

St. George's Montezbury

Magazine 50p



April 2023

The Parish of Pontesbury

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Contributions for St. George's Magazine should be in by the **15th** of the **previous month**. It may not be possible to include until the following month contributions which are received after this date.

Send e-mail & attachments to stgsmagazine@googlemail.com

Please post handwritten articles to Ford Place, The Bank, Pontesbury Hill, SY5 0XX.

Website: www.st-george.org.uk

Items for inclusion in the Deanery News to be submitted by 10th of previous month to
Alison Bebb - Keepers Cottage, Cruckmeole, Shrewsbury, SY5 8JN
Telephone: 01743 860158 email: alisonbebb5@gmail.com

Two anonymous QUOTES:

- ⇒ The world needs more warm hearts and fewer hot heads.
- ⇒ What the nations of the world need is a peace conference with the Prince of Peace.



LIFTING UP OUR EYES

With Pam Bickley

Depending when you receive this magazine, Easter will either be a couple of days away or just gone.

I've been thinking about the journey through Lent. I've always found it to be a time for reflection. I've long since stopped giving things up for Lent, instead I would rather "do" something for Lent. Each year that may be something different – choosing a book to read and reflect on; choosing to read a section of the Bible in depth; or choosing to pray in a different way.

I always accept that sometimes life simply gets in the way of all my good intentions and with the maturity of age and faith, I realise that feeling guilty about not achieving something is pointless. Much more sensible to simply start again the next day.

Each Lent there is one thing that touches my heart more than anything else and that is the hymn "When I survey the wondrous cross". It was written by Isaac Watts. He was complaining about the quality of hymns being sung at his local church and his father challenged him to do better. He certainly achieved that.

We sang this beautiful hymn at a nine o'clock service at Shelve church in March. No musical accompaniment – just eight of us singing to our Lord. The beauty of those words once again washed over me and reminded me of Jesus love for us; that He gave his life for us so that our sins may be forgiven.

It reminds us not to boast; not to have pride but most of all it reminds us of love. The final sentence can reduce me to tears but it also reminds me of why I'm a Christian and why I became a priestLove so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. Our faith journey through Lent is a reminder that God's son, born of a virgin; living a human life; sent to teach us and prepare us for his death but also for His resurrection is the ultimate gift of love. I wish you all a Happy and Blessed Easter.

*Christ is risen; He is risen indeed.
Pam*

Readings and Services for this MONTH

Here are the Sunday Service details, and the readings which you may enjoy at home if you are unable to join a church service this month.

Date	Service	Readings
2 nd April Palm Sunday	Holy Communion 10.30am	Dramatised Passion
Tuesday 4 th April	Tea Service 2.30pm Passover meal 6.30pm	TBA
Thursday 6 th April Maundy Thursday	Footwashing 6.30pm followed by Vigil	John 13 1-17, 31b-35 Gospel of the Watch Matthew 26 30-end
Friday 7 th April Good Friday	Tenebrae 6.30pm	TBA
9 th April Easter Day	Holy Communion 10.30am	Acts 10 34-43 Colossians 3 1-4 John 20 1-18
16 th April 2 nd Sunday of Easter	Holy Communion 10.30am	(Psalm 16) 1 Peter 1 3-9 John 20 19-end
23 rd April 3 rd Sunday of Easter St. George's Day	Holy Communion 10.30am	(Zephaniah 3 14-end) 1 Peter 1 17-23 Luke 24 13- 35
30 th April 4 th Sunday of Easter Group Service	Holy Communion 10.30am	Acts 2 42-end (Psalm 23) John 10 1-10

QUOTE: When praying. don't give God instructions
- just report for duty. - Anon

Our Local and Church COMMUNITY

APCM 2023

**The APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) this year
will be held on
Sunday, 23rd April following the 10:30am Service.**

All members of the Electoral Roll are invited to attend the APCM,
when we appoint Church Wardens, Assistant Wardens,
Sidespeople and PCC Members.

We hope you will be able to join us.



Rea Valley
foodbank

**Caring and sharing
within the community**

The support of Shrewsbury Food Bank Plus enables us to help the many households where budgets are under huge pressure. We will bridge the gap until your circumstances improve by providing a weekly parcel of nutritionally balanced food, along with other essential household items.

You do need a referral but just call Reverend Greg Smith 07902 794653
Or Reverend Richard Lonsdale 07922 830488

A referral ensures that your parcel will meet the needs of you and your family and take into account any dietary requirements.
You will be warmly welcomed by our team when you come to your collection point.

Holy Trinity Church, Minsterley Tuesdays 10am-12.00
St George's Church, Pontesbury Thursdays 10am-12.00

We are in need of donations of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Financial donations are also welcome, enabling us to buy essential items :
Here are the account details:

The Rea Valley Foodbank
51-61-06
76841804

The reference is: Donor

If you would like more information
then please email
support@reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk

Another Saturday BIG BREAKFAST in Church on 22nd April 2023 9.30—11am

Tickets £10 per breakfast from Marianne McCall 07944 333830
or Mary Worrall 01743 791069



OASIS *FREE lunch & companionship for anyone living in Pontesbury, Minsterley and surrounding villages, who has been recently bereaved...
...on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays every month, 12pm - 1.30pm
Minsterley Methodist Chapel, Horsebridge Rd, Minsterley.
Transport is Available—Friends & Family are Welcome too.*

Contact Heather Ryder for more information, at
ryder928@btinternet.com or 01743 790359

St. George's PARISH VISITORS Would you, or someone you know, appreciate some help or a phone call? Maybe you're feeling lonely, isolated, in need of support and friendship?
*St. George's Church has a team of friendly people who would love to **phone** or **visit** you - **if we can help, we will !***
Call in confidence: Phone **Marion Elliott 01743 792256**

St. George's Prayer Chain is a small group of people who believe that prayer can make a difference. Each person within the group offers daily prayer for anyone who asks for prayer.

If you yourself or someone you know needs special prayer for any reason, please contact

Rev. Shirley Small 01743 791885.

All information given is given in confidence.
A name is enough if that is all you wish to give.

Looking at GOD

A Cross Attitude

In this Easter season, how does Philippians 2 help us to understand more about the cross?

Paul explains what Jesus did in this way: *'He did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage... And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross!'*

Jesus' example (v6-8)

Paul reminds us that Jesus, although He was fully God from eternity, entered our world as a man to take on a life of service. *'He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.'* He completely surrendered Himself, by identifying with all the weakness, problems, and frailties of human life. This took Him to the cross, where He rescued us from the power of sin and death, so that we might know God's eternal life.

Our Response (v3-5)

Paul says that our relationships should reflect the same attitude as Jesus: *'Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.'* We should look out for the needs of others before our own. This will transform our relationships at home and church. How practically can we develop a *cross attitude*?

God's Purpose (v9-11)

The Resurrection demonstrates how God has exalted Jesus in triumph: *'Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name'* (v9). Our willingness to serve, like Jesus, will be rewarded by God, especially when we feel used or exploited.

'This is our God, The Servant King, He calls us now to follow Him, To bring our lives as a daily offering, Of worship to The Servant King' (Graham Kendrick)

Canon Paul Hardingham continues a series on the spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and deepen our faith.



Spiritual Practices: Confession

This month we are looking at the practice of *confession*. *'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.'* (1 John 1:9). Confession enables us to enter fully

into God's grace, as we are assured of forgiveness for our sin and shame.

It is the death and resurrection of Jesus that makes this a reality. On the cross he bore our sin in himself to put us right with God: *'God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.'* (2 Cor. 5:21).

In *'Celebration of Discipline'*, Richard Foster describes three aspects of confession:

Be Specific: It's easy to say, *'God, please forgive me because I sinned today,'* rather than being specific, *'God, I spoke angrily today... please forgive me.'*

Be Sorrowful: Confession is not primarily about feelings about sin, but having a deep regret at having offended the Father's heart.

Be Determined to Avoid Sin: Confession gives us a yearning for a holy life and avoiding sin. It is the *will* to be delivered from sin that we seek. This is a gift, as it can only be done in God's strength, not ours.

Some practical tips: Make confession part of our regular prayer time, using the pattern ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication).

Reflect on what you need to confess, asking God to speak into the situation and then pray with a trusted friend.

Write down those things that are making you feel guilty, pray and then tear the paper up into pieces. This is a physical reminder of the sin being taken away.

'At the heart of God is the desire to give and to forgive.' (Richard Foster)

The doctor and the ill person

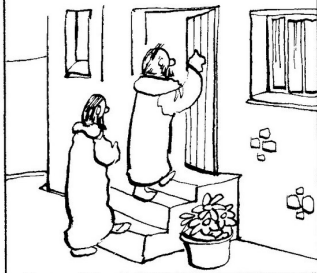


JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ON ONE OCCASION JESUS CALLED MATTHEW - A TAX COLLECTOR TO BE HIS FOLLOWER.

JESUS EVEN WENT TO MATTHEW'S HOME.



THIS SET PEOPLE'S TONGUES WAGGING. THEY THOUGHT JESUS WAS LETTING THE SIDE DOWN!

BUT JESUS EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO TALK TO EVERYONE!

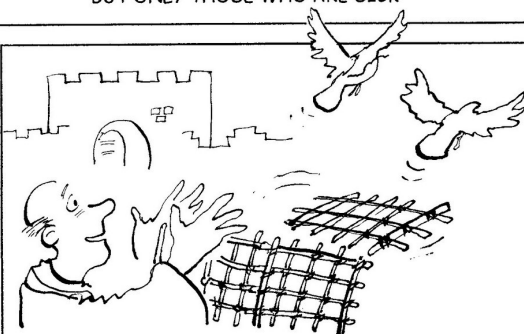


"PEOPLE WHO ARE WELL DO NOT NEED A DOCTOR"



"BUT ONLY THOSE WHO ARE SICK"

"IT IS KINDNESS THAT GOD WANTS"



"NOT ANIMAL SACRIFICES!" see Matthew Ch. 9 v.9-13

Reflecting faith – Easter Flowers

Written by The Revd Dr Jo White

Many types of flowers are used in churches, but during Easter, there is one that is especially loved: the Easter Lily. It is a tall, stately flower topped by large, graceful, white trumpet-shaped blooms.

While commercial bulb production of Easter lilies only began in the 19th century, Easter lilies make many appearances in both the Old and New Testaments, emphasising the flower's importance to Christianity. King Solomon spoke of them, and Christ referenced them, too.

These strikingly beautiful flowers are highly perfumed, with the central stamens covered in bright yellow or orange pollen. Unfortunately, the pollen can be a hazard, as it can permanently stain cloth due to chemicals it contains! For this reason, good florists and especially church flower arrangers will remove all the stamens before bringing them anywhere near church fabrics, or near to where ministers wearing white might brush against them.

It's thought that Easter lilies came to symbolise Christ because they embody purity - the trumpet-shaped blooms recall the horns that heralded the resurrection of Christ. This is also why lilies are identified with the Virgin Mary, and in artworks depicting the Annunciation to the Virgin they are often found in the angel Gabriel's hand.

The second reason that Easter lilies represent Christ is because of their life cycle. Each one grows from a bulb that for several years has been lying quietly beneath the earth, before growing tall and stately, and blossoming into magnificent flowers. What a picture of Jesus' life and resurrection!

This month

Have a look around the church over Easter. Daffodils and Easter lilies are often displayed, because they are the first flowers of spring, when Nature is being reborn. Their life after the death of winter reminds us of the Resurrection. For we cannot imagine the death and the passion of Christ without having in mind the empty tomb, radiating hope. Christ's death has no meaning without His Resurrection.



Surveying the Cross by Lester Amann

In England in the 1600s, singing in church was confined to simple melodies attached to the words of the psalms. Each line would be sung in turn by a precentor, and the congregation would follow. This was a slow, stilted and rather uninspiring process!

When Isaac Watts was 15 years old, he complained to his father that singing in church was nothing but tuneless dirges. Watt's father, a church deacon, challenged his son that if he could do better with the worship he could go ahead and try.

Watts rose to the task in a big way: during his lifetime he wrote over 600 hymns! And from that time, countless poets and composers have followed his example, and enhanced the way we worship God.

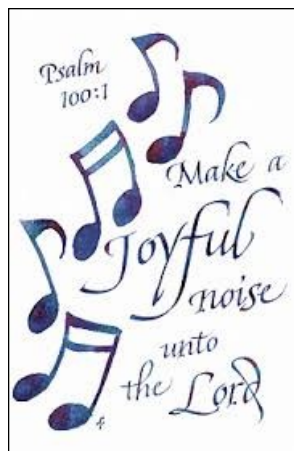
Many churches will sing one of Watts' hymns this Easter: *When I survey the wondrous cross*.

It is written as though Watts is standing in front of the cross, gazing at the crucified Jesus, and taking stock of what this all means to him.

Incredibly, Watts describes the Roman device for capital punishment as a '*wondrous cross*' and views this as an amazing scene of God's love. The cross was indeed a sight of horror, but it was also one of love where Jesus died for our sins.

As Paul put it: "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."
Galatians 6:14

Watts realises that anything he has of value pales into insignificance when considering the magnitude of Jesus coming from the glorious realms of heaven to live for a while on earth. As Watts looks at his Saviour dying in agonising pain, he knows there is no place for self-esteem. Jesus sacrificed Himself for us, securing our salvation and it is only about Him we should boast.



Watts uses an imagery of the starkness of the crucifixion with 'sorrow' and 'love'. It was sorrow for our sin that took Jesus to the cross; it was not the nails that held Him there, but His love for us.

The final verse is about gratitude and commitment. What can we give to Jesus as a 'thank you'? How can we repay Him? Even if we could give the whole world as a gift to Jesus it would be inadequate — a 'present far too small'.

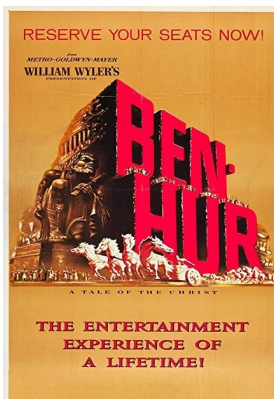
Our only proper gift can be to offer Him our own 'soul, our life and our all'.

The story behind the story of Ben Hur

(Luke 24:1-12)

There is a story to be told of the writing of *Ben Hur*, the book that became the 1959 block-buster film featuring Charlton Heston.

It was written in 1880 by Lew Wallace, an American lawyer, Union general during the Civil War, and then governor of the New Mexico Territory. (His statue still stands today on Washington's Capitol Hill).



Wallace had told his wife that he intended to examine the New Testament, and then write a book that would explode what he called "the myth of Christ's resurrection". Wisely, his Christian wife did not argue with him, but simply prayed.

The months passed, and Wallace read and reread the New Testament, and wrote and rewrote his draft chapters. Finally, he confided to his wife that he could not refute the resurrection of Christ, and that therefore his book would not be written.

Wallace's wife disagreed. She persuaded him to write his book, but from a new and different standpoint altogether. '*Ben Hur- a tale of the Christ*' was the result. It is the story of a high-born Jewish man who is taken prisoner by the Romans, who encounters Jesus, and whose life is gradually transformed. Oh, and there is a battle at sea and a chariot race in the story as well!

In the past 143 years since it was written, '*Ben Hur- a tale of the Christ*' has never been out of print.

Looking at the CHURCH Worldwide

Ukraine: church leaders targeted by Russian forces

Church leaders in Ukraine are being singled out for persecution by Russian forces in occupied areas. Some pastors have been arrested, interrogated, tortured, and even expelled from their towns by the Russian military and their supporters.

Occupying forces have confiscated church buildings and Christians have received harsher treatment at Russian military checkpoints, say partners of Release International, which serves persecuted Christians around the world.

According to reports, Russian forces broke into a Baptist place of worship in occupied Berdyansk, in Zaporizhzhia. After checking the identity of everyone present, they searched the church and sealed it. The next day they seized another Baptist church nearby.

Later that month, according to Forum 18, Russian forces seized a priest of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in occupied Kherson.

In the following account, names have been changed to protect the individuals:

Before the war Pastor Ivan led a growing congregation of more than 200 people in a town in the Kharkiv region. He also supported a thriving network of five evangelical churches in the area.

Last spring when the Russian military were poised to take the town many fled, including families with young children. Only some elderly people remained. Pastor Ivan and his wife Viktoria stayed behind too.

They felt called by God to serve the elderly and vulnerable in their occupied town. So, they did what they could to provide those who remained with food, prayer, and comfort from the Bible.

But the Russian forces came to Pastor Ivan's home to arrest him. They threw him into prison and tortured him, accusing him of being an American spy. They are suspicious that evangelical pastors are agents of the West.

Enduring their beatings, Pastor Ivan tried to talk about God with them. And when he was stuck in a tiny cell with eight other prisoners, he prayed for them.

Two days later the Russian soldiers interrogated him again and

beat him so badly he thought he would die.

“Other prisoners tried to help me and called for help. The Russians sent me to a hospital, which I believe was divine grace and intervention. I believe God saved my life through the Ukrainian doctors who helped me.”

After two weeks, Pastor Ivan was allowed home where he recovered slowly. And, as the Russians tightened their grip, Pastor Ivan and Viktoria left for Poland. As soon as their town was liberated by Ukrainian forces, they returned.

Says Release International CEO Paul Robinson: “Pastor Ivan is again leading a congregation of more than 300 people, many of whom are new to church. God is using him and others like him to share the gospel and to help people in practical ways in the liberated areas of eastern Ukraine.”

Release International has launched an appeal to help Christians in Ukraine and around the world who are suffering oppression for their faith.

If you would like to help, please go to:

<https://releaseinternational.org>

14 conversations to have with your neighbours at a King's Coronation street party

We have all known that awkward moment at a party, when your conversation with a stranger suddenly dries up. But if you are going to one of the King's Coronation street parties next month, you don't need to worry.

An information pack called the Coronation Big Lunch 'conversation menu' has been published, offering 14 handy ideas for keeping the conversational ball rolling. The ideas range from asking your neighbours whether they have ever met a member of the Royal Family, to what is their favourite way to spend a bank holiday. The 'menu' even includes a couple of jokes you can tell, if you get really desperate.

More than a million people, and more than 7,000 street parties and community events, have so far signed up to the Coronation Big Lunch initiative.

Buckingham Palace is hoping the celebration will bring neighbours together across the country. Certainly, chatting with our neighbours is no longer common. One poll from 2019 found that half of us had not chatted over the garden fence or outside our homes in at least a month, while almost one in five of us have never spoken to our neighbours at all.

The Coronation Big Lunch will take place on Sunday, 7th May, the day after the King and the Queen Consort are crowned at Westminster Abbey.

More than 17.2 million people took part in Big Lunch events last June, for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.



From the Dragon's Den

Look—he's grown up!

Sadly, we had to cancel a Little Dragon's session recently due to heating problems in church. So, on the following week, when all was warm and comfortable once more, we had a full house and lots of enthusiasm shown by our little people, as they had already missed a week for the half-term break.

Always popular, is the small cooker, where we often see lots of activity as both the 'hob' and 'oven' are well used. Never have so many eggs and burgers been cooked by so many little people. Another really popular activity is seen at the playdough table. We make our own playdough, having an excellent recipe, and this term's bright green dough (made by grand-daughter, Zarrin) is extremely popular. The concentration shown by LDs involved in this activity is amazing. Rolling out the dough and cutting into the desired shapes involves highly-developed skills of concentration, it would seem.

Following the development of these skills - who knows - perhaps, one day, we will see one of our little people taking part in Master Chef!

Joy to everyone, from Val and from we three:



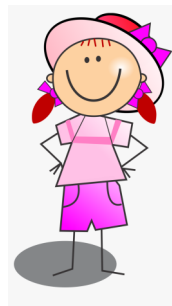
George,



Uncle Sam



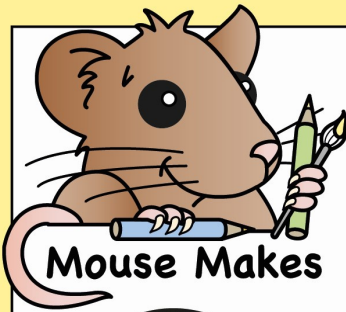
& Idris



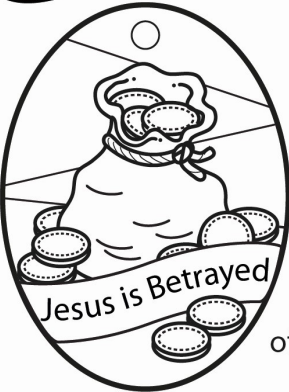
Happy Birthday, Cadbury Crème Egg

Cadbury Crème Eggs celebrate their 60th birthday this Spring. They have a lot to celebrate: the Creme Egg is the best-selling confectionery item between New Year's Day and Easter in the UK, with annual sales of more than 200 million eggs, worth about £55 million.

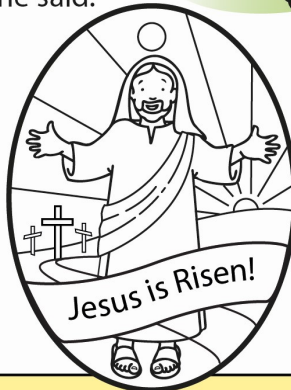
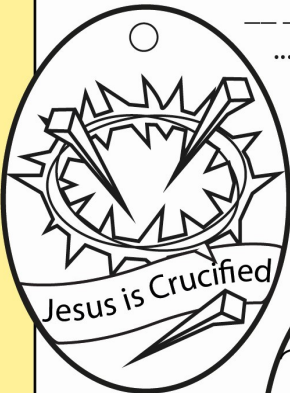
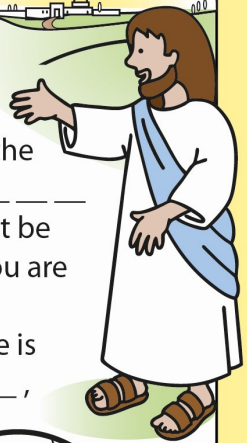
Cadbury Crème Eggs were first created by the British chocolatier Fry's in 1963, before being renamed by Cadbury in 1971



HE IS RISEN!
Read the story of
The Resurrection in
Matthew 28:1-20



An _____
of the Lord came down from
_____ and going to the
_____ rolled back the _____
... the _____ said, "Do not be
_____, for I know you are
looking for Jesus who was
_____, He is
not here; he has _____,
just as he said."



Glue this page onto
card. Cut out the
ovals then colour in.
Punch a hole at the
top and hang up
for Easter

Looking at the wider COMMUNITY

When should people not be allowed to strike?

The Government's plans to curb strike actions by workers in essential services go too far. So says the Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich, the Rt Revd Martin Seeley.

Speaking recently in the House of Lords during the debate on Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill, he said: "For the good functioning of society, it is essential that all workers have a legitimate and peaceful means to seek redress against pay and conditions that leave them unable to make ends meet.

"Surely this applies even more to those who provide essential service in the public sector, where discussions about fair remuneration can be dismissed, often by the language of limiting government expenditure."

Bishop Seely accepted that negotiations should be conducted in good faith by both sides, but expressed concern that in the current disputes, each side is accusing the other of intransigence.



Among their demands
were bourbon biscuits,
double fees for
weddings, and Sundays
off ...

The Ven John Barton visited York Minster last Good Friday ...



*“All you who pass
by....”*

For Good Friday last year, the morning service at York Minster was offered online for everyone to see, anywhere in the world. It's the most solemn day

of the year. Hymns, readings, prayers: all focussed on Christ's death and its benefits for humanity, for all time.

A hundred or so people were in the congregation, alongside choir and clergy. Towards the end, the Archbishop of York carried a large replica cross from the back of the cathedral to a stand at the front. People were invited to come forward in silence, to venerate the cross, in the way they chose. Many came and knelt, or stood to pray, or touch the wood in memory of Christ's suffering and death.

While this was going on, the entrance doors remained open, and scores of visitors wandered round that great building. A number stopped briefly to look at what was going on; some appeared bemused. One man lifted his video camera for a few seconds to record a snapshot of what was happening, then moved on. A teenager ran from one side of the Minster to the other and then disappeared out of sight.

It was an extraordinary mixture of reverence and irreverence. Should the doors have been closed while the service was taking place? Then one remembered this was a commemoration of the actual Crucifixion, which was also witnessed by a cross-section of the human race. A handful of disciples, mainly women, were nearby; others perhaps observing from a distance. Curious onlookers stared. Some just passed by. Telling verses from the Old Testament are often recalled on Good Friday:

“Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look around and see. Is any suffering like my suffering that was inflicted on me, that the Lord brought on me in the day of his fierce anger?”

This was the day when Christ pronounced absolution on us for our ignorance, saying “Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are doing”. When we hear this, we feel both ashamed and revived, for we know this is what it cost Him to allow us another go at living as we should.

Nigel Beeton writes: 'One of the most beautiful stories in the Bible is found in John 20 and verses 14 – 16. A distraught Mary Magdalene is standing outside a tomb, and she is convinced that some ne'er do wells have stolen the body of her beloved Master, Jesus, for reasons which she can't begin to fathom. There's a gardener nearby, and he has the audacity to ask her why she's so upset...'

Outside an Empty Tomb

"Oh woman, why this weeping?
Oh woman, dry your tears!
Oh woman, cease your weeping
And lay aside your fears!"

"They've borne away my Master!
And laid Him who knows where;
His tomb is standing empty,
And He's no longer there."

"Oh Sir, please will you tell me
Where you have laid Him now?
For you can surely tell me
What they have done, and how;
Yes how may I now find Him
And for His body care?
For I will truly care for Him
If you'll but show me where?"

He said to her, "My Mary!"
She turned and met His eye
She cried with joy, "My Master!"
For she at last knew why
The tomb behind was empty
And why no body lay –
Her Master Christ is Risen
Upon this Easter Day!



Looking at you

Remembering Corrie ten Boom

It was 40 years ago, on 15th April 1983, that Corrie ten Boom, a Dutch writer, watchmaker, and Holocaust survivor, died. She wrote about her experiences in Christian books that became best-sellers.

Corrie's family were Calvinist Christians in the Dutch Reformed Church, and served their neighbourhood by offering shelter, food and money to the needy. They believed the Jews were precious to God and that all people were created equal. During the Second World War, she – and the rest of her family – helped many Jews and others to escape from the Nazis at great risk to themselves. She later received the rare accolade from Israel of being named Righteous Among the Nations.

The Dutch Resistance helped them to build a secret room in their house behind Corrie's bedroom, which became known as The Hiding Place – later the title of her most famous book. The room held six people, had its own ventilation and an alert buzzer, and was astonishingly successful. It is estimated that about 800 Jews in all were saved through Corrie's efforts, which included obtaining at least 100 false ration cards.

Eventually an informer gave them away, and the family were arrested in February 1944 – though not the six people in the Hiding Place at the time. After months in prison, Corrie and her sister Betsie were sent to Ravensbrück concentration camp in September 1944, where they continued to worship and share the message of forgiveness, hope, love, and salvation. Betsie died in the December, but Corrie was released later that same month, apparently because of a 'clerical error'. A week later all the women in her age group were sent to the gas chambers.



After she was set free, Corrie travelled the world for 33 years, from 1944 to 1977, speaking in 64 countries. She suffered three severe strokes from August 1978 and died on her 91st birthday.

First flight over Everest

It was 90 years ago, on 3rd April 1933, that the first flight over Mount Everest took place. British pilots the Marquis of Clydesdale and Donald McIntyre flew two biplanes over the summit.

The two Scots were financed by the striking and rather eccentric Lady Houston, who started life as a chorus girl but through judicious liaisons and marriages became one of the richest women in England - and one of the most generous, using much of her money for philanthropic projects, especially in the area of aviation.

The flight was organised by Major L V Stewart Blacker, who had retired from the Royal Flying Corps and was working as an arms manufacturer. He convinced the Royal Geographical Society it would be scientifically useful.

The three-hour excursion certainly provided valuable information concerning pilots at high altitude. Lord Clydesdale flew a modified Westland PV-3 biplane, accompanied by Blacker. Following them in a Westland PV-6 were McIntyre and photographer S R Bonnett. Both planes had open cabins.

At one point, Bonnett felt faint and found a fracture in his oxygen line, which he was able to repair without losing consciousness. In high winds, both planes soared a hundred feet over the summit.

Lord Clydesdale was awarded the Air Force Cross for his leadership of the expedition, and the footage shot by Bonnett was used to create the Academy Award-winning documentary *Wings Over Everest*, now available on YouTube.

The Marquis's grandson repeated the flight in 2013 to celebrate its 80th anniversary. But commercial aircraft are now banned from flying over Everest.

The two pilots had to make a second flight (against orders) to obtain the promised photographs - but those pictures were used 20 years later to help guide climbers Hillary and Tenzing to the summit.

You can do this at home, leading up to Easter!

Why not put a small cross in your front window as Lent draws to a close, and Easter Week approaches? You can use a Palm cross or a wooden one. A cross is a visible reminder of the death of Jesus, and the Christian meaning of Easter and Resurrection.





From the Dean of Hereford, Rev'd Canon Sarah Brown
On choosing a story

I always find Easter difficult to write about, which seems absurd because it is the most important and exciting time of the Christian year. The problem is that Easter- the Resurrection of Jesus- is massive and world-changing, but only if it is seen in the light of the human condition, life, suffering, and death. Without the context, it looks like a weird story of a dead god bounding back to life and scaring the big bad Romans and wicked religious people- Boo! It's like something you might read in a book of myths and legends. And then there is the tricky business of the Christian claim that it is neither the stuff of myth nor legend because Jesus is still alive and active in billions of lives today. If you were creating a global religion from scratch you wouldn't start with all this. It's far too complicated.

But every day, I and countless others stake all that we are and will be on Easter and the person at its heart. We may be fools or we may be right. No priest or scientist, no philosopher or politician can prove it one way or another this side of the grave. And so we just have to choose which story we prefer to live by. Cue considerable decanal pinching from Bob Hartman, but it boils down to this: The first story says: *A very long time ago, there was a series of accidents. Energy and matter and molecules collided and somehow, you are here today. By accident. Your fate is random and only fleetingly important to you and a few loved ones*

The second story says: *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And you are here, not by accident, but because he designed you and loves you and wants to be in a relationship with you.*

The first story goes on: *The fit live, the weak die, the vocal and the strong dominate. Survival is the game. Look out for number one.*

The second story goes: *Blessed are the meek, the poor and the peacemakers. Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends.*

The first story concludes: *You die. You decay. The end.*

But the second story doesn't have an end. *For Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die"*

In church, we celebrate that second story daily, especially over Holy Week and Easter. It is your story and mine. Come and see...



Christmas is only eight months away – time to think about Christmas cards. We are hoping to produce a Church Christmas card(s). probably using photos of the church – inside and outside – which have been taken by YOU!

Details coming. **WATCH this SPACE !**

Deanery of Pontesbury

DEANERY NEWS

Rural Dean: **The Revd Bill Rowell**

telephone: 01938 552064 • email: wkrowell@btinternet.com

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

from Rev Richard Lonsdale

Curate in the Pontesbury & Stiperstones Benefice

Well, it snowed again, in spite of the rain and thaw that was setting in the night before and although I had guessed that this had happened before I got out of bed, by the bright white light that was creeping in through the cracks in my curtains.

So I peek through the curtains to see snow everywhere, branches and hedges covered, yesterday's footprints filled in and that child-like enthusiasm fills up my heart again from somewhere. Snow!!

Soon the text messages started arriving; school was closed! Going into the children's rooms you can see their faces tight with sleep but also tension and expectation - will there be a "snow day"?? It's funny isn't it, how normally one has to crank the kids out of bed, but on days like this they spring out so quickly, rushing around for dressing gowns and racing down for breakfast.

Now we can see snow as a dangerous nuisance and of course it can be, but hopefully you all felt that childlike spark of joy and excitement even if only for a moment, when you first opened the curtains. Modern life has a tendency to bring us down, to focus on outcomes and actions; actions and indicators; spreadsheets and grey computer screens.

We spend so much of our time in a place of **disenchantment**, so much so that we don't even notice it half the time, but then occasionally events happen which break through - Christmas and Easter are two obvious ones although they are baked into the calendar to some extent, but snow days! Rare and delightful, everything is turned on its head just for a short while - no need to go to work or school (although the internet's creeping tentacles increasingly make that a challenge), get out and play, delight in each other and the joys of simple hot soup, the pleasure of coming in from the cold with streaming faces to the warmth of indoors, the enjoyment and satisfaction of watching the birds nibble at the food you have put out for them.

"All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, so thank the Lord, thank the Lord, for all his love".

By the time you read this the snow will probably have gone, but I'd encourage you to take time to find moments of enchantment in each day, to actively reject the *disenchantment* that seems to be all too prevalent and instead allow God's love, which can be seen around us still, to touch us, to come up to church over Holy Week and the Easter celebrations and remind ourselves of the truth of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection and of the real life delight and re-enchantment that flows out from that event; all the way to the here and now in rural Shropshire. Amen.

Our Stiperstones Benefice COMMUNITY

Bits & pieces from Greg:

The Gathering

The monthly service of praise and worship at Marton Village Hall for the whole deanery takes place on the last Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm (refreshments served from 7). All welcome.

Passover

There will be a supper in remembrance of the Passover at St George's on **Tuesday April 4th at 6.30 pm**. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Places can be reserved by emailing Greg at rectorpontstip@gmail.com or writing your name on a list at the back of either St George's or HolyTrinity Minsterley. There will also be a compline service at Snailbeach that evening.

Lent Courses

The last of these occasions will be—

at 12noon on April 5th in St. George's;

at 7pm (Agape Supper) on 5th April led by Rev Bill Rowell
(details 01938 552064);

on 3rd April at 3pm in Westbury;

at 7.30pm on 3rd April in Ford.

Your PUZZLES for April

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Mt 21:1-11, Mk 11:1-11, Lk 19:28-38, Jn 12:12-19

Thousands of people went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast each year. This year Jesus and his friends went too.

Two miles outside Jerusalem
Jesus said to two of his friends



Go into that village and bring
back the donkey you find there.

If anyone asks, say
'The Lord needs it.'



So off they went ...

and they found it
as Jesus had said.



Why are you
taking our donkey?

The Lord needs it.



That's alright then

They brought it back to
Jesus, and made a saddle
from a cloak.



They spread more cloaks
on the road to make it a
way fit for a king.



Others cut palm branches and
waved them.

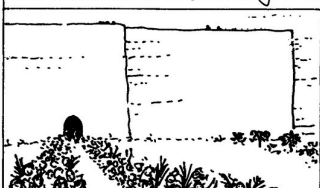


They shouted the traditional
welcome to the Passover feast

God bless the one
who comes in the
name of the Lord!



As they got closer to
Jerusalem the crowd grew.



Everyone shouted to
welcome Jesus as king



The teachers of the
laws were angry



Teacher, you should stop
them calling you 'king'.

But Jesus replied



What they say is so
true that even if I made them
stop, the stones would shout!

j	a	n	y	o	n	e	z	p	v	x	h
w	e	l	c	o	m	e	t	a	c	k	z
b	b	r	a	n	c	h	e	s	r	f	m
y	l	j	u	m	b	g	d	s	o	f	i
n	e	e	d	s	a	n	f	o	w	k	l
t	n	o	s	l	a	f	r	v	d	i	e
f	g	y	l	s	c	l	i	e	r	n	s
e	h	i	u	n	a	m	e	r	o	g	t
a	v	o	l	o	r	d	n	m	a	w	o
s	h	o	u	t	s	i	d	e	d	m	n
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c	l	o	a	k	d	o	n	k	e	y	s

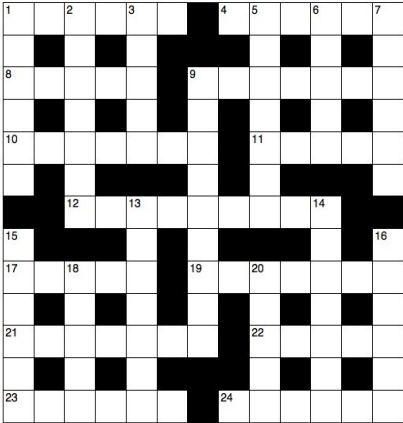
Can you find all 24 words (below), which are from the Bible Bite story, in the grid (above)?

king
 bless
 name
 thousands
 Passover
 village
 needs
 miles

anyone
 Jerusalem
 saddle
 donkey
 teachers
 friends
 Lord
 outside

feast
 stones
 cloak
 road
 branches
 God
 crowd
 welcome

... and here's a Crossword Puzzle too—for you to print out



Crossword Clues & Answers for April

Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)

- 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3–4) (5)
19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)
21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)
23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
7 He reps (anag.) (6)
9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27)(7)
14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
15 The human mind or soul (6)
16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
20 Bared (anag.) (5)

DOWN: 1, Cliffs. 2, Scholar. 3, Issue. 5, Holy war. 6, Moist. 7, Sphere. 9, Deliverer. 13, Candace. 14, Deacons. 15, Psyche. 16, Stolen. 18, Dance. 20, Debar.

ACROSS: 1, Cosmic. 4, Thomas. 8, In his. 9, Deliah. 10, Falwell. 11, Water. 12, Recovered. 17, Sidon. 19, Radiant. 21, Centaur. 22, Broil. 23, Eleven. 24, Prison.

God in the SCIENCES

Written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, Church Engagement
Director at The Faraday Institute
for Science and Religion in Cambridge.

How Can a Christian be a Scientist?

I used to ask this question as a student. I wondered, who could make it in the world of science and still hold onto their faith? Soon enough I met a good number of successful scientists who were sincere Christians, some of whom were at my own university. So, what do people like this make of the opportunities and challenges that a life in science holds for a Christian?

Science is an exercise in observing and measuring things in the world, and coming up with general principles about the way things are. Exploring the world is a great thing to do to express our gratitude to the Creator. There is a sense of awe and wonder that comes when we expand our minds and our horizons by discovering things about the universe can feed into our worship.

Of course, there may be things in science that some Christians don't want to get involved in because of what they believe. But there should also be ethical issues that make them want to get stuck into new research that will help people, protect creation, or tackle injustices. I am glad to see that many senior scientists do their best to find appropriate ways to make their own faith visible, so that people like my younger self can find role models and mentors.

Another helpful thing about science is that although our beliefs may at times affect what we notice about the world and how we interpret our data, they shouldn't affect the outcome of experiments themselves. This means that a scientist can be respected by her colleagues for doing good work, regardless of what she believes and what her colleagues think of that worldview.

In my work at [The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion](#), and my involvement with [Christians in Science](#), I have the privilege of meeting a great number of scientists who are also Christians. One of the most famous living biologists is Francis Collins, who was Director of the project to decode the whole of human DNA. He wrote that it is "possible for the scientist-believer to be intellectually fulfilled and spiritually alive, both worshipping God and using the tools of science to uncover some of the awesome mysteries of His creation." (Francis Collins, [The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief](#) (Simon and Schuster, 2007))

God in the ARTS

Michael Burgess continues his look at great works of Christian art.

'He gave us eyes to see them': Poussin's 'The Funeral of Phocion.'

In the 17th century the name Arcadia evoked an earthly paradise that was celebrated in art and literature as an idyllic place of peace and harmony where humanity and nature were at one. To live in such beautiful surroundings was to find heaven on earth. We often have that feeling when we are out in the countryside amid the hills and woods, the valleys and lakes. The sun shines benevolently down on the scene, and we feel nothing can destroy that happiness and sense of unity we have with creation around us.

That is the mood shown to us when we first look at this month's painting, 'The Funeral of Phocion.' It is by the Baroque artist, Nicholas Poussin, who was born in France but spent most of his working life in Rome, where he died in 1665. In the distance are friendly hills, and then closer at hand we see the trees and bushes, a winding river, the shepherd and his sheep, a couple walking and talking, and the farmer and his cart. There are also signs of civilization – it is the city of Athens with its temple and buildings, a place where harmony and reason rule. Poussin presents us with a calm, ordered landscape.

But in the foreground, we see something that jolts us out of this reverie. Two slaves carry off a body for burial. It is Phocion, an Athenian general. He was known as 'Phocion the good,' admired for his honesty and integrity and for his simple way of life. In the 4th century BC Phocion argued for peace when the city around clamoured for war with Macedon. His enemies won the day and they intrigued to have him condemned. As a traitor, Phocion was denied a burial in Athens, and so his body is being taken outside the city.

The world of civilization and the world of nature seem oblivious to this tragedy of a moral life cut down by others. In this month of Eastertide we can think of a similar scene of nature and civilization. The garden of Joseph of Arimathea where a body is brought for burial – someone, who like Phocion, stood out for goodness and peace, but who fell victim to the forces of hatred and jealousy within the city walls of Jerusalem.

Poussin painted a second canvas where the ashes of Phocion are

returned to his grieving widow – a sad end to a good life with no hint of hope for a better future. In this season we rejoice in a different end to the story of Jesus. On Good Friday His body is laid to rest in a tomb. Two days later the Lord of Easter walks again in that garden to tell a grieving Mary Magdalene that there is hope for her future. There is the promise of transformation – a new creation and a new world where eternal life is triumphant. In such a world, the human heart within, the dwelling places of people and the countryside around can never be the same again. The Easter Alleluia rings out to embrace them all.



Have a drink. Have two drinks!

Drinking is really good for you. Drinking water, that is. Recent research has found that people who drink a good amount of water are less likely to develop chronic conditions, or to show signs of advanced ageing.

The key seems to be in your serum sodium levels, which go up when your fluid intake goes down. Adults with high serum sodium levels are more likely to develop chronic illness, and also more likely to die younger.

"The results suggest that proper hydration may slow down ageing and prolong a disease-free life," said one scientist.

The study was published in a recent issue of the *eBioMedicine* journal. According to NHS England, people should have six to eight drinks a day, which can include water, lower-fat milks, tea and coffee.



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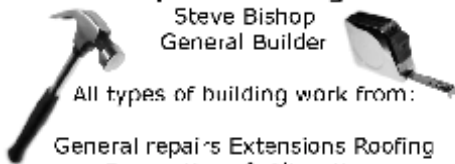
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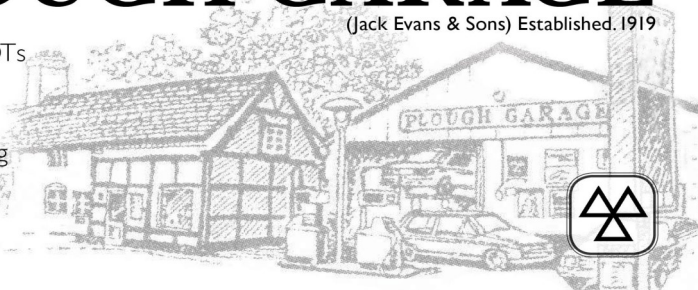
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