aid skills and how to get help from the emergency services, a very important skill to learn! They also enjoyed making spring rolls and learning about Chinese New Year. Both Beaver colonies have also had visits to Beane River View care home and played games with residents. 2nd Bengoe

Cubs had a fun evening out at Mulligan's crazy golf in Stevenage last week trying a new sport.

It was a popular evening with Cubs, Beavers and Explorers from other groups in the county playing too. Following the challenges of the 18 hole course they finished with a pizza and chips supper.

The Scouts enjoyed taking part in the District Ready Steady Cook competition, where they came a respectable 2nd! All of the Scouts prepared for the competition by making a healthy minestrone soup. The newly refurbished BEAM theatre kindly welcomed the Scouts to a fascinating backstage tour.

If anyone can spare a couple of hours a week to help one of our sections with their activities please contact [groupscoutleader@2ndbengoe.org.uk](mailto:groupscoutleader@2ndbengoe.org.uk). To put your child's name on our waiting list contact [waitinglist@2ndbengoe.org.uk](mailto:waitinglist@2ndbengoe.org.uk).





# On the Doorstep – Bluebells



We are very fortunate in this area to be surrounded by woodlands which, around the end of March, beginning of April, burst with the beautiful sweet scent and vibrant violet blue colour of bluebells that carpet the woodland floors. We are fortunate too, as almost half of all the world's bluebells are found in the UK.

The bluebell, Latin name *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, is a member of the *Asparagaceae* family. It has several common names, cuckoo's boots, crow's toes, lady's nightcap and witch's thimbles are a few, although I would imagine not many would know it other than bluebell.

This delicate blue flower, as its name suggests, has small bell-shaped flowers which are a violet blue colour, although white and pink flowers can also be found. The flowers have six petals that form a narrow bell shape and these petals curl back on themselves at the tips, possibly the inspiration for the common name crow's toes. The flowers hang

from the tubular stem to one side, which is one way of identifying them from the non-native Spanish or hybrid varieties which have flowers all the way round and are more upright. There can be as many as twenty flowers growing from one stem. The pollen is a creamy white colour and the leaves of the bluebell grow from the base of the plant, they are hairless, long and narrow, growing to around 45cm. The flower attracts a variety of insects and pollinators including hoverflies, various bees and butterflies.

The bluebell likes to grow in hedgerows and broadleaved woods and is one of the flowers along with wood anemone that indicates ancient woodland. The bluebell flowers when the canopy of the woodlands is open before the leaves of the trees grow and shut out the light. Bluebells grow from bulbs and can form vast colonies which can take many years to establish. The flowers are also very susceptible to being trampled on, they will die back and can take several years to recover, so tread lightly if visiting any bluebell woods.

There are various myths and folklore about the bluebell and considering what a delicate beauty it is, some of them are quite gloomy. It was thought that if you stood in the middle of a bluebell ring the fairies would enchant you and you would die. The same outcome would await you if you heard a bluebell flower ring and witches were supposed to use the flowers for their potions, possibly inspiring the common name witches' thimbles. Some of these gloomy myths may stem from the fact that the bulb and parts of the plant are highly toxic. However, there are some brighter myths too for this flower, it

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was said that if you were able to turn one of the flowers inside out without tearing it you would win the one you loved, or if you wore a wreath of bluebells you would only be able to speak the truth and in the language of flowers the bluebell symbolises humility, constancy, gratitude and everlasting love.

The plant has not been used much for medicinal reasons, although 13th century monks did use bluebells to cure snakebite and leprosy and in more recent times there has been research into certain extracts from the bluebell being used in the treatment for HIV and cancer.

The bulb of the bluebell has been used over the years for various things, crushed it forms a sticky substance that was used for binding books and gluing feathers onto arrows and the Elizabethans

used the starch like juices to stiffen their collar and cuff ruffs.

The bluebell is indeed a sight to behold and enough to inspire any budding poet to write, but today I will leave you with the first verse of 'The Bluebell' by Anne Brontë.

*A fine and subtle spirit dwells*

*In every little flower,*

*Each one its own sweet feeling breathes*

*With more or less of power.*

*There is a silent eloquence*

*In every wild bluebell*

*That fills my softened heart with bliss*

*That words could never tell.*

**Bridget Hersant**

## Friends of St Leonard's

Spring is here and the Friends of St Leonard's are looking forward to warmer days and the St Leonard's Church summer season.

We will be welcoming our local model railway enthusiasts to St Leonard's on Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd June. "Little Trains for a Little Church" will include a range of working model railways and vintage train collections. It will include a model for children to operate. On Saturday 12th July we are delighted to be welcoming back Courtyard Arts to run a Children's Art Workshop. At previous events some wonderful creative art has been made.

We have several concerts planned so look out for details of these on the website [www.stleonards.parishofbengeo.com/events-and-concerts-at-st-leonards](http://www.stleonards.parishofbengeo.com/events-and-concerts-at-st-leonards). We will advertise how to buy tickets later in the year. You can also follow us on Facebook (search for St Leonards Bengeo and you will find us).

As part of the Parish of Bengeo we hold special services in St Leonard's. This year we will again have our Pet Blessing Service in early July and the very popular Hymns and Pimms Service in early August.



We love to be able to open up the church to different events and just to let people have a wander around to enjoy Hertford's oldest building. We need more volunteers to help us do this so please get in touch if you would like to get involved.

Becoming a Friend of St Leonard's Church will give you advance warning on what is happening. You can join through our website [www.stleonards.parishofbengeo.com/friends-of-st-leonards](http://www.stleonards.parishofbengeo.com/friends-of-st-leonards).

**Helen Fleming**

Secretary [friendsofstleonards@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofstleonards@gmail.com)



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# All change at your Local Council

Remember the 1970s? Back then there were huge changes to the way our local councils were organised. Now it's happening all over again, says Cllr Ben Crystall.

In a White Paper published last December, our new Government set out plans to transform all 'two-tier' councils – those with both a County Council and a District or Borough Council – into so-called 'unitaries'. For us in Hertford, that means Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts District Council will both be replaced with a new unitary council covering anything from a quarter to a half – or more – of the County. Other areas will go the same way, so that Hertfordshire will likely end up either divided into 2 or 3 unitaries, or with a single one covering the entire county (the exact number isn't decided).

Additionally, the Government says we will have a new county-wide Mayor, running a new strategic authority, in charge over the unitaries. It is offering new powers to this Mayoral strategic authority, over things like transport, planning, skills and jobs. In other words, some powers from Government will be handed down or 'devolved' to the Mayor, much like in London where the Mayor and London Assembly govern over the London boroughs.

Sounds sensible? Our current council system is certainly complex. Here in Hertford and across much of the county, we have 3 levels: town or parish councils, districts or boroughs, plus the county council, each with different responsibilities. Many of us struggle to work out which level does what. So a simpler system should be welcome and – the government believes – may be cheaper. Plus more strategic, county-wide thinking sounds good.

But this all comes with health warnings. The evidence for financial savings is not clear. There will still be 3 levels in Hertfordshire: the Mayoral strategic authority, the unitaries and the towns/parish councils, but with key powers shuffled about. Rearranging the deckchairs in this way is going to cost vast sums, and if eventual savings are small, it could take decades to pay off.

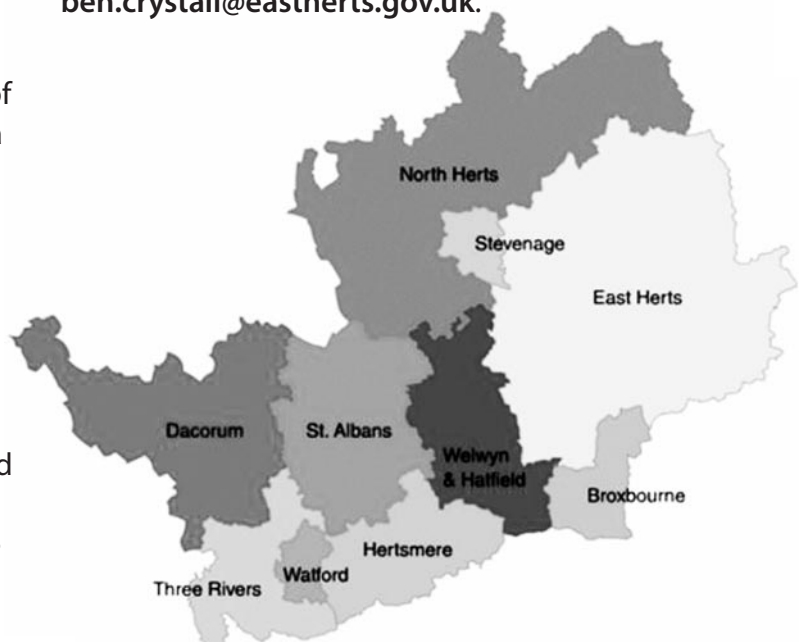


Another unknown is how 'attached' you will feel to your unitary, and how attached it will feel to you – some people may be concerned that their future unitary council will be operating out of, say, Stevenage, or Welwyn Garden City, rather than Hertford. Does it matter if decisions on transport or planning that impact Bengeo are made by a Hertfordshire Mayor in, say, St Albans? And might all this mean people feel even less

inclined to take part in elections – at a time when we already struggle to get more than half of residents to vote.

The timetable is tight. In the next few months, the County and District/Borough Councils must put draft proposals to the government, and detailed plans must be ready by November. As one of your councillors I want to ensure the community is not left on the outside, and that residents understand the implications of this once-in-a-generation change, and have a voice. Are you happy that powers will be concentrated in a new Mayor? How large should our unitaries be? Do you care how many councillors will be needed? And should new powers be handed down to Town Councils so that more things can be decided at the truly local level?

If you have questions, or want to give your views, please get in touch with me [ben.crystall@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:ben.crystall@eastherts.gov.uk).



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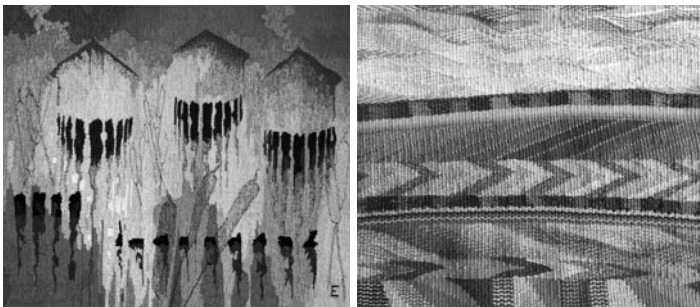
# Courtyard Arts

## Fenlands

British Tapestry Group –  
Eastern Region  
4th–29th March

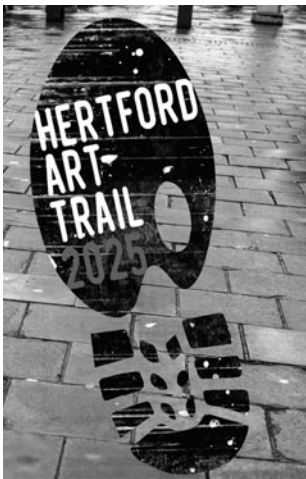
This exhibition is in both the Main Gallery and Stables Gallery.

A chance to see an exciting translation of the Fenlands, a naturally marshy region of east England. Capturing its atmosphere, colours and imagery. Their works of woven tapestries, created using traditional techniques in a modern context.



## Hertford Art Trail

Various venues across the town  
5th–26th April



Sisha Dulson will be exhibiting in the Stables Gallery as part of the Trail.

We are delighted to announce that the Hertford Art Trail will be returning for 2025! This respected and popular free event once again will showcase wonderful pieces by local artists and makers across the centre of Hertford.

From 5th–26th April, pop-up exhibition spaces will appear across Hertford – from retailers to bars and cafes; beauty salons to gift shops. Participating artists are each teamed up with a venue to display and sell their work for the duration of the trail.



## Courtyard Open 2025

Various Artists  
4th April–3rd May



## COPS Theatre

presents

### Colder than Here

4th–12th April 2025 at  
7.45pm | Matinee on  
12th April 2025 at 2.30pm

Nobody can ignore the fact that Myra is dying, but in the meantime life goes on. There are boilers to be fixed, cats to be fed and the perfect funeral to be planned. As a mother researches burial spots and biodegradable coffins, her family are finally forced to communicate with her, and each other, as they face up to an unpredictable future.



Laura Wade's beautifully poised family drama finds every opportunity for life and laughter in the process of grieving that comes before death – a testament to family,

relationships and finding light even in the darkest of times. The enormity of terminal cancer and the mundanity of everyday life collide to create as much comedy as emotion in this tender, unabashedly truthful and life-affirming play.



# Just Love to Sing choir



Jenny Salmon started this choir in September 2023 for people who just enjoy singing. I was lucky enough to be at the very first rehearsal.

There are now about 30 singers who meet in term time either at 11am on a Monday at Holy Trinity Church or at 7pm on a Tuesday evening at Jenny's house in The Avenue. We have made several appearances at Hoddesdon town centre, Hertford Castle and at various other charity events. Singing in public is not compulsory! We sing a wide range of



songs and Jenny encourages us to suggest new ones. The rehearsals are a very relaxed affair and new trial harmonies are welcomed!

This is a very inclusive and supportive group and new friendships are made all the time. Jenny's ethos of singing for pleasure shines through every rehearsal. She also takes private lessons for various instruments.

If you would like more information or would like to join in singing, please contact Jenny on [jennysalmon123@yahoo.com](mailto:jennysalmon123@yahoo.com) or 07823 884445.



**The Children's Society**

## Bring & Buy Coffee Morning

Saturday 26th April 10am to 12 noon  
at 1 The Orchard, Bengo

There will be the usual White Elephant stall, please look out some goodies for us including books. There will be cakes to buy, again donations very welcome and of course there will be the Raffle.

Do come and join in the fellowship. It is always a friendly occasion to meet up with others whilst enjoying refreshments and looking for a bargain or something you have always wanted!

For those who love trains there can also be a trip to Peter's train shed!

Any queries or requests for lifts please ring Libby 01992 583979.



## Annual Pet Service

Sunday 6th July

at 4pm at

St Leonard's Church

Please save this date in your diary, this year we will be raising money for 'Alfs' a local Charity supporting the community and their pets and also the people and animals of Ukraine.

More details will follow in the May/June Magazine.

**Libby Shillito**



# Children's Integrated Playschemes

CHiPS is a registered charity in Hertfordshire. We started as a pilot project by Herts County Council in 1994, with a small summer playscheme in Hertford for 20 children with additional needs and their siblings. It aimed to offer good fun for the young people and a break for their parents.

The pilot project was developed by a group of parents including Davina Foster, Julia Everett, Judy Saint and Gill Weeks working with far-sighted Social Workers including Ann Sypula. The team hit upon the idea of a specialist scheme, which would include siblings too, and CHiPS was born. The first playleader, Shirley Roper developed the ethos of child-led play, which continues to this day at all our schemes.

In 1996, due to increased demand and popularity, CHiPS was established in both Ware and Bishops Stortford.

In 1998 the scheme had grown so we split from social services and became an independent charity no. 1069535.

Our head office is now in Hertford.

In 2007 CHiPS launched the first scheme in neighbouring Broxbourne.

Throughout the years the Charity's objective has remained constant: the relief of children with special needs particularly by:

1. offering integrated play and social opportunities to children with special needs along with their siblings,
2. supporting the families and carers of children with special needs through respite, mutual support and information and increasing disability awareness. in the area

However, the variety of opportunities, inclusiveness and awareness has changed over the years and now include activities such as climbing wall, cookery club, craft club, unique events and days out, computer club and parental support.

CHiPS now offers crucial support to over 235 families, of which there are some 300 children with additional needs and their siblings and covers the East Herts District Council and Broxbourne areas. CHiPS has built a reputation throughout the county

and beyond as being the first scheme of its kind to offer this type of service.

As a member of the Hoddesdon Model and Railway Club my first introduction to CHiPS was at a railway play morning hosted by the club in Broxbourne. These monthly CHiPS mornings are always a delight, there are model cars, trains and boats that are available for young people to play with or view running. I drive the ride on the railway with a couple of other members. We try our best to ensure that all runs safely and smoothly. The obvious smiles and delight in those young people, passengers or observers who are non-verbal communicants, is satisfaction beyond measure. Very often there are superb cakes and coffee for the morning as well, a double result.

As a PCC advocate for CHiPS and suggesting this charity as our Lent partners, I am certain that Bengeo will be most generous in giving towards craft materials, specially adapted bikes and play equipment that will be appreciated and used by these families.

**8th MARCH and 12th APRIL: CHiPS Play sessions at Hoddesdon Model and Railway Club 10.30am–12 noon.**

**David Cramphorn**



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# Foodbank Report



Throughout 2024 we were blown away by the generosity of our local community, giving not only donations of food and money, but their time, energy, prayers and constant encouragement. We are incredibly grateful for all the support and ask that you continue to support us throughout 2025 and for as long as we are needed.

We helped to support over 3300 individuals last year, providing them not only with nutritionally balanced food to help them during their time of crisis, but also where needed signposting or working directly with agencies to help them get back on their feet and out of crisis. There are over 80 agencies currently linked to the foodbank, 59 of these used our services in the last six months.

It's great to be able to work with agencies throughout our district to help everyone we can. Our aim remains the same – we want to see more people helped out of crisis and fewer people needing foodbanks in the future.

Hertford Foodbank at the United Reform Church is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from

10–11 am. Enjoy a free hot drink and biscuit in the church vestibule, free hot potato lunch 2nd Thursday of the month at 12 noon.



## BanktheFood

Download BanktheFood app on your phone to let you know the items most needed when you are at the supermarket.

Thank you for all your support.

T: 07851 708470

E: [info@hertforddistrict.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@hertforddistrict.foodbank.org.uk)

[www.hertforddistrict.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.hertforddistrict.foodbank.org.uk)

### Hertford Adult Learning Group

You would be very welcome on a Tuesday morning at the Parish Church Hall, Duncombe Road, Bengoe for the next course organised by HALG. After Easter we hope to run 'The Rise of Hitler and Nazi Germany to 1939' with Stephen Corley. Five sessions 10.30am–12 noon, 22nd April to 20th May. Fee £18.

Stephen is no stranger to Bengoe, having taught several enjoyable twentieth century history courses for Hertford WEA, which was the forerunner of Hertford Adult Learning Group.

To join our mailing list, send your contact details to [halgcontact@gmail.com](mailto:halgcontact@gmail.com). Further information 01992 589538.

### 'Lent Event' for Christian Aid

**HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH:**

**Piano Recital on Sunday 2nd March at 3pm.**

Bérenger Morel is the youngest member of our team of musicians who accompany our services.

He is currently working towards his GCSEs at Haileybury. His 40 minute recital will include music by Bach, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, Ponce, Glinka, Balakirev and Brahms, and will be followed by tea and cakes.

Admission free, but donations for Christian Aid will be very welcome as this is our Lent Event for this year – a few days early!

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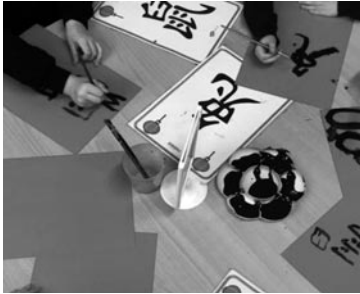


**Book the church hall or make an enquiry on 01992 589538  
or [churchhallbookings@parishofbengeo.com](mailto:churchhallbookings@parishofbengeo.com)**





# Mill Mead Primary School



**Ducklings** have been looking at the core books *Poles Apart* and *Lost and Found*. Both books are about Penguins and the adventures they have. We have also been celebrating Chinese New Year and had a go at some Chinese writing, made some lanterns and used chopsticks to pick up noodles!



**Mice** have created a 'winter window', using their observational skills to make their artwork and started our new topic about homes.



**Birds** have been learning how to tell the time to o'clock and half past in Maths and are working with numbers up to 50. In English they have been enjoying the *Owl Babies* story and

writing their own. They have been very creative by making rockets for our computing topic and puppets as part of D&T.



**Hedgehogs** have gained new skills when writing clear, informative instructions on 'How to trap a dragon' as well tackling the challenge of learning to tell the time

in maths. In science we have started our new topic on habitats and successfully located some of the wonderful human and physical features of our world. In art they used colour and texture making collage pictures.



**Squirrels** created olive oil lamps, crafted mosaics, tried our hand at Roman-style art, and even made our own essential oils to understand Roman culture and history. A visitor Faiza help them to gain a deeper understanding of her culture and beliefs. They are having fun learning French numbers and games.



**Owls** are working hard on fractions. Swimming lessons are proving a big hit! Reading, English AND History are all based around our topic of Anglo-Saxons and Vikings and in Science they explored solids, liquids and gases.

**Badgers** have been exploring fractions, using Cuisenaire rods and developing our design skills by creating pop-up books. The Science investigation into sieving to separate 'gold' and 'gold dust'! We have been retelling the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur from different perspectives.



**Foxes'** class book, *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell, set in the Amazon Rainforest has sparked some fantastic discussions about deforestation. In Geography they have

been learning about the unique climates, wildlife and geography of desert regions. In Maths, they have mastered decimals and measurement, including calculating area and volume.



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# Discover a Duncombe education

Every child's journey begins the moment they step through our doors. Starting at age 2 within our Treetops Pre-School, learning becomes an adventure where curiosity and creativity thrive. Our child-centred approach blends traditional teaching with hands-on experiences, making each day exciting and educational.

As children transition into Main School (ages 5-11), the curriculum expands to accommodate diverse learning styles and foster strength of character. Small class sizes ensure personalised attention, allowing our teachers to explore and progress every child's talent.

Specialist teachers guide younger children through subjects such as Spanish, French, ICT, and Music, while older children, alongside these subjects, also delve deeper into English, Maths, and Science, with lessons tailored to help them excel.



Enrichment is at the core of our philosophy. From World Book Week, International Languages Day and Science Week, our dynamic calendar of events brings learning to life, fostering a love of knowledge beyond the classroom.

We are extremely proud to have been awarded Highly Commended for 'Excellence in STEM' in the Muddy Stiletto School Awards 2024 and to have been shortlisted for 'Co-educational Independent School of the Year', reflecting our commitment to educational excellence.

In the digital age we live in, we lead the way with innovative programmes that make learning fun and future-focused. We equip children with the skills to thrive online, ensuring they are both knowledgeable and safe.

At Duncombe, wellbeing is key. We create a positive environment that nurtures both physical and mental health, through initiatives like buddy sessions and wellbeing programmes, ensuring every child feels valued.



**Our children graduate from Duncombe as confident, compassionate individuals ready to thrive in the 21st Century.**

# A Word from The Rectory

## Risen at Easter

From The Vicar, The Revd Robert Thompson



Easter brings the message of new life, new beginnings and God's promise of some brighter future. And for me personally, the end of fasting this Lent signals the welcome return of something wonderful. Cake.

Bengeo is a splendid place to go to church if you're a fellow admirer of quality baking. Our church has more than its fair share of champion

bakers, a talent that this particular vicar positively encourages. If there's just one lesson to be drawn from Christian worship and ritual it's that sharing food and celebrating our gifts is something we're supposed to be good at.

But what happens when things don't work out the right way? What if everything you ever try and make ends up sinking? What if you're the kind of person for whom everything seems to keep on coming out wrong?

Easter is a day when everything is supposed to rise: not just cakes from the oven, but hearts and souls and spirits are supposed to rise, in concert with Jesus rising from the grave itself. He has harrowed hell; he has brought with him those among the dead who hunger for his life; he is risen, Alleluia! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

But what do you do if Easter comes and your spirits do not rise? It's a bad day in the kitchen, in your marriage, with your in-laws or your employment prospects or your bank balance? What do you do if your job has disintegrated, your hopes are dashed, your dreams didn't come true – or if, for some reason you cannot understand, there is no 'Alleluia' in your heart?

There's no need to beat yourself up. When you read the Easter story again you'll see that even Jesus' first disciples took time to absorb the news. Mary saw it

and jumped at it. Peter and John didn't believe it, half-believed it, went to look for themselves and still took a while to take it in. The other disciples took longer – Thomas, according to John, stubbornly refused to believe what his eyes could not see. And even when the disciples did get the news, they didn't know quite what to do with it: for a while they still found themselves fishing in Galilee, a little lost in life.

The Alleluia of Easter, the risen spirits, are not always automatic. There are weeks and weeks of Easter still to come; the Church calendar celebrates the slow dawning of Easter for fifty days – even longer than the arduous journey of Lent. Easter Day is a promise of things to come, not a climactic moment that you have to catch as it passes. If your heart doesn't yet say Alleluia, let your curiosity lead you to God. Voice your doubts to God and let your questions be heard.

Look, and hope, and wait. Christ is risen. Your good day will come.

*With my prayers,*

**Robert Thompson**



# World Day of Prayer

A woman led, global, ecumenical movement

*"I made you wonderful"*

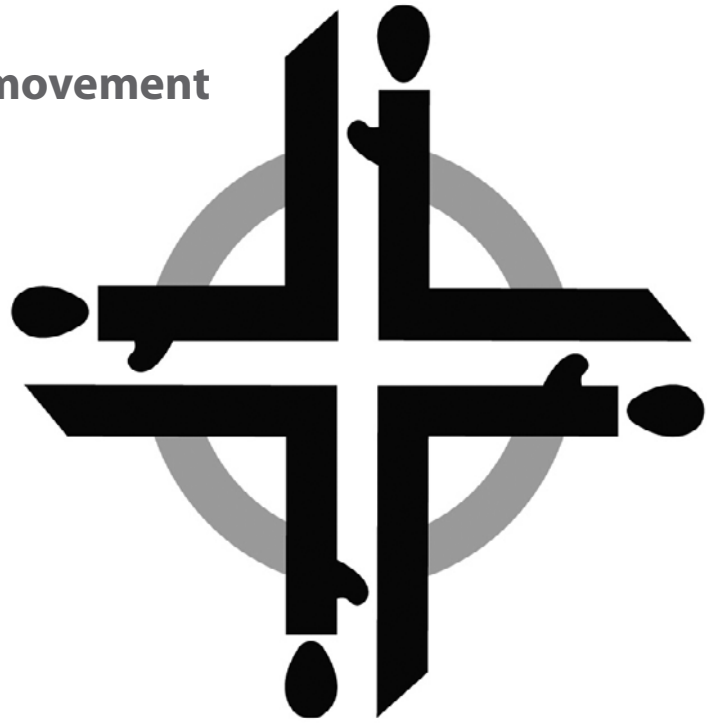
Kia Orana!



**"Wonderfully Made" By Tarani Napa and Tevairangi Napa.**

Our sisters in The Cook Islands welcome us and lead us for the Day of Prayer 2025. This group of 15 islands in the South Pacific Ocean has a rich and colourful Māori heritage and a deep connection to nature. Join with us as we pray together and reflect on the theme 'I made you wonderful'.

World Day of Prayer is an international, ecumenical organisation which enables us to hear the thoughts of women from all parts of the world: their hopes, concerns and prayers. The preparation for the day is vast, the service begins with the writing country and theme being chosen a number of years earlier. Once written it goes to the International Committee in New York for translation and dissemination to the National Committee in each participating country. The service is then discussed and edited before



being presented nationally, regionally and then locally for branches to make their plans. Finally, at a church near you, on Friday 7th March 2025, people will gather to celebrate the service prepared by the women of The Cook Islands.

The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 120 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world – through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa some 38 hours later. A worldwide wave of prayer...

The Worship Service invites us to notice aspects of our divinely created bodies that we often take for granted. The scripture reading from Psalms 139:1-18 is woven together with stories of three women from the Cook Islands. We come to understand that God knows us, is always with us, and made us unique and special.

The service leads us to offer prayers of adoration and thanksgiving to our Creator, followed by prayers of confession and longing. Finally, the prayers of intercession guide us to ask God for wisdom, courage and healing, that our world would come to treat all people as 'fearfully and wonderfully made.'

The World Day of Prayer is celebrated with a service at All Saints Church, Hertford on the 7th March at 2pm.

For further information and resources see the WDP website [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk).

# Parish Calendar MARCH 2025

<b>Sunday 2nd March</b>		<b>Sunday Next before Lent</b>	
9am	Holy Communion		
10am	Parish Communion – Introduction to our Lent charity, CHiPS		
<b>Tuesday 4th March</b>			
8pm	Quiet Time at Holy Trinity		
<b>Wednesday 5th March</b>		<b>Ash Wednesday</b>	
8pm	Holy Communion		
2pm	Bengeo Afternoon WI – new members always welcome		
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Café at The Secret Garden Café, The Avenue		
<b>Thursday 6th March</b>			
10am	Holy Communion		
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road		
<b>Friday 7th March</b>			
2pm	World Day of Prayer – All Saints Church, Hertford, all welcome		
<b>Sunday 9th March</b>		<b>First Sunday of Lent</b>	
9am	Holy Communion		
10am	Parish Communion		
<b>Tuesday 11th March</b>			
8pm	Quiet Time, Holy Trinity		
<b>Wednesday 12th March</b>			
10am	Craft Club, Church Hall, Duncombe Road, all welcome		
<b>Thursday 13th March</b>			
10am	Holy Communion		
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road		
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Café at The Oasis Café, Ware Road Methodist Church, Hertford		
<b>Sunday 16th March</b>		<b>The Second Sunday of Lent</b>	
9am	Holy Communion		
10am	Parish Communion		
<b>Tuesday 18th March</b>			
8pm	Quiet Time at St Leonard’s Church to mark the 1,700 anniversary of the Nicene Creed		
<b>Thursday 20th March</b>			
10am	Holy Communion		
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road		
6.30–8pm	Bereavement Café at The Secret Garden Café, The Avenue		
<b>Sunday 23rd March</b>		<b>The Third Sunday of Lent</b>	
9am	Holy Communion		
10am	Parish Communion		
<b>Tuesday 25th March</b>			
8pm	Lent Group at Holy Trinity		
<b>Thursday 27th March</b>			
10am	Holy Communion		
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road		
<b>Friday 28th March</b>		<b>Concert at Holy Trinity Church</b>	
7.30pm	Chamber Music with The Academy of St Martin in the Fields music by Schubert, Haydn, Beach		
<b>Sunday 30th March</b>		<b>The Fourth Sunday of Lent (Mothering Sunday)</b>	
9am	Holy Communion		
10am	All Age Worship		



# Parish Calendar APRIL 2025

<b>Tuesday 1st April</b>	
8pm	Lent Group, Holy Trinity
<b>Wednesday 2nd April</b>	
2pm	Bengeo Afternoon WI, new members always welcome
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Cafe at The Secret Garden Cafe, The Avenue
<b>Thursday 3rd April</b>	
10am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
<b>Sunday 6th April                      <b>The Fifth Sunday of Lent (Passion Sunday)</b></b>	
9am	Holy Communion
10am	Parish Communion and Junior Church
<b>Tuesday 8th April</b>	
8pm	Lent Group, Holy Trinity
<b>Wednesday 9th April</b>	
10am	Craft Club, Church Hall, Duncombe Road, all welcome
<b>Thursday 10th April</b>	
10am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Café at The Oasis Café, Ware Road Methodist Church, Hertford
<b>Sunday 13th April                                      <b>Palm Sunday</b></b>	
9am	Holy Communion
10am	Parish Communion with procession of palms around the church
<b>Monday 14th April                                      <b>Monday in Holy Week</b></b>	
8pm	Holy Communion
<b>Tuesday 15th April                                      <b>Tuesday in Holy Week</b></b>	
8pm	Holy Communion
<b>Wednesday 16th April                                      <b>Wednesday in Holy Week</b></b>	
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Café at The Secret Garden Café, The Avenue
8pm	Holy Communion
<b>Thursday 17th April                                      <b>Maundy Thursday</b></b>	
10am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
6.30–8pm	Bereavement Cafe at The Secret Garden Cafe, The Avenue
7pm	Prayer supper in the Church Hall, Duncombe Road – commemorating the Last Supper through word and action
<b>Friday 18th April                                      <b>Good Friday</b></b>	
12 noon–2pm	Prayer and meditation
2pm	Good Friday devotions
<b>Sunday 20th April                                      <b>Easter Day</b></b>	
9am	Holy Communion
10am	Festival All-age Communion
<b>Thursday 24th April</b>	
10am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
<b>Sunday April 27                                      <b>The Second Sunday of Easter</b></b>	
9am	Holy Communion
10am	Parish Communion
<b>Tuesday 29th April</b>	
8pm	Quiet Time, Holy Trinity

# Parish Prayers

## Daily Prayers for March

1. The Churches in Wales
2. Our Lent Charity CHiPS
3. Anchor Lane
4. The campaign against knife crime
5. Ash Wednesday Services
6. HMP Send Women's Prison, Surrey
7. World Day of Prayer at All Saints Hertford
8. Church building maintenance
9. Our Worship Group
10. Archer's Close
11. Christians in Parliament
12. Christian Churches in Nigeria
13. HMP Spring Hill, Open Prison, Hampshire
14. Our choir
15. Our memorial garden
16. Amwell View School in Tonwell
17. Aston Grange
18. The Christian Police Association
19. Christian Churches in DR Congo
20. HMP Stafford, a sex offenders prison
21. Hertford and Ware Food Bank
22. Hertfordshire Social Services
23. Our bellringers
24. Barley Croft
25. Our QT Study Group
26. Christian Churches in Zimbabwe
27. HMP Stamford Hill, Sheppey
28. Ely Cathedral
29. Hertford and Ware Street Pastors
30. Our Mothers
31. Bartletts Mead

## Daily Prayers for April

1. Young Carers in Hertfordshire
2. Christian Churches in Bangladesh
3. HMP Stocken, Rutland
4. All who use our Church Hall
5. The Children's Society
6. CHiPS Head Office, Hertford
7. Balfour Street
8. Oxfam Work with Women's Rights
9. Christian Churches in Oman
10. HMP Stoke Heath, Shropshire
11. Our Councillors
12. Our Lent Charity CHiPS
13. Age Concern
14. Beane River View
15. Holy Week Services
16. Holy Week in Jerusalem
17. HMP Styal, Women's Prison Cheshire
18. Hertford and District Churches Together
19. Our Neighbours
20. Our Families
21. Bengo House
22. Oxfam Charity Shops
23. St George's Day
24. HMP Sudbury, Derbyshire
25. Exeter Cathedral
26. Local parks and playgrounds
27. The Samaritans work with farmers
28. Bengo Meadows
29. Hospice Care Chaplains
30. Christian Churches in Cuba

### Register

Funeral 9th January

**Terence Merrion**

Funeral 15th January

**Ann Metcalf**

Burial of Ashes 19th January

**Joan Branford**

Funeral 20th January

**Elsa Sleet**

Funeral 31st January

**Alan Cracknell**



### Quiet Time

All are welcome to join Quiet Time which is held on Tuesday 4th, 11th March and April 29th at Holy Trinity Church at 8pm. The Quiet Time session on Tuesday 18th March will be at St Leonard's Church at 8pm and is a special event to mark the 1,700 year anniversary of the Nicene Creed. The Lent Group will meet at Holy Trinity Church at 8pm on Tuesday 25th March, 1st and 8th April.



# Church Contacts

## Team Vicar

The Reverend Robert Thompson  
The Rectory, Byde Street, Bengeo, SG14 3BS  
E: [info@parishofbengeo.com](mailto:info@parishofbengeo.com)  
T: 01992 413691

## Associate Priest

Fr. David Pepper  
T: 07583 985266

## Reader

Bob Kelly  
T: 01763 274653

## Churchwardens

Diana Howarth  
T: 07711 571272  
Graham Squires  
T: 01992 553465

## Parochial Church Council

*Chairman:* Rev Robert Thompson  
*Honorary Secretary:* David Greely  
T: 01920 412485

## Director of Music and Organist

Dr Andrew Sentance

## Assistant Organist

William Sarjeant

## St Leonard's Church

Friends of St Leonard's  
*New Member Secretary:* Sue Patterson

## Addresses

Holy Trinity Church  
New Road, Hertford SG14 3JJ  
St Leonard's Church  
St Leonard's Road, Bengeo, SG14 3JW

# Local Contacts for Help and Advice

Below are links to local services.

## Medical and Health Advice

[www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)

## Domestic Abuse

[www.sunflower.org](http://www.sunflower.org)

## Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 808 8088

[Freephone Monday to Friday, 9am–9pm  
Saturday/Sunday 9am–4pm]

## Financial Advice

### Hertfordshire Support Fund

If you need help, regardless of whether you qualify for benefits, please call HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044, email [info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net) or visit [www.hertshelp.net](http://www.hertshelp.net).

For more information about the support on offer for residents both locally and national, please visit [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/costofliving).

### Money Advice Unit

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/benefits)

### Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service

03444 111 444

### National Debtline

[www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)  
0808 808 4000

## Advice on avoiding scams

Sign up for scam alerts from trading standards  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updates](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updates)

### Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline

0808 223 1133

If you are interested in volunteering

[www.thvolunteering.org.uk](http://www.thvolunteering.org.uk)

HertsHelp 0300 123 4044

## Mental Health Advice and Support

### Herts Mind Network

[www.hertsmindnetwork.org](http://www.hertsmindnetwork.org)  
020 3727 3600  
0300 777 0707 [8am–7pm]  
Nightline: 01923 256391

## Emotional Support and Practical Help

[www.hertshelp.net](http://www.hertshelp.net)  
[info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net)  
HertsHelp: 0300 123 4044

*Page 27: Bridget Hersant's photographs of bluebells.  
See the article on page 6.*

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# On the Doorstep – Bluebells





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Catherine Morgan

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Caroline Shaw *Entr'acte*

Amy Beach *Dreaming*

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