

♦ Trinity Methodist Church ♦ Kidderminster ♦

Trinity *Tidings*

April 2022

Easter Edition



...all are welcome in this place!



TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH
CHUIRCHFIELDS, KIDDERMINSTER

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**The closing date for items for the
MAY edition
Of Trinity Tidings is Sunday, 24th April, 2022**

**Please email articles, preferably as a Word Document to:
arleystation@aol.com**

Thanks to John Harris for designing the front and back covers,
and to Jon Skitt for putting the magazine online each month.

Dear Friends,

Diane and I have just had our Christmas present from Jessica, our eldest daughter. The reason we are only just getting it now at the end of March is because she bought us tickets to see Johannes Radebe performing at the 'Everyman Theatre' in Cheltenham.

For the benefit of anyone who doesn't know who Johannes Radebe is, he is one of the professional dancers on 'Strictly Come Dancing', the hit BBC television show, which you may or may not watch yourself. (In my opinion he is by far the best of the professionals on the show).

The most recent series of 'Strictly' saw the very first all male couple to dance on the show, one of the pairing being Johannes. Although Johannes was unsure as to whether the public were ready for such a pairing, he and his partner John, on the votes of the general public, made it all the way to the final and it was a very exciting and close run competition indeed.

Johannes comes from Zamdela in South Africa, he is black and gay and has spoken out about the homophobic bullying he received as a child, and much of the show he is touring the UK with at the moment (which is what we went to see) is about his personal journey from that village to where he is today.

The show's title is 'Freedom' and Johannes speaks about how he believes everyone should have the freedom to express themselves however they wish and the opportunity to live their life true to themselves, without prejudice, obviously speaking from his experiences as a black, gay man.

For millennia, religion and particular interpretations of a miniscule part of the bible has marginalised, criminalised and demonised people like Johannes, based mainly on misunderstanding and prejudice. Christian societies have based their judicial systems and laws on these interpretations, leading to horrendous sentences that no one should have to endure, just because of the way they were born. The way God made them!

Thankfully many societies nowadays accept and promote equal opportunities for everyone, irrespective of their sexuality or who they are attracted to. Thankfully many societies nowadays have abandoned outdated, barbaric laws surrounding the rights of gay men and women. Thankfully many societies nowadays treat everyone as equal, whomever they happen to fall in love with.

I have no idea if Johannes has a faith or not, but I recognise the freedom about which he speaks.

Jesus said "I have come that all may have life, life in all its fullness.

Freedom indeed!

Every blessing,

Nick.

PRAYER CORNER

We remember in our prayers Liz potter, Les Fuller, Lyn Jones, Margot Stanton, Ray and Barbara Lee, Betty Norman, Ruth Palmer, Anne Perkin, Diane Collison's parents, Peter and Ann, those on the Prayer Vine and all those we know who need the love, comfort and the knowledge of Christ's presence with them.

We pray for the people of Ukraine suffering in a war not of their making, but one which is causing death and destruction in their lovely country. We pray also for the thousands who have fled to safe countries that they may be welcomed, and find friendly places to stay, especially be with the children, separated from their parents. Our prayers go out to the perpetrators of the fighting, that sense, and peace may prevail, and their soldiers return home. We pray for the Russian people who are being kept from the truth, and that they be comforted when they hear of the deaths of their young men.

God of justice and love may your peace reign.



During the month of April, please remember in prayer,
the people and places within the area of Kidderminster
known as Offmore and Comberton.

Offmore and Comberton

April

St Chad's, Offmore and Milton Hall Baptist Churches.

Offmore and Comberton Primary Schools and Nurseries - King Charles 1 School.

Offmore Farm Rest Home, Nightingales, Holmwood Nursing Homes

Sandlewood Assisted Living

Children's Centre

Residential Housing

Retail Units and Trading

Women's Refuge

Kidderminster Cricket Club



From the Editor...

Dear Friends,

Have you ever heard of Rev Gilbert White? He was born in the vicarage at Selborne in Hampshire in 1720. He was a curate in several parishes, although still living in Selborne. He eventually became a curate in Selborne where he stayed until he died in 1795. Why was this man, on the face of it quite unremarkable, so important, and why has his book 'The Natural History of Selborne' never been out of print since it was first published in 1789? The clue is in the title. The book is a series of letters to two of his friends, Thomas Pennant, and Daines Barrington. In these letters he describes what he has seen in the natural world around where he lived. He asks many questions, and to some he cannot find an answer. For instance, is it possible that at the end of March a small bird like a chiff chaff should start singing, and be around for six months then disappear? He thought it impossible that such a small bird could fly south to a warmer country, as had been speculated. He was convinced that most swallows, especially the young ones hibernated over winter. Some, he thought, hibernated in disused chimneys, or perhaps they buried themselves in the mud beside a river or pond. Although he dug into likely places he never found any!

Gilbert White was responsible for positive identification of many small birds who often appear to be the same, such as the willow warbler, the garden warbler and the wood warbler.

He made detailed notes on the weather, birds, animal behaviour, insects, butterflies and anything that aroused his curiosity. No wonder he never became the vicar of a parish, he would never have had the time! We should thank God for such a quiet, unassuming and dedicated man. I leave you with a quote from one of his letters:

The evening procedures and manoeuvres of the rooks are curious and amusing in the autumn. Just before dusk they return by thousands and wheel around in the air and sport and dive in a playful manner, all the time exerting their voices and making a loud cawing.

I remember one little girl who, as she was going to bed, used to remark on such an occurrence that the rooks were saying their prayers.

David



Important message from the Editor:

You may find that you have a copy of the magazine with printing on one side of the pages only. These copies are to be returned to the box, so that next month's edition can be printed on the blank side, thus saving a considerable amount of paper. It was hoped to start this from April 1st, but it was not possible.

Offertories for the past four weeks are as follows

	Envelopes	Loose Cash	Standing Orders	Total
	£	£	£	£
06.03.22	305.50	71.00	737.75	1114.25
13.03.22	76.00	82.00	737.75	895.75
20.03.22	380.00	120.00	737.75	1237.75
27.03.22	95.00	60.00	737.75	892.75

In addition, offertories donated by bank transfer in February amounted to £90.00.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Ukraine Appeal which raised £749.50.

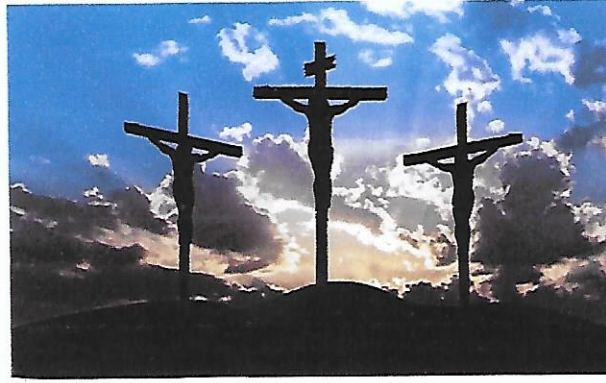
In this current church year it is estimated that offertories of £1200 per week will be required to break even.

SERVICES IN APRIL

April 3 rd	10.30am	Rev Nigel Taylor
	6.30pm	Rev Sue Levitt
April 10 th	10.30am	Dr Ken Mothersdale -- United service with Baxter
	6.30pm	Rev Nick Collison -- Café Worship
April 17 th	10.30am	Rev Nick Collison & Rev Andrew Mann-Ray -- H.C.
	6.30pm	Mr David Skitt
April 24 th	10.30am	Rev Nick Collison, with Baxter in the hall. Guides and Brownies St George's Day service in the church.
	6.30pm	Mr Phillip Bridgewater
May 1 st	10.30am	Rev Andrew Mann-Ray
	6.30pm	Rev Sue Levitt -- Holy Communion

DETAILS OF THE EASTER SERVICES ARE ON A SEPARATE PAGE





PALM SUNDAY 10TH APRIL 10.30AM DR KEN MOTHERSDALE
6.30PM - REV NICK COLLISON
HOLY WEEK
MONDAY - MRS SUE STINTON
TUESDAY - MR DAVID SKITT
WEDNESDAY - REV ANDREW MANN-RAY
MAUNDY THURSDAY - REV NICK COLLISON MEAL AND HOLY COMMUNION
(ALL SERVICES AT 7.00PM)
GOOD FRIDAY 15TH APRIL 9.30AM - REV NICK COLLISON
EASTER SUNDAY 10.30AM - REV NICK COLLISON
& REV ANDREW MANN-RAY - HOLY COMMUNION
6.30PM - MR DAVID SKITT



The Baxter letter from Andrew Mann-Ray

What does Resurrection mean to me?

Dear Friends,

Easter is almost upon us and in a matter of weeks we will be celebrating what is the centrality of our faith – the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Scripture tells us that without the resurrection we still wouldn't be in the right relationship with God and that we would be the most pitied of people because without the resurrection we would be lost. The cross on Good Friday only secures our salvation because what it achieves – the destruction of sin and death – is only proved by the joy of an empty tomb on Easter Sunday.

But what does resurrection mean to us today in April 2022? The pain and suffering of a cross and a resurrection that occurred 2,000 years ago surely doesn't have anything to say to us right now. After all, as we look around us at a world torn apart once more by war in Ukraine and other places, and a scale of human suffering not known since World War II, together with a world still reeling from the last two years of a global pandemic, how can one man's death and resurrection make any difference?

Of course that way of thinking reduces our faith and relationship with God down to our way of viewing the world rather than allowing God to raise us up to his. For a start Jesus is not just another man. If he was we would have reason to question his death and what it actually achieved. But we know that Jesus was the incarnation of God – God with us, God with skin on – and that makes a difference because it means that in Jesus, God understands what it means to be human. God understands our frailties and weaknesses. He knows what it is to weep and mourn, but also he knows what it is to have fun and to laugh. But Jesus doesn't do this as simply a human being. He does it as both God and Human being mysteriously combined and when he died on the cross he took on the pain of sin and death and conquered it coming out the other side in the resurrection.

Resurrection gives testimony to the reality that pain and suffering are defeated and that no matter how we might be feeling right now and no matter what we are facing there is always hope of life in all its fullness. Resurrection gives testimony to the fact that God is in control and that with him and through him we can stare death in the face and have no fear of the future. Through resurrection even death, the last enemy, is destroyed and we can live with hope.

This means that though we are living with dark days right now, with spiralling costs of living and uncertainty over whether peace can be restored, God is with us. God understands what we are going through and that no matter what we face God is in control and that in the end everything and everyone must submit to his authority.

What resurrection means to me is that God is in control and that with him, through Jesus, I can live my daily life knowing that nothing can overwhelm me. What about you? What does resurrection mean to you and how will you seek to celebrate it this Easter time?

Happy Easter!

Andrew

**UPDATE:
APRIL 2022**

NEW Roof Project...

The recent 'Quinquennial Report' completed in March 2021 found some serious defects in the state of the building roof at Trinity.



The Problem...

The Hall, Lounge and Toilet Roof areas and the connecting gulley, at the foot of the tower, require urgent replacement.

The Answer...

A New Roof complete.

Costs

Approx £65,000



UPDATE: APRIL 2022

Roof Contract Progress to date.

Final quotations have been reviewed and the contract agreed with the contractors about to start as soon as possible!

The Roof Fund

A 'Big Thank You' to everyone who has supported this project thus far...

The Roof Fund as at 28th March is currently made up as follows:

- Interest Free Loans
- Donations & Fundraising Events
- Donation from the Circuit
- Total to date...

£16,000.00

£36,695.00

£20,000.00

£72,695.00

How you can Help!...

Everyone is therefore encouraged to play whatever part they can in helping this project, thus enabling the **Interest Free Loans** to be paid back, by continuing to support:

Fundraising Events – please watch out for information on events.

Donations – If you wish to donate to the Project

Please contact:

Iestyn Davies

Tel: 01562 740429

Email: iestyn.davies@btopenworld.com

If you would like more detailed information on any aspects of this Major Project, please contact: **John Bacon**
Tel: 01562 744502.

Funds
Raised
to Date

As of 28th March, '22

Total

£72,695.00

Made up of
Donations & Fundraising

£56,695.00

Interest Free loans

£16,000.00

Please give this appeal your careful and prayerful consideration and support! Thank you.

Bunny Drive

Saturday 9th April

6pm for a 6.30pm start

Chip supper

£8 per person

Bring change for some games

Drinks available for donations or BYO

Book through Sarah or email

trinitysocialcommittee@gmail.com.uk



Trinity Methodist Church Kidderminster

A day out to Salisbury!

Come and enjoy a day out to the
historic city of Salisbury
with coach travel by

'Phillips International Travel'

on Friday
6th May 2022

Cathedral Tours

To book a tour of the cathedral, including the
tower, this must be booked for the
2.15pm tour, on
www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/visit/tower-tours
There is a payment for this.

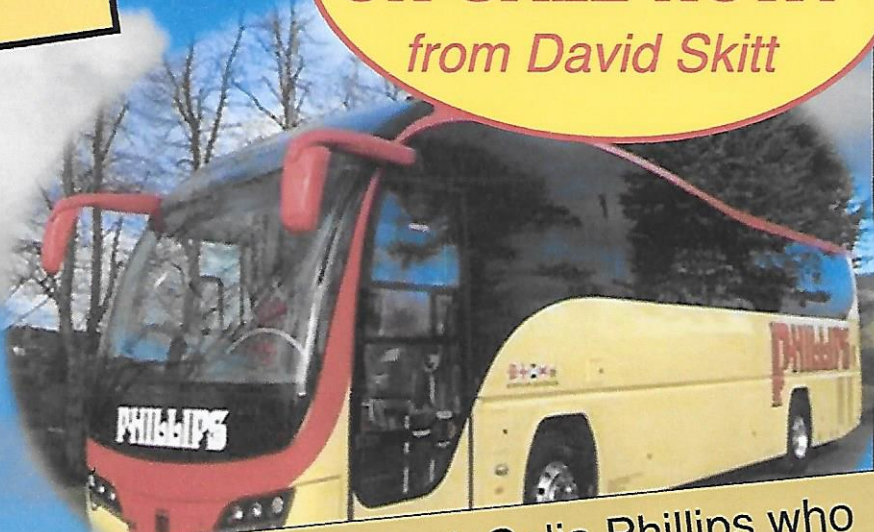
Tickets **£20** Each

ON SALE NOW!

from David Skitt

Coach Departs
From Trinity at

8.45am



We thank Alan & Celia Phillips who
have generously offered Trinity their
coach for the day!

Raise the Roof!

Raise the Roof!



All proceeds in aid of the
Trinity **NEW** Roof Project

Methodist Modern Art Collection



After two years of Covid-enforced cancellations, we are delighted to announce that our exhibition will take place in 2022 at

Bewdley Museum, Load Street, Bewdley, Worcestershire DY12 2AE

Saturday 26th March – Sunday 24th April 2022

Open Daily: 11.00 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.

Admission Free

The Methodist Modern Art Collection is one of Britain's most important collections of modern religious art, comprising more than fifty paintings, prints, drawings, relief and mosaics. The artists include famous names from the British art world of the last 100 years (Graham Sutherland, Edward Burra, Patrick Heron, Elisabeth Frink) alongside more contemporary artists. Our exhibition in Bewdley will feature 20 of the pieces.

Full details can be found at: www.forallpeoplebewdley.com

JESUS THE PAINTER

Wednesday 6th April, 2.30pm

Bewdley Methodist Church

Mike Dernie will lead an interactive exploration of the way Jesus 'painted pictures' for his listeners, and how he is still painting on the canvas of our lives.



Rev Rachel Parkinson, our District Chair, is marking Lent by writing 6 sonnets inspired by works from the Methodist Modern Art collection.

They are published online every Wednesday on Youtube at "Rachel Parkinson Methodist"

Sunday at the Proms

May 8th 2:30pm

Kidderminster Town Hall

Tickets: £10 £8 concessions (under 12)

HIGHLEY COLLIERY BRASS BAND

Conductor: Chris Cobon



With guests

KIDDERMINSTER MALE CHOIR

Conductor: David Barclay



Tickets available
online from

kidderminstertownhall.ticketssolve.com/show

'Last Night of the Proms' style concert. Bring your flags and your vocal chords to join in this most patriotic event. Along with British Sea Songs, Jerusalem and Elgar's Land of Hope and Glory, the band will present a selection of music to suit all tastes.

More Smile Lines sent in anonymously.....

A little girl asked her great grandma how old she was.
Smiling she replied I am so very old I can't remember.
Have a look in your cardigan, mine says 3-4 years.

Always in a hurry, a white van man nipped into Subway to get a crocodile sandwich and asked if they could they make it snappy.

The Pope has a weekly delivery of Worcestershire Sway from Bewdley Brewery.
That's why they carry him in on a chair.

Halfords found it impossible to explain to a boy racer that the light on his dashboard was for the indicator.

At Runnymede in 1215 a great crowd gathered to watch King John. Walls introduced a new ice-cream for the occasion called Magnum Carta.

A man was travelling on a train when he spotted a suspect package.
The alarm was raised and the bomb-squad called.
Asked, he described it as follows:-
A battery, alarm clock, explosives all inside a Tesco meal deal sandwich.
Is it tickin' ?
No, tuna mayonnaise.

Due to climate change most of the bears at Dudley Zoo are waking up from hibernation early.
This makes them grizzly.

A family travelled over 200 miles to watch the Coronation in 1953. Unfortunately their car had a leaking radiator. Quite angry the father marched into the AA HQ in Leicester Square.
I have opened every AA box all the way here and there was no AA man in any of them!

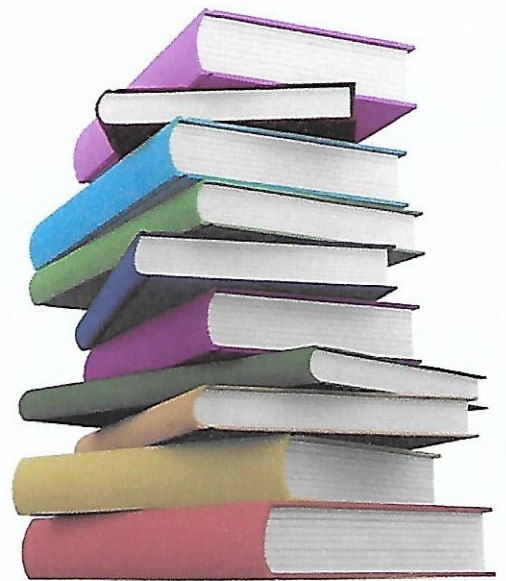
Dad was at work and Mum was in bed with the flu. Their daughter 12 was asked to pay the milkman. She would find the money in a tin in the hall. When he called the tin was empty.
The following conversation took place:-
Child: Mum, tintintin
Mum: Tintintin?
Child: No tintintin.
Mum: If it tintintin come and get my purse.

A bulldog owner took his pet to London to learn to play the flute for a new Churchill TV advert.
The first day he went from Barking to Tooting.

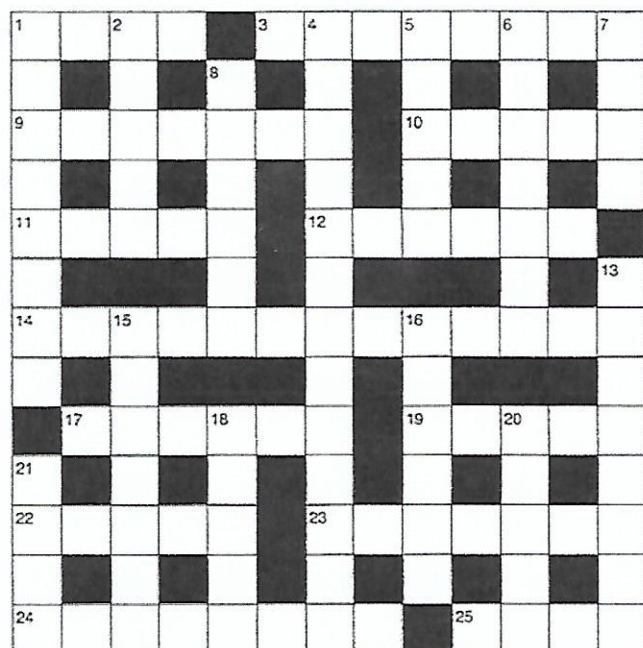
The away team on their way to the Hawthorns were stuck in heavy traffic on the motorway.
They rang Steve Bruce and told him to get started at 3 o'clock and they would catch them up when they got there.

Who wrote the following books and poetry:

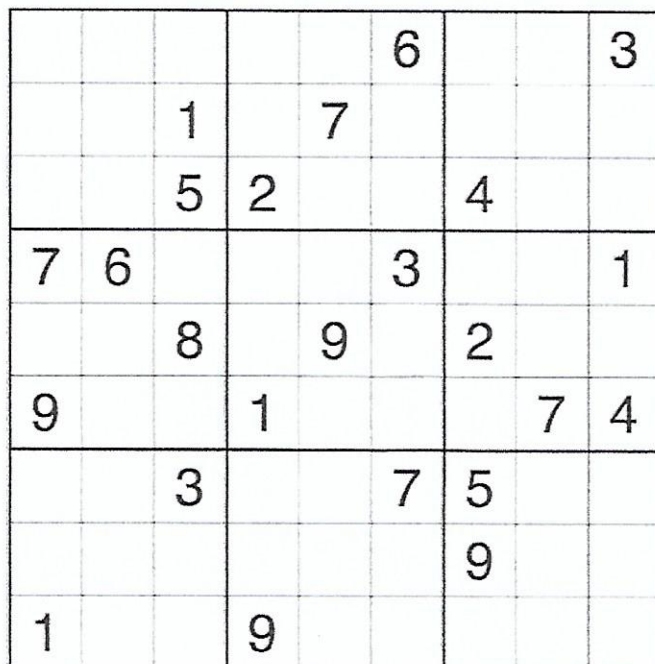
1. Gangsta Granny Strikes Again
2. Mary Poppins
3. The Jungle Book
4. The invisible Man
5. A Brief History of Time
6. Fatherland
7. The Old Man and the Sea
8. And Then There None
9. The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde
10. Thomas the Tank Engine
11. The Old Man of Lochnagar
12. The Kon-Tiki Expedition
13. The Darling Buds of May
14. War and Peace
15. The Chimes
16. Wolf Hall trilogy
17. On the Origin of Species
18. The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo
19. The Diary of a Nobody
20. The Thursday Murder Club
21. Through the Looking Glass
22. Mr Midshipman Hornblower
23. The Whitsun Weddings
24. Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats
25. The Shropshire Lad
26. Ode to Nightingale
27. Carry on Jeeves
28. Cider with Rosie
29. Silas Marner
30. Around the World in Eighty Days



Parish Pump Crossword



Sudoku puzzle



© 2008 KrazyDad.com

Across

- 1 'The baby in my — leaped for joy' (Luke 1:44) (4) 3 A 'don't know' in matters of faith (8)
- 9 In the distant past (Jeremiah 2:20) (4,3)
- 10 Armada (1 Kings 10:22) (5)
- 11 Where Moses was confronted with the burning bush (Exodus 3:1) (5)
- 12 Hair colour indicative of skin infection (Leviticus 13:30) (6)
- 14 'The worries of this life and the — of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful' (Matthew 13:22) (13)
- 17 Expel (2 Kings 13:23) (6)
- 19 What Jesus wrapped round his waist when he washed his disciples' feet (John 13:4) (5)
- 22 The sixth plague to afflict the Egyptians (Exodus 9:9) (5)
- 23 For nine (anag.) (7)
- 24 Where there is no time (Psalm 93:2) (8)
- 25 Goliath's challenge to the Israelite army in the Valley of Elah: 'This day I — the ranks of Israel!' (1 Samuel 17:10) (4)

Down

- 1 'I will become angry with them and forsake them; I — — my face from them' (Deuteronomy 31:17) (4,4)
- 2 Usual description of prophets such as Amos, Hosea, Micah, and so on (5)
- 4 'They cannot see the light of the gospel of the — — — , who is the image of God' (2 Corinthians 4:4) (5,2,6)
- 5 An animal's internal edible parts (Leviticus 4:11) (5)
- 6 Popular 20th-century religious novel by Lloyd C. Douglas, which became a 1953 film starring Richard Burton (3,4)
- 7 'A — on a hill cannot be hidden' (Matthew 5:14) (4)
- 8 One of the exiles, a descendant of Bebai, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:28) (6)
- 13 Old Testament hymn-singing (8)
- 15 'And O what transport of delight from thy pure — floweth' (7)
- 16 Of felt (anag.) (3,3)
- 18 'So — the — sets you free, you will be free indeed' (John 8:36) (2,3)
- 20 Comes between 'bad' and 'worst' (John 5:14) (5)
- 21 'Neither height nor depth... will be — to separate us from the love of God' (Romans 8:39) (4)

GARDENING NOTES FOR APRIL

April is often famed her showers and this weather lore is based on fact, we may experience short sharp downpours. Hail, rain, snow and thunder are quite common. Fortunately April is characterised by a pleasant mixture of fair, to fine conditions. Good sunny spells, frequent cool showers and chilly nights with the tantalizing hint of warmer weather later on.

One thing that will be evident this month will be the greening of the lawn as the grass has its first flush of spring. Mowings will become more frequent, with the blades set high to begin with. Aerating and scarifying established lawns will improve neglected areas and will allow water, light and air to penetrate down through the soil, and will remove dead and decaying material from the upper surface. Repair damaged edges.

If the weather is favourable, and by that I mean not frosty, prune back forsythia to promote new growth. Cut back stems of buddleia to a stronger pair of buds and don't be shy about it, it will respond well to a hard prune. If the weather in March precluded the pruning of roses then don't delay, do it now and feed with a proprietary food and hoe into the surface.

April is the ideal time to divide and split established clumps of herbaceous perennials. After gently lifting the established clump the splitting of herbaceous perennials is a simple task. Simply pull apart with your fingers into individual plants, or if the clump is a little more congested, then the best method is to insert two forks back-to-back and rock the forks back and forth until the clump is severed apart then split as above.

Once bulbs have flowered remove flowers before they expend energy in producing unwanted seed. If the weather happens to be exceptionally dry then give the bulbs a good watering as this will help the bulb to store up energy for the next year, this is especially important for daffodils. A late mulching of beds and borders helps to suppress weeds and conserve moisture. Good garden compost or spent mushroom compost is ideal for this purpose, although remember that the latter should not be used in any circumstances be applied around lime-hating subjects such as camellias or rhododendrons, as spent mushroom compost is very alkaline in nature. Apply mulches after rain to maximise their effect.

Pond plants will begin to grow this month and the pool will often have its first algal bloom. Don't worry - if the pool is balanced the green will disappear next month as the oxygenators put on growth. Feed fish sparingly at this stage, especially if the weather is cool.

Anemone Pannonica is truly spectacular for spring colour. A native of grassy hillsides and olive groves along the shores of the Mediterranean, this tuberous perennial is equally happy here in the Midlands. For best results plant in a well-drained, sunny position and they will, over time, reward you with a spectacular display of early spring colour. Usually reaching a height of around 18" they appear in a variety of shades from purple, pink through to scarlet and white. Like most things originating from the Med. They go to sleep when it gets hot, becoming dormant throughout the summer, to reappear in the autumn with fresh growth. They are simply charming.

Writing these notes in March it's hard to imagine the warmth that awaits us within the next few weeks. I am sure that by the time you read these jottings spring will be well and truly with us. The sun will be out, the birds will be singing and nesting, the garden will be bursting into colour and winter will be a distant memory.

Whatever the weather, enjoy your garden: it's the only one you've got!

Bob



Easter – A Time for Joy and Sadness

Oh! To see the bible through the eyes of a child. There is a strange sort of innocence among small children. Christmas is here, a few carols, the Baby Jesus and many presents. Just 4 months later it's time for celebration again, filling themselves with chocolate eggs. To them, Jesus was born in December and died in April, every year. They had no idea that Jesus lived for 33 years. Oh that life could have been so simple.

The fact is, we don't know a lot about Jesus's life, all the things He did could have been carried out over those 4 months. Miracles, curing the disabled, could have been done over a short period of time. However long it took, the Jesus movement finally got off the ground. It caused crowds to flock around Him, although many would have faded away, scarcely understanding what He was talking about. So He spent more time speaking with His more receptive believers, basically, His disciples. This is where His troubles began. It was against the law to preach and He knew it could be punishable by death. His message was carried by word of mouth and writings and eventually spread through the world. Whatever the story, it is always stamped by death and resurrection. They begin with a body and suddenly it's gone. Then it comes back and the message is "Christ is Alive". A new life for us followers to believe in.

Did Jesus go out with His preaching and expect to be up to death? Of course He didn't. He went out to preach the Word of God and if people had accepted it He would have lived to a ripe old age. Many people did, but others had doubts. "I don't know how to love Him" sang Mary in 'Jesus Christ Superstar'. Priests and teachers of the day were also angry with Him. They had their own version of the law and couldn't accept Jesus talking about God's love for people everywhere. He became a risk and a danger.

So Jesus changed tack and set about sacrificing Himself for the love of God. Why don't they understand He thought, but He knew He had to die. He never gave way to hatred or bitterness and when He was crucified He asked for His murderers to be forgiven. As the Hymn says "No Guilt in Life, No fear in death". Jesus's death was not inevitable, it's what He chose. Jesus condemned Himself. That's why His life is the greatest story ever told.

What of the cross? Actually, it was a T Shaped piece of wood from which bodies were hung. Then they were left there forever. Just left to rot. Uniquely Jesus's body wasn't. As evening came, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a rich man and a member of the Jewish religious council and also a follower of Jesus, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate said he could have it; so Jesus's body was taken down from the cross, wrapped in linen and placed in a cave in a rock. From there He would rise from the dead. As everyone stood around, it was Joseph of Arimathea who stepped forward and cradled the body of Jesus. Many of His followers stood back feeling helpless as He died on that cross. Joseph of Arimathea didn't. Many of His disciples looked on, feeling failures, what could they have done? Why didn't they step in? Their challenge was yet to come. They would have to step forward and spread the Good News when He rose from the dead.

So why did Jesus die on that cross? He died for us, that our sins would be forgiven. He was forgiveness itself. He lived to forgive and died to forgive. His last words were "forgive them Father, they know not what they do". The greatest sin of all was putting to death the Son of God, but He died for us that we might be born again.

Mike

(Mike Knott, Stourport Wesley)

April Showers

Now here's a little story. In the East End of London there are these green oases of parks, or playgrounds as they call them, it's the same all over the Country. Sitting in one of these parks was a man, always with a can of 'Special Brew' by his side. He loved his can, he loved it so much he had Special Brew tattooed on his arms and eventually, by deed poll, had his name changed to Special Brew.

However, this man was no down and out, he was loved by children and their parents. Day by day, as he sat on the bench with his can of Special Brew, they would bring him cakes and sandwiches. He was one of the Community. Then suddenly he disappeared. He was discovered in hospital.

Coming back home, all the children, parents and the local Methodist church gathered together to look after their own Special Brew. Well again, he took up his usual place on the bench in the park with his can by his side. One day when in the shop to buy his can, he bought a lottery ticket and, unbelievably, he won a million pounds. He didn't need the money and gave it away to all the friends and children who had loved him through the years as he sat on that park bench. Most of all he thought of that Methodist church and it's minister and decided to give them a legacy. Now in that East London Methodist church is the finest stained-glass window of all time. People come from far and wide to see this window and underneath is a brass plaque. It reads "Kindly donated by Special Brew".

Mike

Thank you Mike, I think we should be reading this on April 1st!!!

Mike's Smile Lines.

Boy: There's a lad in my class who comes from Azerbaijan.
Mother: Where's that?
Boy: I don't know, but it can't be far, he goes home for lunch.

**

I left my shoes outside my room to be cleaned and in the morning I found one black shoe and one brown shoe. I complained to the reception and the receptionist said "Sorry Sir, that's the second time that's happened this morning".

**

"Wee Willie Winkee runs through the town, upstairs and downstairs in his night-gown" – and you think **I'm crazy** writing Smile Lines!

**

I went on a diet using vegetables and olive oils. I haven't lost any weight but I don't squeak any more.

**

Vicar: How many times a day do you say your prayers?
Johnny: Once Sir, at night.
Vicar: But don't you say them during the Day?
Johnny: No Sir, I'm only afraid at night.

**

A Council in Jamaica is putting boards across all the bottoms of the public toilet doors. This is to stop limbo dancers getting in free.

**

Teacher: If you bought 20 doughnuts for a pound, what would each be?
Boy: Stale Miss.

**

Two blokes go into a restaurant and are shocked how the cutlery is laid out at their place settings. Don't worry, says one, I read about this in a book. You start at the outside and work to your plate. One hour later they're still sucking up their soup with a serviette.

**

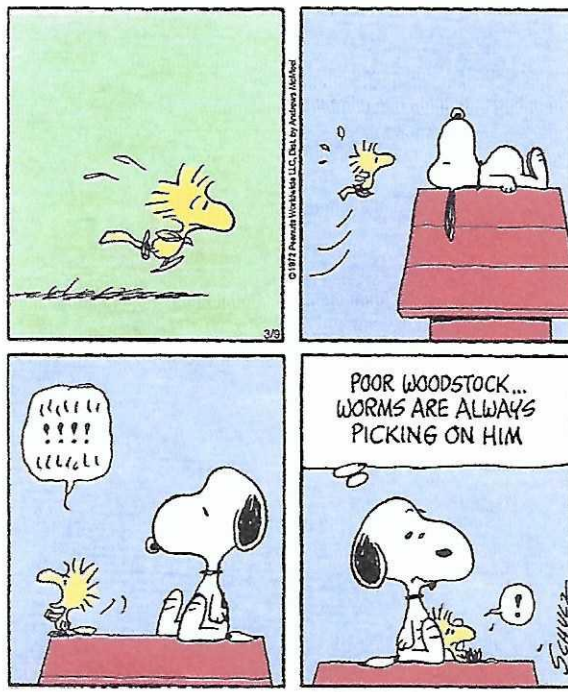
Same two men order an omelette each, one has a plain one at a £1, the other has a Spanish one at £2. When they come, they both look the same. "Hey", one says "I ordered a Spanish, where's the difference?" The waiter clicks his fingers, stamps his feet and shouts "Ole".

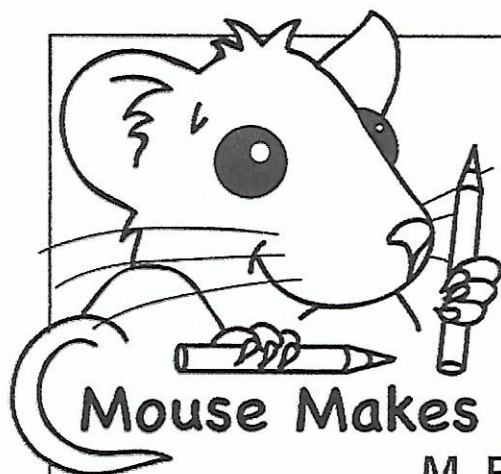
**

Waiter, when you served me that steak I noticed you had your thumb on it.
That's right Sir, I didn't want it to fall on the floor again.

**

Waiter, what's this food?
It's ravioli Sir, a dish from Italy.
Blimey, it looks like teabags in tomato sauce.



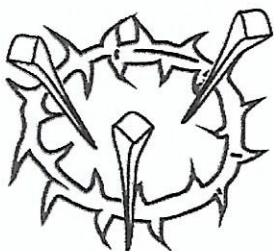


Mouse Makes



Who betrayed Jesus?
Who denied Jesus?

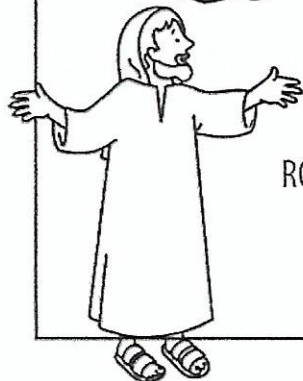
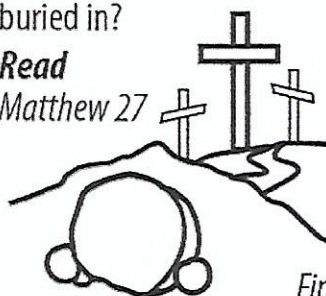
Read Matthew 26:17-75



What did the soldiers put
on Jesus at his crucifixion?
What time did Jesus die?
Whose tomb was Jesus
buried in?

Read

Matthew 27



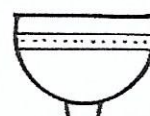
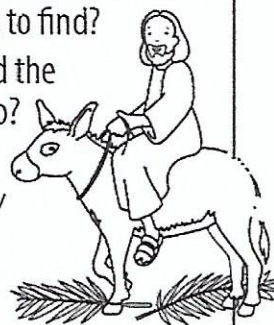
HAPPY EASTER!

Jesus has risen!
Jesus is with us!
Jesus will come
again!



What did Jesus send the
disciples to find?
What did the
crowd do?

Read
Matthew
21:1-11



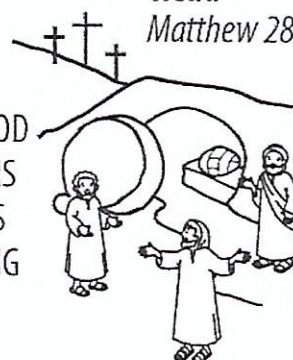
What did
Jesus do
at Passover?

Read Matthew 26:17-30



On the third day who
rolled away the stone
covering the tomb?
What had happened
to Jesus?

Read
Matthew 28



Find these words from the Easter story in the word search:

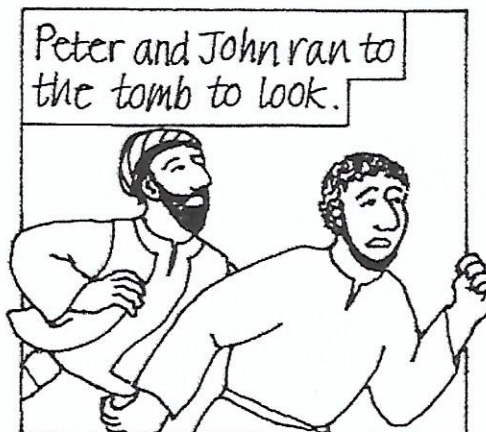
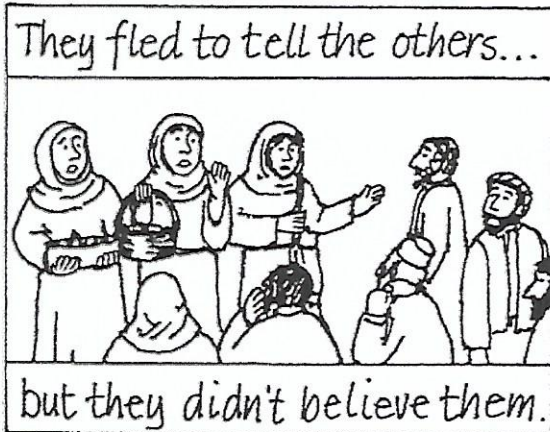
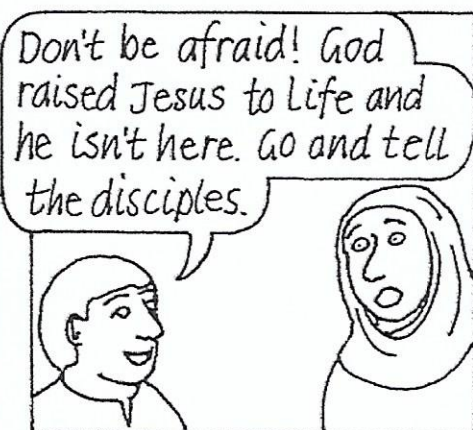
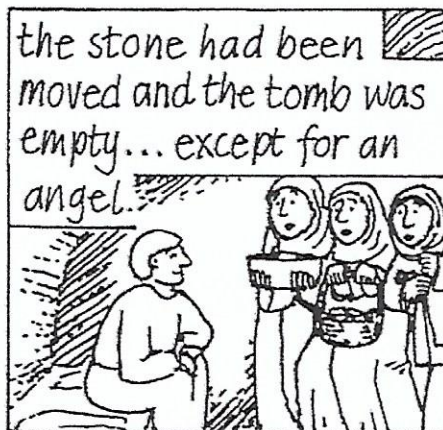
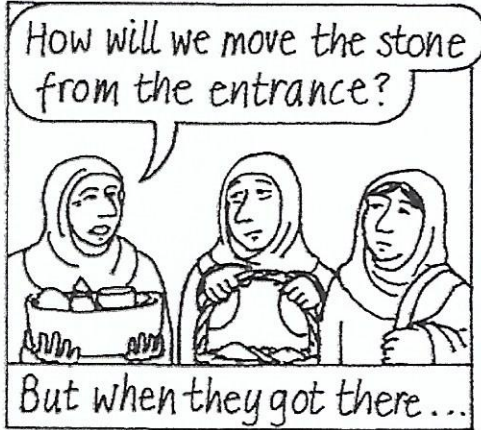
DONKEY • ROAD • BRANCHES • PALMS • KING • HOSANNA
PASSOVER • ROOM • BREAD • WINE • CUP • MEAL • BODY • BLOOD
KISS • MESSIAH • CHRIST • JESUS • CRUCIFY • CROWN • THORNS
ROBE • TREE • NAILS • CROSS • DARKNESS • QUAKE • DEATH • LOTS
TOMB • LINEN • STONE • BODY • BURY • THREE DAYS • MORNING
MARY • ANGEL • HEAVEN • GOD • RAISED • JOY • GO TELL
GOOD NEWS • PEACE • SPIRIT • SAVIOUR • PRAISE • EASTER

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

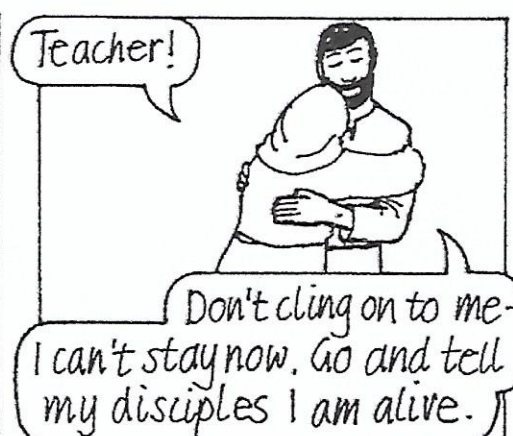
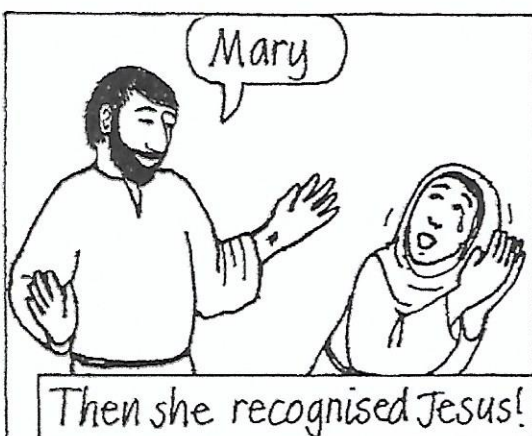
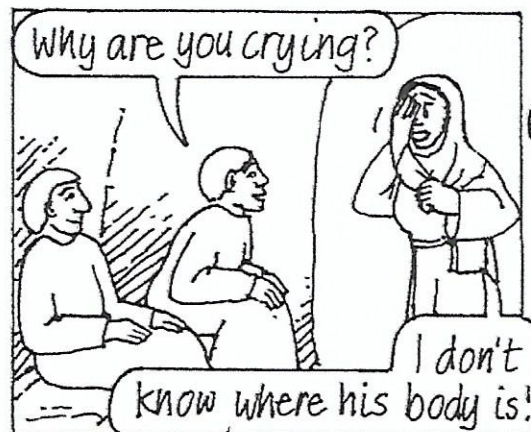
It can be read in the Bible in
Mark 16:1-8, John 20:1-18

Jesus' tomb had been sealed with a large stone.
Very early Sunday morning, some of Jesus' friends went to put spices on his body.



They saw the tomb was empty and only the cloths that Jesus' body had been wrapped in lying there. So they went back to the others.

Mary Magdalene stayed by the tomb, crying. She didn't understand that Jesus was no longer dead. When she looked in the tomb there were 2 angels.



Fooling Around

Probably the most famous April Fool's joke of all time was the 1960's BBC TV broadcast feature on the spaghetti farms of Italy. A BBC reporter on Panorama interviewed Italian farmers about their work and the progress of the spaghetti plants in great detail. Spaghetti plants were filmed being carefully planted, and then being harvested. And all in the BBC's most serious documentary manner. It was narrated by Richard Dimbleby and it took a while to appreciate that this was Auntie playing games. Whatever next!

The odd thing is that no one is quite sure of the origin of this very British tradition. Most attribute it to changes in Britain's calendar in the 1700s, when New Year's Day moved from 25th March to 1st January. Not surprisingly, the change caused a lot of confusion and mistakes around the start of April. Others look even further back, to the ancient Roman feast of Hilaria, when the goddess Cybele was celebrated with pranks and jokes around the Spring Equinox, 25th March.

Parish Pump 2022

Why Easter will never go away

How do you make sense of the Resurrection? Dead men don't rise, so why believe that this particular dead man *did* rise?

At the end of St Luke's gospel we read that: "they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement" (Luke 24:4). This is highly significant. The Gospels do not show us a group of disciples who were in a receptive frame of mind. After the crucifixion, they were in hiding, frightened and scattered. Then suddenly, they came out of hiding and were totally different; excited, joyful. By Pentecost they were confident, with one firm message: 'You crucified Jesus, but God raised Him up!'

How did they know this? Because of direct personal experience. Some of them had visited the tomb of Jesus: it was empty. Others claimed to have seen and touched the risen Lord. Were they hallucinating? People can hallucinate in groups – when taking drugs, for example. But of course, each one will see a different hallucination. But the disciples all saw the same thing. Or rather, the same person. Jesus.

Were they lying? Jesus had died a humiliating death as a criminal. Perhaps they wanted to rescue His good name. So, did they pretend they had seen Him?

This theory has a big problem. Their preaching led them into trouble with the authorities. They were beaten and imprisoned and some of them killed. People will die for ideas and causes which they believe in passionately. But not for things they have made up. We might suffer for our convictions, but we will not suffer for our inventions.

What about the 'swoon' theory? That Jesus didn't die on the cross, despite terrible wounds? That He recovered in the tomb, and then escaped? That the disciples nursed Him back to health? But Roman soldiers knew when a man was dead; and there was the guard on the tomb. Also, the events which followed simply don't fit. If the disciples had been hiding Jesus all along, they would have kept very low-key, and out of the way, so that the authorities did not come after Him again. Besides, to preach that God had raised Jesus from the dead – which is exactly what they did preach – would have been a lie. Beatings and threat of death would soon have loosened their tongues. Inventions crumble under pressure; convictions hold fast.

Another reason for believing in the Resurrection is this: Jesus' continuing impact. Thousands and soon millions of people in every generation since have shared an inescapable sense of being 'accompanied' through life. Though unseen, they identify this presence as the Risen Lord. Sometimes this experience of meeting Jesus is gentle and fitful. Sometimes it is dramatic and life changing. This reminds us that the resurrection of Jesus is not just an interesting historical

puzzle. It is a vital, present day reality. It brings wonderful comfort, assuring us of the central Christian truths: death is dead; Jesus is alive; God is love.

This central notion was captured, most movingly, by the great Albert Schweitzer: ‘He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: “Follow thou me,” and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the suffering which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is.’

Have a joyful – and a challenging – Easter.

Parish Pump 2022

St George and Hiccup and the dragon

Have you seen the film *How to Train your Dragon*? It’s set in a Viking village under attack from dragons, who steal livestock and burn down houses. Hiccup, the village Chief’s son, invents a machine to capture dragons. However, when he catches one of the most dangerous dragons, he cannot kill it, when he sees that the dragon is just as frightened as he is. Through this friendship, the people and dragons eventually learn to live in harmony.

This month we celebrate St George, the patron saint of England. He is famous for slaying a dragon, a tradition which became popular in the Middle Ages. Whether he killed an actual dragon is open to question! However, we do know that the original George was a Roman soldier at the time of Emperor Diocletian. He refused to renounce his faith, as commanded by the Emperor, resulting in his death on 23 April 303 AD.

The contrast is clear: St George slayed the evil dragon, while Hiccup refused to kill one. However, they also have something important in common. Both acted according to their conscience, defying the popular understanding of those around them and not worrying about the personal cost to themselves. St George was martyred for standing up for his faith in Jesus before a pagan emperor, while Hiccup risked rejection by his father and village because of his compassion.

Today, we are still called to stand for Christ against wrongs and injustice in daily life, whatever the personal cost. However, we also need to be ready to look our enemies in the eye and meet their hostility with love and compassion. This is why we also remember this month that Jesus died and rose again, so that we might have God’s power to do this in our lives.

Parish Pump 2022

An Easter reflection (by Canon David Winter.)

“When you die, that’s it. Nothing. Out like a light.” That’s what the man in the pub said, and his mates all nodded, though the one whose mother had died the week before wasn’t really quite so certain. Still, it seemed to make sense.

After all, we know what ‘dead’ means: dead leaves, dead batteries, dead fish, dead pets . . . and dead people, to be honest. While we recognise that it’s all too easy to go from alive to dead, we’ve got serious doubts about the possibility of any return journeys.

Which is why Christians have an uphill task at Easter. Jesus was a great man, and people want to remember how He died. Fair enough. But it starts getting complicated when Christians insist that Jesus died – but didn’t stay dead – in fact, that He’s alive now. That ‘return journey’ has happened, they say.

That’s the problem about Easter, Christians persisting in what sounds like a ridiculous belief. If they just dropped the resurrection bit and concentrated on the wonderful teaching of Jesus and His

example of generosity, compassion and love then everybody would find Christianity much more believable. Wouldn't that make sense? And wouldn't that fill the churches again?

Well it might (or, more likely, it might not). But in any case, the trouble is that it wouldn't be Christianity at all. The faith of Christians actually depends on the resurrection of Jesus, and always has done, right from the earliest days.

After the crucifixion the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross by some of His friends and put in a rock tomb with a heavy stone rolled across the doorway. Yet the following Sunday, the third day after His death, His followers claimed that they had met Him, seen Him, talked with Him. So certain was their belief that nothing could make them recant it. Not ridicule, not torture, not even death itself. They couldn't deny His resurrection, because they were absolutely convinced that it had happened. Plenty of clever and powerful people at the time had a vested interest in proving them wrong. It shouldn't have been difficult to prove that a dead man had stayed dead, especially when you have at your disposal the resources of the greatest empire in history. Yet they didn't do it, because it couldn't be done.

Still today millions of people all over the world believe that Jesus did in fact rise from the dead. They include brilliant scientists and philosophers as well as plenty of 'ordinary' men and women of all ages. They believe it because they respect the witness of those first Christians, and because in many cases their own lives have been transformed by a relationship with Jesus – a relationship that wouldn't make sense if He were dead!

Christians don't put their faith in a dead hero from the past, but in someone who is alive and *active in their own lives and in the world*. That, in a nutshell, is the real message of Easter.

Parish Pump 2022

Two donkeys

Two donkeys were walking the streets of Jerusalem. One said: "Just a few days ago I came down that hill carrying Jesus, and the people were all singing and shouting and throwing down their cloaks and palms for me to walk on. But today they don't even recognise me."

The other donkey replied: "That is how it is, my friend. Without Jesus, none of us amounts to much."

Parish Pump 2022

How to have some happiness this April

'April is the cruellest month,' wrote TS Eliot at the beginning of his magisterial poem, *The Wasteland*. And it is a good description of what April may bring us, between the war in Ukraine and soaring energy prices.

But apparently, major problems do not mean that we can't enjoy anything. According to the 'science of happiness,' fuelled by advances in brain-scanning technology and a cultural shift towards seeing happiness as a key index in human development, there is a way through the deep gloom that hangs over this month.

Neuroscientists suggest that even while we are dealing with the big problems of life, we can also make room for 'small, fleeting moments of fulfilment'. These can range from holding the hand of a loved one, to appreciating the daffodils in your garden, to enjoying a cup of tea with a good friend. Such moments of quiet contentment are 'joyful vignettes' which can be the bread and butter of our daily human happiness. As one writer has said: "Hold on to the small moments and the bigger picture of gloom doesn't have to be as overwhelming as it first seems."

Parish Pump 2022

All in the month of April

It was:

100 years ago, on 3rd April 1922 that Joseph Stalin became leader of the Soviet Union, in succession to Vladimir Lenin.

90 years ago, on 23rd April 1932 that the Royal Shakespeare Theatre opened in Stratford-upon-Avon, replacing the one that burnt down in 1926.

75 years ago, on 1st April 1947 that the school leaving age in the UK was raised to 15.

65 years ago, on 24th April 1957 that the first episode of the British astronomy series *The Sky at Night* was broadcast on BBC TV. It became the world's longest-running TV series with the same presenter (Patrick Moore) until his death in December 2012. The series then continued with new presenters.

50 years ago, on 11th April 1972 that the first episode of the radio comedy panel game show 'I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue' was broadcast on BBC Radio 4. It is still running.

40 years ago, on 2nd April 1982, that the Falklands War began when Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands. A British victory, although Argentina continues to claim sovereignty over the islands.

30 years ago, on 23rd April 1992 that the world's largest McDonald's fast-food restaurant opened in Beijing, China.

Also 30 years ago, on 27th April 1992 that Betty Boothroyd became the first female Speaker of the House of Commons.

25 years ago, on 13th April 1997 that the American golfer Tiger Woods, aged 21, became the youngest player to win the US Masters championship, and the first African American to win.

20 years ago, on 1st April 2002 that the Netherlands became the first country to legalise euthanasia.

Parish Pump 2022

3rd April – the Boat Race

This month begins with one of the world's oldest and most famous amateur sporting events: The Boat Race.

First raced in 1829 by crews from Oxford and Cambridge Universities, it is considered the epitome of amateur sport, and each year attracts more than 250,000 spectators to the banks of the Thames, as well as many millions more on television.

The Boat Race is raced along what is called the Championship Course, which is over 4.25 miles of tidal Thames in West London, between Putney and Mortlake. This year will see the 167th Men's Boat Race and the 76th Women's Boat Race.

Parish Pump 2022

Remembering Samuel Morse of Morse Code

Samuel Morse died 150 years ago, on 2nd April 1872. The American artist and inventor is best known for developing a commercial single-wire telegraph system – and the Morse Code, with his friend Alfred Vail.

He was born in 1791 in Charlestown, Massachusetts, the son of Calvinist preacher and geographer Jedidiah Morse. He found a great deal of interest in lectures on electricity, which was then poorly understood. His parents were somewhat disconcerted that he also enjoyed painting miniature portraits.

It was in 1832, while returning by ship from Europe, that Morse had the idea of a commercial electric telegraph – after hearing a conversation about the newly discovered electromagnet. The idea of an electric telegraph had been put forward in 1753, but Morse believed it could be put into action.

His eagerness stemmed partly from an early tragedy. His first wife Lucretia was taken seriously ill in 1825 while he was working on a portrait of the Marquis de Lafayette in Washington, but the message took ages to reach him by horse messenger. By the time he got home to Connecticut, his wife was not only dead, but buried.

By 1838 he and Vail had developed the system of dots and dashes that became known throughout the world as the Morse Code, and by 1844 the first telegraph line in the United States, from Baltimore to Washington, was completed, and he sent the first message: “What hath God wrought?”

This had been suggested to him by Annie Ellworth, the teenage daughter of the commissioner of patents.

In 1871 there was a huge celebration of the telegraph in Central Park, New York, and Morse sent the final nationwide message on the day, part of which read: “Glory to God in the Highest; on Earth peace, goodwill to men.”

Parish Pump 2022

Quotes

On Good Friday, the most sacred day of the year, when God’s justice and mercy are intertwined, I take heart for myself and the whole human race by meditating on this text: “There is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people”. [1 Timothy 2:5) – *Archbishop John Sentamu*

The real purpose of a child’s full name is so he can tell when he’s really in trouble.

The easiest way to tell the difference between young plants and weeds is to pull up everything. If they come up again, they’re weeds. – *Anon*

Parish Pump 2022