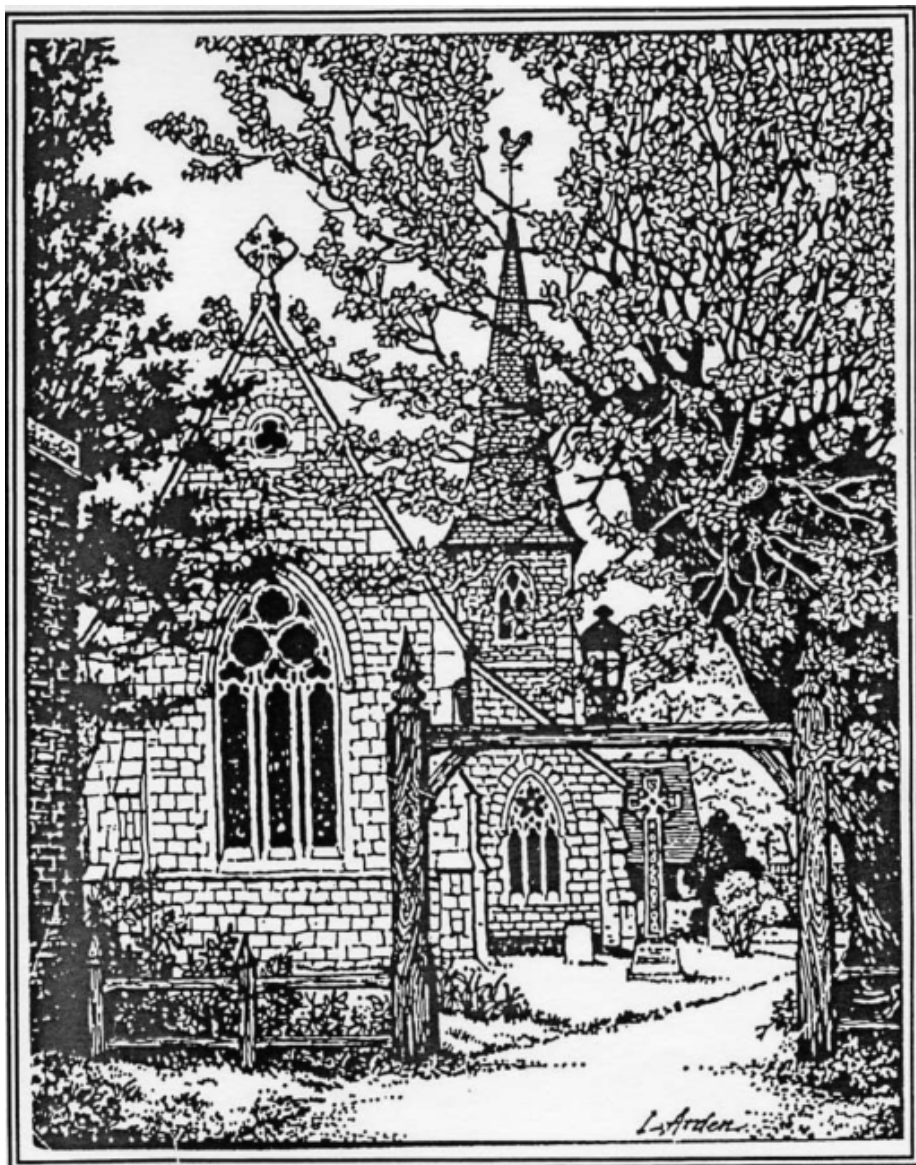


**The Parish Church of
*St. James, North Cray***

**50p
*April, 2022***

(Part of the Bexley Team Ministry)



St JAMES, NORTH CRAY PARISH STAFF

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Sacristan: Stephen Hills 020 8302 7236

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Magazine Editor: Steve Blake
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St James Sunday Service

9.30am Holy Communion

(All age service with Uniformed Organisations on second Sunday)

TEAM RECTOR'S LETTER APRIL 2022



For Christians, the events of Holy Week and Easter are times when we experience and reflect on a range of mixed emotions!

Palm Sunday, which this year falls on 10 April recalls the time when Jesus rode into the city of Jerusalem, cheered on by the crowds who saw in him a political leader who would free them from Roman oppression. People waved branches of palm trees – much as a modern crowd might wave football scarves when their team is winning, or the union jack flag when the Queen comes to town! Adulation and excitement were the key emotions of the crowd.

There is a more sombre mood for **Maundy Thursday**, which falls on Thursday 14 April this year. This recalls the time that Jesus shared a final meal with his friends – the Last Supper. On that occasion he showed the humility of his nature by washing the feet of his companions – a job usually reserved for the most insignificant servant. At that final meal, Jesus used the bread and wine as a visual reminder of his physical body, which was to be ‘given’ out of love for all humankind.

Good Friday is the day when the terrible events surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus are remembered.

They are summed up in the words of two verses from the old hymn *The Old Rugged Cross*, often sung at funerals.

*On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.*

*So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some day for a crown.*

In that old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,
A wondrous beauty I see,
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died,
To pardon and sanctify me.

And finally on **Easter Sunday** morning Christians join together in tiny chapels and churches and great Cathedrals to celebrate the joyful events of the very first Easter morning, when Jesus' friends discover that the tomb in which his body had been laid was empty. They learn that Jesus has conquered death and comes to us in a new and wonderful way. The power of death and the evil has been overcome for all time. We will sing the joyful hymns of Easter, as we join our voices for those wonderful words...

*Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death has won.*

Reverend Ren Harding (Team Rector)

The Vicarage, 6 Tile Kiln Lane, Joydens Wood, Bexley, DA5 2BB
01322-528923 renharding@hotmail.co.uk

For Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, let me sow pardon.
Where there is doubt, let me sow faith.
Where there is despair, let me give hope.
Where there is darkness, let me give light.
Where there is sadness, let me give joy.
O divine master, grant that I may
not try to be comforted, but to comfort;
not try to be understood, but to understand;
not try to be loved, but to love.
because it is in giving that we receive,
in forgiving that we are forgiven,
and in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Francis of Assisi (1182 – 1226)

SERVICES AND EVENTS FOR APRIL 2022

SUNDAY 3 April

9.30am Holy Communion

SUNDAY 10 April PALM SUNDAY

9.30am All Age Service for Palm Sunday
with leaders and young people from our Uniformed Organisations

HOLY WEEK

Monday 11 April 7pm Holy Week Compline at St John's Bexley
Tuesday 12 April 7pm Holy Week Compline at St John's Bexley
Wednesday 13 April 7pm Holy Week Compline at St John's Bexley
8pm Zoom Service for Holy Week
(*contact Team Rector for link*)

Thursday 14 April MAUNDY THURSDAY

7pm Bexley Team Ministry
Maundy Thursday Communion
with light meal at St Mary's Bexley

Friday 15 April GOOD FRIDAY

10am Good Friday Reflection
at St James North Cray

SUNDAY 17 April EASTER SUNDAY

9.30am Easter Day Holy Communion
3.00pm Forest Church for Easter

SUNDAY 24 April

9.30am Holy Communion

2pm St George's Day Parade at St John's Bexley
(Muster at Bexley Cricket Ground at 1.30pm)

Please contact the Team Rector or a member of the clergy team to be included on the emailing list or see our website for further information.

Also, do contact any of our clergy team if you are concerned, or if you would simply like a chat, or prayer.

Bexley Team Ministry

Lent Course 2022



Join us this Lent as we explore
'The Prayers of Jesus'

Our Lent course will be offered on Zoom and in-person,
and you are free to choose which is most convenient for you.

We will meet on **Zoom** on Wednesday evenings from
8pm-9.15pm, starting on the 9th March.

Course dates: 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th March, and 6th April.

We will also meet **in person** at St Mary's Church
on Thursday mornings from 10am-11.15am,
starting on the 10th March.

Course dates: 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st March, and 7th April.

All are welcome to join us as we journey together
towards Holy Week.

To let us know which course you are planning to attend, or if you have any queries,
contact Rev Matt on matthodder10@gmail.com - 07889873125

Or let any of the other Team Clergy know.

Praying for Ukraine

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued a pastoral letter to the clergy and people of the Church of England, calling on them to pray for peace in Ukraine.

They wrote: “This attack is an act of evil, imperilling as it does the relative peace and security that Europe has enjoyed for so long. The attack by one nation on a free, democratic country has rightly provoked outrage, sanctions, and condemnation.

“We lament with the people of Ukraine, and we pray for the innocent, the frightened and those who have lost loved ones, homes, and family.



News and Issues

Prayers across Europe for peace in Ukraine

The Bishop in Europe, Bishop Robert Innes, writes:

“Our little church in Kyiv are right at the centre of this crisis,” he explained. “Some of them have fled the city by car, others are still there. These are our people, our brothers and sisters, and of course we are very concerned for their wellbeing and safety.

“In the face of military action and aggression, we feel powerless. What can we do? One thing that we can all do is pray.”

“The situation in Ukraine is very deeply troubling. President Putin is leading a completely unjustified and aggressive war against Ukraine, a war which many ordinary Russians deeply deplore.

Leaders from many Christian churches, including the Ukrainian Orthodox (Russian Patriarchate) Church have condemned the invasion of Ukraine. Our hearts cry out for justice and peace. We are most especially concerned for the wellbeing of those in Ukraine who are directly affected by the war.

This includes particularly the members of our own congregation of Christ Church, Kyiv. The Churchwarden there, Christina, messaged us this morning saying: ‘Please pray for us as we are standing here for our land and for our roots. The battle for Kyiv has begun; it is fierce and intensive. Pray for us.’

In the face of military action, we can easily feel powerless and fearful. But one thing we can do is pray. We can pray in solidarity with those most affected. We can pray that God will yet overrule in the hearts and minds of those with power and authority. We can pray that the victims will be few and that the innocent will be protected. We can pray that peace will come through justice and not through the infliction of the will of a stronger party on a weaker.

How help can be given to someone in Ukraine

Ukraine is in crisis. Only God knows how the situation will unfold in the coming days and weeks. Meanwhile, there is a need for food and other basic humanitarian aid.

The following Christian charities are at work in the country, and would welcome your immediate support:

Barnabas Fund. <https://www.barnabasfund.org/gb/>

Christian Aid. <https://www.christianaid.org.uk>

Methodist Church UK. <https://www.allwecan.org.uk>

Operation Mobilisation <https://www.uk.om.org/Appeal/ukraine-in-crisis>

Samaritan's Purse <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk>

Transform Europe Network: <https://www.ten-uk.org>

World Vision <https://www.worldvision.org.uk>

12th April - International Day for Street Children

The International Day for Street Children, first launched on 12th April 2011, is a response to the desperate need of hundreds of millions of children world-wide who are forced to live or work on the streets.

The UN admits that although there are millions of such children, official figures are virtually non-existent. Tragically, these children are virtually invisible, living without rights and protection on some of the most dangerous streets in the world.

Record levels of inequality, violence, migration, war and natural disasters have caused the problem. The children run away to escape abusive, dysfunctional homes and end up on the streets after being displaced or trafficked.

Toybox is a Christian charity which has worked with street children, first in Latin America and now in Asia and Africa, for more than 25 years. "We want to help children marginalised and abused by those who should be protecting them," the charity says.

Toybox began out of one Christian couple's compassion for the children they saw suffering on the streets of Latin America. "Today, we continue to act, motivated by that same Christian faith, to see a world in which no child is forced to live or work on the streets."

If you would like to support Toybox, please go to:

<https://toybox.org.uk/support>

ST JAMES NORTH CRAY SAVE OUR SPIRE

The ancient parish church of St James, North Cray has been there as a focal point for the community through many lifetimes. The building stands through the seasons, and the years, as a reminder of the Church's commitment to God and His love for all people, whether they attend church services or not!

We want to ensure that this precious church building remains open for many years to come. To achieve this, we now need the help of our community!

We are facing a number of significant challenges with the church building, the most pressing of these is our lovely church spire. This is covered with traditional wooden shingles, and we need to replace these urgently.



If you value your parish church, and the part it plays in your community, please do consider making a donation to this work.

Help this beautiful church...Link to our new online giving page:

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/569e4fec-3e77-4d90-8a0a-94d0726a8974>

Use the QR code above.

Contact me for more information or look on our website



BEXLEY TEAM MINISTRY

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. .”

2 Corinthians 1:10-11 (NIV)

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Wash hands frequently with soap & water or alcohol-based hand rub. It has been suggested that instead of singing Happy Birthday to ensure we wash our hands for long enough - that we say the Lord's Prayer!

Avoid touching eyes, nose & mouth as this can transfer the virus.

Stay informed (but not obsessively so!) on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your own healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer. National & local authorities have the most up to date information for your area.

A CALL TO PRAYER

Wherever you are, and whatever your personal circumstances, we invite you to pause at midday each day, to join with your brothers and sisters across the Bexley Team Ministry to pray for our churches, our community, our nation and the world. We pray the prayer that unites all Christians, the Lord's Prayer. This is the Traditional version:-

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory; for ever and ever. Amen.”

You may wish to use this prayer written by Malcolm Duncan of Spring Harvest: -

“May you be given the gift of simple faith. When the world around you is full of uncertainty, may God remind you that you are not alone and you do not need to be dominated by fear. May you find peace amidst chaos from God's promises. Hold onto the God who holds you.”

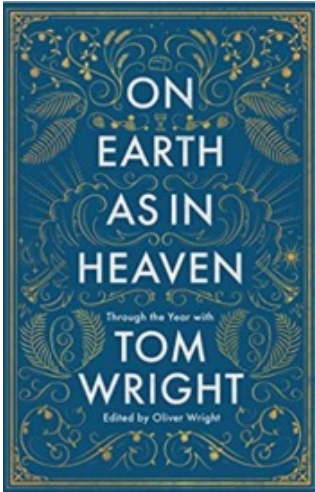


Book Mark



On Earth as in Heaven. By Tom Wright, SPCK, £19.99

Christians of all traditions have long regarded the writings of Tom Wright as a rich source of guidance for living faithfully in today's world.



His bestselling books, including *Simply Christian*, *Simply Jesus*, and *Surprised by Hope*, have encouraged millions worldwide.

The devotions begin on Easter Day, the first day of new creation, and then follow the seasons of the Christian year to end with a second Easter and the invitation to begin again.

Reflecting on the biblical themes of beauty, power, spirituality, justice, truth, freedom and love, these daily meditations will invigorate and sustain the reader.

The Easter Story. By Karen Williamson, illustrated by Marie Allen, Candle Books, £6.99

Here is a book for sharing with toddlers and young children, perfect for bedtimes leading up to Easter.



It is written as a continuous journey, from 'A noisy entry' where Jesus is walking to Jerusalem, 'A meal to remember' where Jesus ate with twelve special friends, through to Jesus appearing to His special friends and His ascension. The story is expanded to give a little more detail and to enable it to be read as a continuous story over a number of days, leading up to Easter.



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MEETINGS and Events 2022

Planning for The "Welcome to the Meadows"
Educational Day which was scheduled for
19th July 2020 is on hold.



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ALL IN THE MONTH OF APRIL

150 years ago, on 2nd April 1872 Samuel Morse died. This American artist and inventor helped develop commercial single-wire telegraph systems and co-developed Morse code.

125 years ago, on 3rd April 1897 Johannes Brahms, German composer, piano virtuoso and conductor, died.

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 the Royal Shakespeare Theatre opened in Stratford-upon-Avon, replacing the one that burnt down in 1926.

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

Also 75 years ago, on 16th April 1947 the term 'Cold War' was used for the first time when American financier and presidential adviser Bernard Baruch described the relationship between the USA and the Soviet Union.

40 years ago, on 2nd April 1982, 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, from 5th April 1992 to Feb 1996 the Siege of Sarajevo took place, during the Bosnian War.


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Bexley Team Ministry Churches Services & Events

SUNDAY 10 April	PALM SUNDAY 9.30am 10am 10am 10.45am 3pm	St James North Cray St John's Bexley St Mary's Bexley St Barnabas Joydens Wood St Mary's Bexley
HOLY WEEK		
Monday 11 April	7.00pm	St John's Bexley
Tuesday 12 April	7.00pm	St John's Bexley
Wednesday 13 April	7.00pm 8pm	St John's Bexley Zoom Service for Holy Week
Thursday 14 April	MAUNDY THURSDAY 7.00pm	St Mary's Bexley
Friday 15 April	GOOD FRIDAY 8.30am 10am 10am 2pm	St Barnabas Joydens Wood St John's Bexley St James North Cray Livestreamed
Saturday 16 April	HOLY SATURDAY 10am	St John's Bexley
SUNDAY 17 April	EASTER SUNDAY 8am 9.30am 10am 10am 10.45am 3.00pm	St John's Bexley St James North Cray St John's Bexley St Mary's Bexley St Barnabas Joydens Wood St James North Cray
SUNDAY 24 April	2pm	St George's Day Parade <i>for local</i>
Please contact the Team Rector or a member of the clergy team to be included		
Also, do contact any of our clergy team if you are concerned, about anything or		
St Barnabas, Joydens Wood		www.joydenswoodchurch.co.uk
St John the Evangelist, Bexley		www.stjohnsbexley.org.uk

THE BEXLEY TEAM CLERGY

Team Rector: Rev'd Canon Ren Harding
Associate Priest: Rev'd Sue Twynam
Team Vicar: Rev'd Edward Barlow
Team Vicar: Rev'd Clive Wood
Team Curate: Rev'd Matt Hodder

Services for PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2022

All Age Service for Palm Sunday
Sung Communion with Blessing of Palms
Palm Sunday Holy Communion
All Age Service for Palm Sunday
Messy Church

Bexley Team Holy Week Compline
Bexley Team Holy Week Compline
Bexley Team Holy Week Compline
(*contact Team Rector for link*)

Bexley Team Communion with light meal

Good Friday Reflection
Good Friday Family Service
Good Friday Reflection
Good Friday Service

Children's Activity/Making an Easter Garden.

Said Communion
Easter Day Family Communion
Easter Day Sung Eucharist
Easter Day Holy Communion
Easter Day Family Communion
Forest Church for Easter



all Scout Groups at St John's (Muster at Bexley Cricket Ground at 1.30pm)
on our emailing list or see our website for further information.
if you would simply like a chat, or prayer.

St James, North Cray www.stjamesnorthcray.org.uk
St Mary the Virgin, Bexley www.stmarysbexley.co.uk

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revclivewood@gmail.com	01322 270942	07982392809
matthodder10@gmail.com		07889873125

Reflected Faith Series
The Rev Dr Jo White



Last month we began our Lenten journey with ashes on Ash Wednesday, reminding us of our beginning and our ending; and this month we will conclude that time with Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Such a relatively short time for so great a distance.

I'm reminded of this by the opening words used in Church of England services at the Palm Sunday services:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing by works of love and self-sacrifice for the celebration of our Lord's death and resurrection. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union with the Church throughout the world. Christ enters His own city to complete His work as our Saviour, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with Him in faith and love, so that, united with Him in His sufferings, we may share His risen life.

It's all about togetherness.

Together as a small group of people in that one church where we worship. Together with 'the' church across all denominations and throughout the world. Together with Christ Himself.

It's one of the reasons that we process on Palm Sunday. Ideally a joyful and noisy procession with banners and rejoicing – reminding us of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as much as into our own lives.

This month:

It's in this joy wherein lies the contrast with our solemn and silent procession on Good Friday. We need them both. One on its own doesn't tell the full story. Just like a play on Good Friday without its follow-up on Easter Sunday leaves you hanging.

We all know that social media tends to only show happy occasions but that underneath all those meals and holidays and smiling faces there can be great heartaches and sorrows.

It's the togetherness of both of those emotions where the true depth of joy is to be found and not on the surfaces. How do we greet Christ anew on Resurrection Sunday without the devastating loss of Good Friday, or that long week travelling in and out of the city walls? May you find real joy in togetherness this Easter!

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The empty tomb and the Risen Christ

By the Ven John Barton

‘So they (*the women*) went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.’

That’s how some early manuscripts of Mark’s Gospel finish. It’s an unexpected twist, when you consider the confident announcement at the outset: “The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” Good news? Afraid?

Mark doesn’t embroider his writing. His Greek language is that of the street, and he uses short, abrupt sentences. So, he tells it straight when the women, who had remained faithful to Jesus right up to the end, were confronted with an empty grave, and the first intimation that Jesus was no longer dead. Nothing like this had ever happened. What had seemed like a tragic and inevitable finale was now flatly contradicted. These women had stumbled across something unique that God was doing. It was to be the beginning of a new era for the human race, encompassing past, present and future.

Matthew’s Gospel tells it slightly differently: ‘the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy.’ Later, when the other disciples encountered the Risen Christ, we read of their joy, doubt, disbelief, gladness, wonder. Luke encapsulates these confused emotions in a single phrase, ‘While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering...’

After many weeks of what we summarise as ‘resurrection appearances’, Luke rounds off his account with Jesus blessing the disciples: “While He was blessing them, He withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the Temple, blessing God.’

A 21st Century disciple will contemplate the presence of the Risen Christ with wonder, adoration, and joy. Surely with trembling, too? The same Jesus, seated at the right hand of the Father, will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Though hopelessly inadequate, we are enveloped by His sacrificial love, released by the crucifixion. We dare to look up, “afraid, yet filled with joy”.

WORDSEARCH



Passover	Lord	blood	world	washing
ate	Supper	Lamb	John	love
last	bread	God	gospel	command
disciples	wine	die	killed	service
transformed	body	sins	feet	maundy

(Solutions on page 30)

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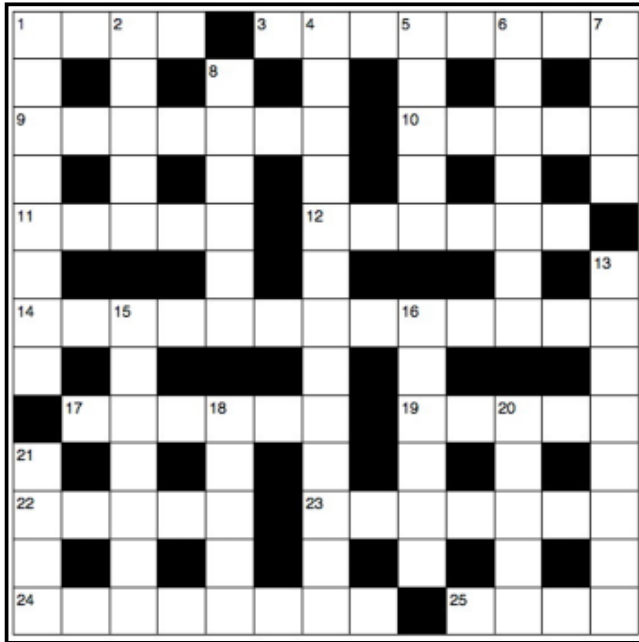
APRIL CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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)

(Solutions on page 30)

ST JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL



On how to run your notice board

The Rectory

St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Your decision to place a notice board outside your church seems a good one – and its design in blue plastic with luminous red detachable letters seems entirely in keeping with the aesthetics of your building. Make sure that it is lockable, however, as an innocent notice saying “all are welcome” may be modified by a devotee of anagrams to say something far less polite by the following day.

We recently replaced ours, which had disappeared shortly before last bonfire night. That the Scouts’ bonfire had a board which closely resembled our old one in its centre was, I am sure, complete coincidence. The Venture Scouts’ collective smirk during the following week’s Parade Service did give one pause for thought, and the Cubs’ collapse into helpless laughter at the chorus “So light up the fire and let the flames burn” only increased suspicion.

On reflection, you may not have been wise to use your notice board to tell everyone your holiday dates. Certainly various local burglars were tripping over each other inside the vicarage while you were away. However, the note the last one left, saying that next time he broke in, he would bring you something, since you had so little left, was quite touching. Inevitably, now that your church has a notice board, there will be open warfare over who is allowed to display notices on it. Will the Slimmers’ Club be seen as biblical? Why is the Ladies Guild notice twice as large as all the others? And do remember that while everyone will want space to

display their notices, no one will ever remove them once the event is over. Plaintive announcements of Christmas parties in April or of Summer Fetes in November only serve to take people down memory lane.

Here's the best way to manage a notice board: create that panacea for all problems: a sub-committee. These poor people only ever exist in order to get the clergy out of tight corners and to make sure that matters are discussed at such inordinate length that every issue eventually dies a natural death. And if even that fails, you could have a quiet word with our Scouts before next year's bonfire night.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace



"It's not as picturesque as the old steeple
but it's saving a fortune in electricity bills!"

THE BOTHY

Are you looking for a small hall for a function?

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GOD AND THE ARTS

By The Rev Michael Burgess

'In a grove lit only by a kiss'

Holy Week, as its name tells us, is the most important, holiest week in the Church's year, when we follow Jesus from His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, to the Upper Room, to Calvary and to the garden of the tomb. As we make that journey each year, we are not just remembering past events. We are celebrating how eternity touched Jerusalem in that first Holy Week and how eternity can touch our lives now.

To create that impact and that realisation, the week is brim-full of colour and variety in its worship, full of action and movement, full of processions and music. But we might think it is a week with very little silence.

Yet the silences are there if we look at the Gospels closely. We enter an upper room and catch our breath when Jesus announces a betrayer. Peter denies our Lord, a cock crows, and a bleak stillness falls on that scene. In the palace Jesus stands accused, no words are spoken, and the governor wonders in the silence. And there is silence by the cross until the ninth hour. The silence does fall during Holy Week, punctuating the crises of these tense days. It is conveyed with dramatic force in this Gethsemane scene: Peter Firth's poem describes it as 'a grove lit only by a kiss.' The painting is by Giotto, 'The Kiss of Judas,' and is part of an amazing series of frescoes he painted for the Arena Chapel in Padua from 1305-06.

At first glance it is a scene of frenzied activity: burning torches wave in the sky, weapons are wielded, and a ram's horn blown. The cohort of soldiers advance on Jesus, and Peter tries to defend Him by cutting off a soldier's ear in his anger. One of the religious leaders points to Jesus in the centre of the painting.

And it is there that the tragic stillness falls as our eyes focus on the eyes of Jesus: that steady, discomforting gaze into the eyes of Judas the betrayer. Judas' cloak seems to engulf Jesus, but it cannot blot out the look of our Lord.

The face of Judas is troubled, and the look of Jesus seems to burrow deep into that anxiety, beneath the surface into his heart.

In Holy Week they are eyes that look out to us. The face of Jesus is turned in our direction, saying, 'Yes, you may follow Me in the heady excitement of Palm Sunday. But will you also follow Me into this garden, on the way of My cross to the foot of Calvary, and beyond to the empty tomb of Easter morning?'



21st Anselm, the man who proved there is a God



Anselm's brilliant and original *Proslogion*, written 1077-8, sets out the 'ontological' proof for God's existence. Nearly ten centuries later, it is still studied by theological students as one of the great philosophical 'proofs' of God's existence.

Anselm was born at Aosta in 1033, the son of a spendthrift Lombard nobleman, whom Anselm detested. In time he decided to become a Benedictine monk, and

so joined Lanfranc's famous monastery at Bec (c. 1060). He became prior, then abbot. He was loved by his monks, appreciated for his sensitivity and intuitiveness. He remained friends also with Lanfranc, who had gone on to be Archbishop of Canterbury. After Lanfranc's death, Anselm reluctantly agreed to accept the job.

Archbishops did not have press offices in those days, but Anselm made his views on Church-versus-King known all the same, and they did not please the king. William Rufus exiled him in 1097 and King Henry I exiled him in 1103. Anselm was utterly committed to what he saw as the cause of God and the Church, and therefore had no time for temporal politics. Peace between archbishop and monarch was not achieved until 1106.

Anselm spent the rest of his life in England. His theological stance of 'Faith seeking understanding' and 'the mind at faith's service' were the keys to his life and teaching.



EASTER EGGS

Easter eggs have been in the shops since just after Christmas but they are not a new idea. The egg has been used as a symbol of rebirth and new life since before Christian times.

The English name for Easter is said to come from Eostre, a northern goddess of spring. The rebirth of growing things in the spring, after the long dark days of winter, was a time of rejoicing in the pagan world and many of their rites and symbols have been carried over into our Christian festival of Easter.

In pagan times they celebrated the return of light and warmth to the world but our Easter celebrates so much more. We celebrate the fact that Jesus died for us and yet is not dead. We celebrate because Jesus overcame death.

And if all those brightly wrapped chocolate eggs in the shops help us to remember that Easter means new life, new life in Jesus, then good – let's have lots!



BEAUTIFUL EGGS

Chocolate eggs are a new idea; the traditional Easter egg is a decorated hen's egg. Why not make some as special gifts to share the good news of Easter?



You can decorate them in the traditional method of wrapping eggs in onion skins and then boiling them. This gives a mottled, golden look to the egg (or try a couple of slices of beetroot for a different effect).

If you are not going to eat the egg afterwards you can decorate it with paint or felt tip pens. Painted eggs can look very special if, when the paint is dry, you stick on sequins and small beads. Rather than waste a perfectly good egg find out how to 'blow' the egg out of the shell – then you can eat the egg as well as having a perfect empty shell to decorate.

Why did the egg go into the jungle?

Because he wanted to be an eggs-plorer.

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