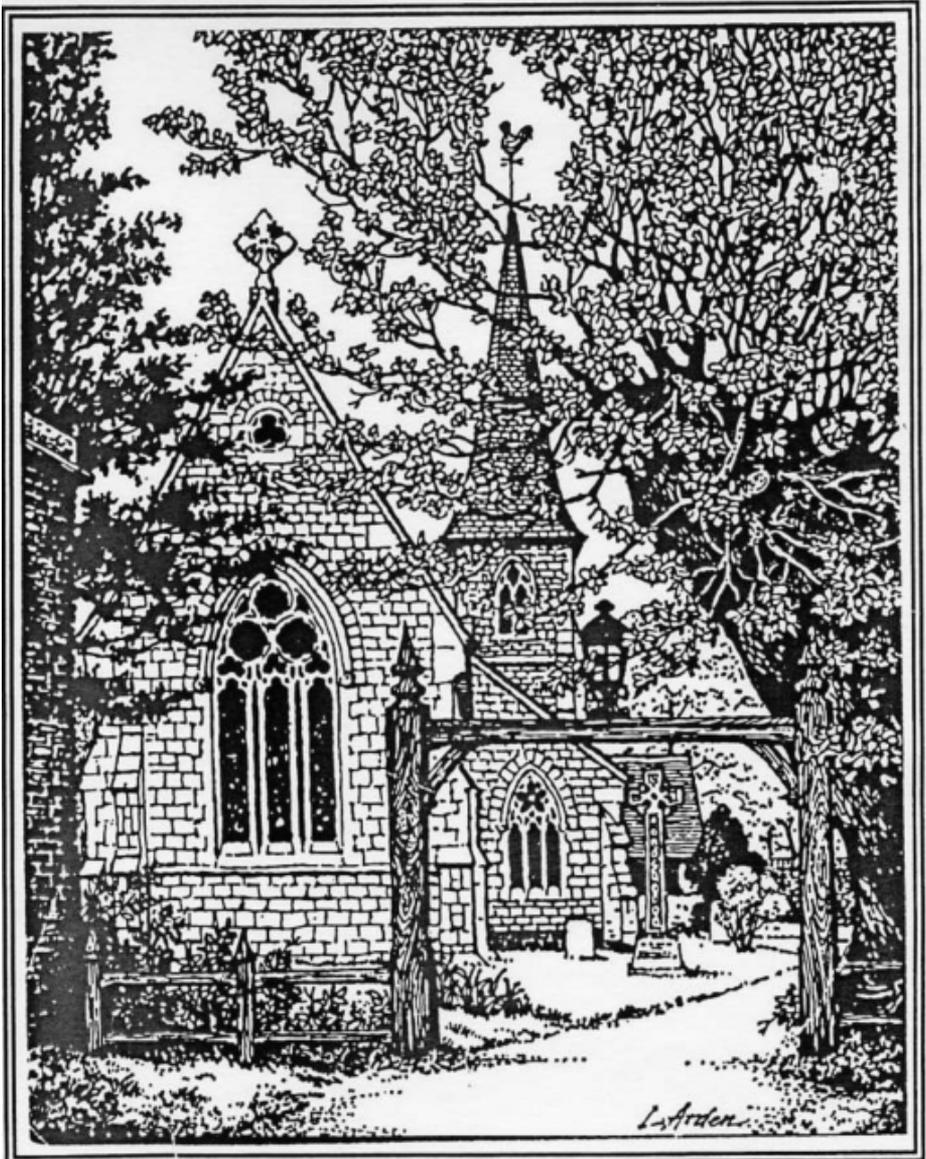


**The Parish Church of  
*St. James, North Cray***

**50p  
*March, 2021***

***(Part of the Bexley Team Ministry)***



## St JAMES, NORTH CRAY PARISH STAFF

**Team Vicar:** Reverend Ren Harding 01322 528923  
The Vicarage, 6 Tile Kiln Lane,  
Joydens Wood, DA5 2BB  
renharding@hotmail.co.uk

**Lay Reader:** David Stevens 020 8300 0867

**Church Wardens:** Suzy Higgs 020 8302 5719  
suzyjhiggs@gmail.com  
Maxine Heath 020 8468 7895  
maxinejheath@gmail.com

**Treasurer:** Position vacant

**PCC Secretary:** Rhonda Collins 020 8300 3797

**Sacristan:** Stephen Hills 020 8302 7236

**Bothy Bookings:** Lynne Meads 07966 315518

**Parish Safeguarding:** Rhonda Collins 020 8300 3797

**Magazine Editor:** Steve Blake  
sblakestjames@virginmedia.com

### St James Sunday Service

9.30am

Holy Communion

(All age service with Uniformed Organisations on second Sunday)

## TEAM RECTOR'S LETTER MARCH 2021



One of the delights of St James Church, North Cray is its lovely setting in a dip leading down to the Footscray Meadows.

The church and churchyard are beautiful in every season of the year, but particularly well-beloved in the spring, with the trees in blossom and the bank of primroses in flower, a carpet of the palest yellow seeming to glow amongst the

gravestones.

To me it is always a sign of new life, this juxtaposition of fresh spring flowers and the gravestones which remind us of our own mortality. Contained within those pale flowers is the abiding Easter message of Christ's victory over death, despair and hatred.

This year particularly, where we have lived for twelve months with the limitations and losses of the pandemic, these signs of spring seem the more welcome and the more poignant.

The government have recently announced the so-called 'road-map' towards some kind of return to normality. Let us hope and pray that this is effective. But while we look with hope to the future, we cannot just wipe this last year from our memories. For many of us there will be a remembering with sadness, the loss of a loved one, the sense of grief at enforced separations in those times when we need human contact the most, the loss of job or health or livelihood. There is a remembering with thankfulness too, those who have supported us, and the many acts of kindness shown, the word of encouragement, the shared concern for the well-being of others.

I believe that all of us in different ways will now need a time of recovery and healing. So may I encourage you to notice afresh the God-given beauty of the natural world and allow its beauty, and the love of its Creator minister to your wounded soul.

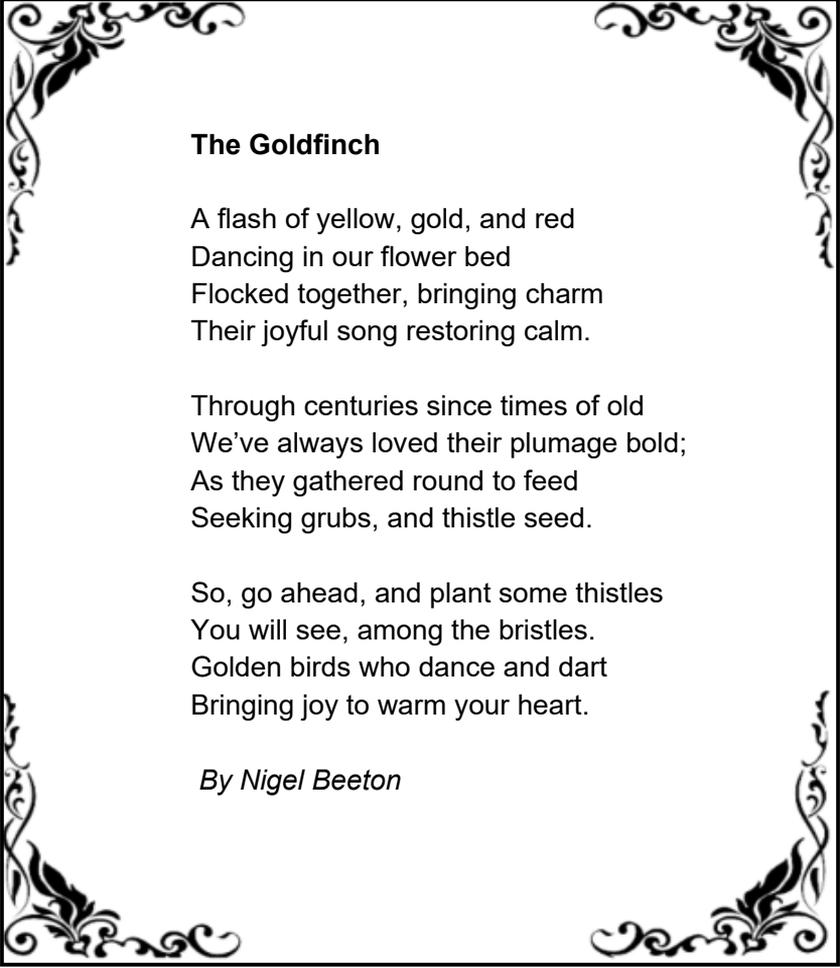
**Reverend Ren Harding (Team Rector)**

contact me at Joydens Wood Vicarage,

6 Tile Kiln Lane, Joydens Wood, Bexley, DA5 2BB

01322-528923

[renharding@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:renharding@hotmail.co.uk)



### **The Goldfinch**

A flash of yellow, gold, and red  
Dancing in our flower bed  
Flocked together, bringing charm  
Their joyful song restoring calm.

Through centuries since times of old  
We've always loved their plumage bold;  
As they gathered round to feed  
Seeking grubs, and thistle seed.

So, go ahead, and plant some thistles  
You will see, among the bristles.  
Golden birds who dance and dart  
Bringing joy to warm your heart.

*By Nigel Beeton*

## **THE BOTHY**

**Are you looking for a small hall for a function?**

**The Bothy (in St James Church Grounds) has all the facilities  
you need and can seat 35 people.**

**If you need further information please contact**

**Lynne Meads on 07966 315518**

## SERVICES AND EVENTS FOR MARCH 2021

The Team Rector, the Team clergy, and the PCC's of the Parish churches in the Bexley Team have been extremely concerned about the figures for Covid infections in this area. We are mindful of our responsibility for the safety and well-being of those attending worship in our church buildings. We have therefore, in accordance with Canon Law, sought the permission of the Bishop of Rochester to suspend public worship for the time being. We will continue to circulate worship material via email, and also make worship available online, on Zoom, or via a phone-in link on Zoom.

Saturday	5.30pm	Zoom Nightwatch Service a quiet service of reflection on the week that is past
Sunday	10am	Zoom Worship including a bible-based talk.

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.

May God bless you all at this difficult and worrying time.

## 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.”***

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### **Pray for those infected or in quarantine**

*Loving Jesus may they feel your power of healing through the care of medical staff. Take away fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people receiving treatment or under quarantine. Protect their families and friends and bring peace to all who love them.*

### **Pray for those at high risk**

*Dear Lord, we lift to you the elderly and people with chronic health conditions. Protect them from harm and be their comfort in this time of uncertainty.*

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*Adapted from prayers of World Vision*

<https://www.worldvision.org/disaster-relief-news-stories/prayer>

### **WORSHIPPING AT HOME**

The following are resources which you may like to use as aids to your own personal prayer and worship. As the weeks progress we will make additions to the list via a weekly newsheet, and will endeavour to make these prayer resources available in paper form in the coming days.

If you have access to the internet this is a good site to visit.  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer-resources>

#### **Radio 4**

Prayer for the Day @ 5.43 am – if this is too early for you it can be found at a time to suit you online at [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)

Daily Service Monday to Friday @ 9.45 am – on Longwave and DAB  
Sunday worship @ 8.10am

Ren, is available to talk to anyone who is feeling the need of a church minister at this time, to talk over a difficult circumstance or to ask for prayer. We also have a resource that can be used at home if you are unable to attend a funeral because of the current restrictions, and a weekly newsletter that is going out on email, with news, reflections and prayers. All you need to do is ring, or email me (see inside cover) and I will do what I can to help, and I can also put you on the circulation list so you receive weekly information. Your email will not be given to anyone else.

Suzy Higgs, Churchwarden

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# News and Issues



## **Coronavirus near Easter: still a good time to pause, pray and remember**

When the UK death toll for coronavirus recently reached 100,000, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York issued a call to the nation. They asked everyone to pause and remember the victims of Covid-19. The victims and their families were ‘known to God and cherished by God’. Perhaps, as we approach Easter, we should consider stopping again and remembering again the terrible cost of the pandemic.

In their open letter, Archbishops Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell had insisted that death does not have “the last word”, and the Christian faith promises that one day “every tear will be wiped away”.

God, they wrote, knows grief and suffering and “shares in the weight of our sadness”.

Turning to the wider impact of the pandemic, the loneliness, anxiety and economic hardship, they then invited people to “cast their fears on God”.

The archbishops said: “We write to you in consolation, but also in encouragement, and ultimately in the hope of Jesus Christ. The God who comes to us in Jesus knew grief and suffering Himself. On the cross, Jesus shares the weight of our sadness.”

“Most of all, we have hope because God raised Jesus from the dead. This is the Christian hope that we will be celebrating at Easter. We live in the hope that we will share in His resurrection. Death doesn’t have the last word. In God’s kingdom, every tear will be wiped away.

“Please be assured of our prayers. Please join us.”

It is expected that the Church of England will hold services of remembrance for those who have died and thanksgiving for all those who have cared for them when it is possible to do so.

## **Church approves 1000<sup>th</sup> award for environmental responsibility**

Conservation charity, A Rocha UK has announced that Hereford Cathedral is the recipient of its Eco Church scheme’s 1,000<sup>th</sup> award for creation care.

A spokeswoman for A Rocha UK said: “Hereford Cathedral demonstrates that even historical buildings can make great progress towards being more sustainable. The Cathedral land includes both gardens within the cathedral complex and some farms in the local area which are managed in a sustainable way.”

Hereford Cathedral, one of over 3000 churches to register for Eco Church, shares eco-lifestyle tips during school visits and in its weekly church notices, including suggestions on personal consumption and carbon footprint reduction. They have made alterations to the heating and lighting across the church buildings to improve efficiency and are actively researching how best to install water harvesting systems in the future. This is a critical year for the climate, ahead of the 26<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (UN COP26) scheduled to take place in Glasgow in November.

Eco Church is a free online award scheme and is an A Rocha UK project. Churches can join the Eco church community by registering at <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> and completing a simple survey.

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Phone: 07931 811620  
Email: [davis54@btinternet.com](mailto:davis54@btinternet.com)



# **MEETINGS and Events 2021**

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 MARCH

1700 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> March 321, the Roman Emperor Constantine 1 (Constantine the Great) decreed that Sunday should be a day of rest throughout the Empire.

1600 years ago, on 25<sup>th</sup> March 421, the city of Venice was officially founded when its first church was dedicated at noon.

300 years ago, on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1721, Johann Sebastian Bach dedicated six of his concertos to Christian Ludwig Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt. They are now commonly known as the Brandenburg Concertos.

150 years ago, on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1871, the Royal Albert Hall in London was officially opened by Queen Victoria.

75 years ago, on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1946, Winston Churchill gave his famous 'Iron Curtain' speech in Fulton, Missouri. He used the term to describe the separation between Soviet and Western countries.

Also 75 years ago, on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1946, London's Heathrow Airport was opened, as London Airport. It was renamed Heathrow in 1966.

65 years ago, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1956, Pakistan became the world's first Islamic Republic.

60 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1961, George Formby, the 'ukulele king' died. A British comedian, singer and actor, he was best known for his comic songs, including 'When I'm Cleaning Windows'.

40 years ago, on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1981, the first London Marathon was held.

10 years ago, on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011, the great Tohoku earthquake and tsunami of Japan took place. It shifted Japan's main island, Honshu, 2.4 metres to the east. 15,897 people were killed, 2,533 went missing, and nearly a quarter of a million were made homeless. Three reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant went into meltdown, leading to the second-largest nuclear accident in history.

**BEXLEY TEAM MINISTRY**  
**“EXPLORING CONFIRMATION” 2020**



This series of informal sessions is designed to help you discover more about the Christian faith and to explore it in greater depth.

It is also designed to help you to decide whether it might be right for you to take the step of being 'confirmed' as a member of the Anglican Church.

**THE CONFIRMATION SERVICE ON 3 MAY HAS BEEN POSTPONED - TBA**

The preparation sessions will take place at  
The Joydens Wood Vicarage, 6 Tile Kiln Lane  
Joydens Wood, DA5 2BB

PLEASE NOTE... Coming to the sessions does NOT commit you to being confirmed. That is your decision nearer the time.

Each of the three sessions will help you to look at some aspects of the Christian faith, and give you plenty of opportunity to bring and share your own questions, doubts, hopes and uncertainties.

<b>Believing</b>	Who is Jesus? The Bible
<b>Belonging</b>	The Eucharist Christian Symbols
<b>Behaving</b>	Prayer and the wider church
	Preparing for the Service

There will be a Rehearsal at St Francis, Petts Wood nearer the time

Reverend Ren Harding (Team Rector)  
01322 528923  
07836644782



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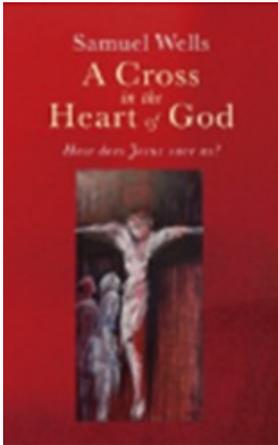
*info@cussenselectrical.co.uk*

*www.Cussenselectrical.co.uk*



# Book Mark

## **A Cross in the Heart of God – reflections on the death of Jesus** **By Samuel Wells, Canterbury Press, £10.99**

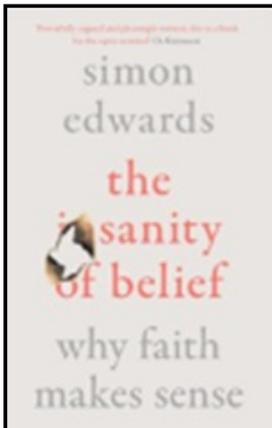


Samuel Wells explores the cross in the purposes of God, and how this act brings about salvation. Over three sections, each with six short chapters, he explores the cross in the Old Testament (Covenant, Test, Passover, Atonement, Servant, Sacrifice); the Epistles (Forgiveness, Obedience, Foolishness, Example, Reconciliation, Boast) and in the Gospels. (Finished, Judged, Betrayed, Pierced, Forsaken, Mocked).

This beautifully clear book will give you a comprehensive understanding of the story at the heart of scripture, and the central event in history.

## **The Sanity of Belief - why faith makes sense** **By Simon Edwards, SPCK, £7.99**

This thoughtful, engaging book challenges the assumptions that may lead



us to reject a faith and doubt something that we've never really had the chance to understand. From our need for meaning and significance, to our desires for truth, goodness, love and hope, he explores the things that matter to us as human beings and shows us why the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ might just make sense of them all.

It may be ideal for anyone looking for a clear, down-to-earth introduction to Christianity, or for those wanting to reaffirm the foundations on which their faith is based.

## **How Sunday became a Christian day of rest**

*By Tim Lenton*

It was 1700 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> March 321, that the Roman Emperor Constantine 1 (Constantine the Great), who had converted to Christianity, decreed that Sunday should be a day of rest throughout the Empire.

This was a change from normal Roman Empire practice, which was to regard Sunday as just another work-day – something the UK seems to be reverting to. But Constantine’s civil decree made Sunday a day of rest from labour. It said: “All judges and city people and craftsmen shall rest upon the venerable day of the sun.”

This was not intended to replace the Jewish Sabbath, which starts at sunset on Friday and continues to sunset on Saturday. Such Jewish observance was regarded by most Christians as being bound to the old law instead of the Spirit, and so was resisted. Christians backed the Sunday rest because it was the day on which Jesus had risen from the dead and the Holy Spirit had come – despite possible doubts about the phrase “day of the sun”.

Christians meeting for worship on Sunday in fact dates back to the Acts of the Apostles, and it is mentioned historically about 115AD. Actual practice varies across the world and through the years.

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## **Let's clap for mothers!** *The Revd Peter Crumpler*

As Mother's Day approaches, let's hear it for all the mothers who have been on the frontline of helping our country survive the Covid pandemic!

Just as we've clapped on our doorsteps for the NHS and other heroes, let's applaud all that mothers have done – often balancing home and employment – during these long lockdown months.

Research shows that mums have carried out most of the home schooling and household tasks – with many also holding down important frontline roles in the NHS and other essential services.

Women spent more than twice as much time as men on their children's home schooling and development during the lockdown, according to a study by University College London. It measured how parents responded while schools and nurseries were closed to most families.

The survey, reported by the Guardian newspaper, found that women across several age groups took the major share of childcare and home schooling. Those with primary school-aged children “were considerably more likely” to have given up working than fathers with children of the same age.

The pressure on families was further increased as many grandparents and other carers were unable to help. Family and friendship networks were put under strain with contacts restricted to online Zoom or Facetime calls that are often difficult with younger children.

Launching a Children's Society report into children's welfare during the lockdown, chief executive Mark Russell said: “We are living in unprecedented times. Months of national lockdown, only small numbers of children in school, and many families experiencing real

crisis. Coronavirus has impacted every area of our lives and The Children’s Society has been deeply concerned about the impact of this crisis on children, especially the most disadvantaged.”

He added: “Our survey found a higher proportion of young people experiencing low well-being than we are used to seeing. Whilst we know that most children’s well-being will ‘bounce-back’, there will be some who do not.”

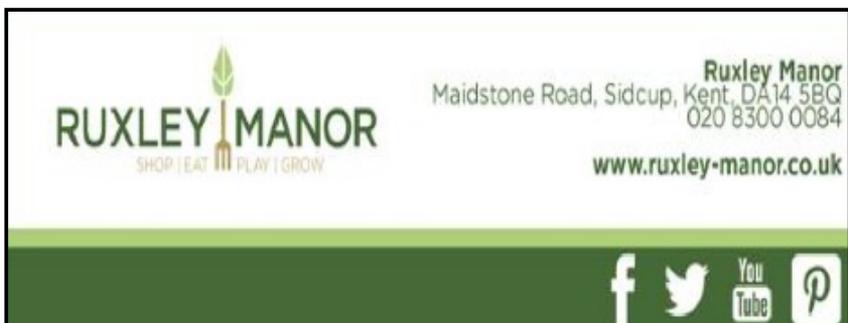
Mothers are at the frontline of helping our children cope with – and then recover from – the effects of the Covid pandemic and the extended lockdowns.

Many working mothers lost their jobs because of the pandemic, and families will be hard-pressed to make up for the income lost. Food bank provider, the Trussell Trust has warned churches to prepare for a ‘tidal wave’ of poverty and to be ready to help their local communities.

This Mother’s Day, daffodils and chocolate may seem very thin reward for the major contribution of mums across our nation.

In normal times, they have a challenging and demanding job to do. Through the pandemic, they have risen to the challenges and sought to ensure children thrive despite the lockdowns.

As we celebrate Mother’s Day, let’s recognise the amazing efforts made by mothers in the home with their children.



## **A year of coronavirus**

*By The Ven John Barton*

The Queen recently spoke for the whole country when she said that many are, “tinged with sadness. Some (are) mourning the loss of those dear to them and other missing friends and family members, distanced for safety. When all they really want ... is a simple hug or a squeeze of the hand.”

We may have become accustomed to wearing face masks in public, keeping our distance from others, cutting out social gatherings, and attending church services online, but ‘no touching’ seems the cruellest of punishments.

As one vicar friend of mine said, the Church has had to learn a lot from lockdown:

“That Zoom is no substitute for meeting together, sharing warmth, laughter, tears – and drinking from the same cup. We have a commonality in Christ, whoever we are. Christianity is more ‘us’ than ‘me’.

“Also, we cannot ignore those who will bear considerable cost arising from the pandemic. People have lost loved ones, businesses, confidence, jobs. It is vital that the church becomes a place of hope – not glib, clichéd words – but solid hope drawn from Scripture and made real in action. The church could become a real hub of the local community.

“But we have to rethink much of what we do and how we say things. The money has all but gone now and the church has to refocus on how it attracts people, what it says in plain English, how it presents itself and provides a warm welcome to those who haven’t a clue what Christianity is.... and all this on a very tight budget!”

He’s got to be right. And some of us could begin to apply some of his ideas right now, even before the pandemic is under control.

As a direct consequence of lockdown, many of us have much more money in the bank than we bargained for. We could send a substantial sum to our local church, and some to an overseas charity, to make some of those ambitions come true. With time on our hands, we could earmark an hour or two for emailing or phoning those in our address book who live alone. We could buy extra supplies for a food bank on our next visit to the supermarket.

And we must ask God to make our church more comprehensible to those who consider themselves outsiders.

# WORDSEARCH



Holy	Devil	Alone	Worship	Temple	Strike
Spirit	Fasted	Kingdom	Me	Stone	Test
Jordan	Hungry	World	Serve	Foot	temptation
Wilderness	If	Authority	Jerusalem	Angels	
Tempted	Bread	Glory	Pinnacle	Bear	

Solutions on page 27

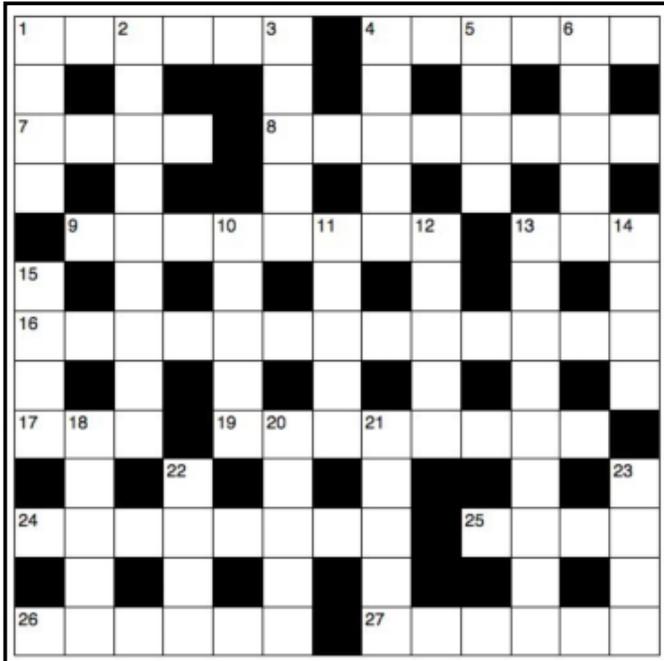
## MARCH CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### Across

- 1 The earth is one (6)
- 4 'On a hill far away stood an old — cross' (6)
- 7 'I am the — vine and my Father is the gardener'  
(John 15:1) (4)
- 8 The Caesar who was Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus'  
birth (Luke 2:1) (8)
- 9 'Your — should be the same as that of Christ Jesus'  
(Philippians 2:5) (8)
- 13 Jesus said that no one would put a lighted lamp under this  
(Luke 8:16) (3)
- 16 Involvement (1 Corinthians 10:16) (13)
- 17 Armed conflict (2 Chronicles 15:19) (3)
- 19 Where the Gaderene pigs were feeding (Mark 5:11) (8)
- 24 What jeering youths called Elisha on the road to Bethel  
(2 Kings 2:23) (8)
- 25 The Venerable — , eighth-century Jarrow ecclesiastical  
scholar (4)
- 26 8 Across issued a decree that this should take place  
(Luke 2:1) (6)
- 27 Come into prominence (Deuteronomy 13:13) (6)

### Down

- 1 Where some of the seed scattered by the sower fell  
(Matthew 13:4) (4)
- 2 Sexually immoral person whom God will judge  
(Hebrews 13:4) (9)
- 3 Gospel leaflet (5)
- 4 Physical state of the boy brought to Jesus for healing  
(Mark 9:18)
- 5 Tugs (anag.) (4)
- 6 To put forth (5)



- 10 Nationality associated with St Patrick (5)
- 11 Leader of the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5) (5)
- 12 'After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping — heel'(Genesis 25:26) (5)
- 13 At Dothan the Lord struck the Arameans with — at Elisha's request (2 Kings 6:18) (9)
- 14 'Peter, before the cock crows today, you will — three times that you know me' (Luke22:34) (4)
- 15 Spit out (Psalm 59:7) (4)
- 18 'When I — , I am still with you' (Psalm 139:18) (5)
- 20 Concepts (Acts 17:20) (5)
- 21 Thyatira's dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (5)
- 22 Does (anag.) (4)
- 23 The second set of seven cows in Pharaoh's dream were this (Genesis 41:19) (4)

(Solutions on page 28)

## ST JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL



### On the nonsense of a lavatory at church

The Rectory  
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

This year, the rigours of Lent have taken second place to a far more pressing matter: the installation of a lavatory at St. James the Least. Personally, I entirely disapprove of this additional sign of decadence in our moral fibre; we have survived perfectly happily for the last 800 years without one, so why is there such an urgent need now? And being surrounded by acres of fields, there seems to be a completely acceptable alternative.

It also spoils the pleasure I used to take, informing ushers at weddings, having liberally refreshed themselves at our local pub before the Service, that we have no facilities and that they would just have to wait. Their look of pained resignation, developing to clear signs of repentance as the Service progressed, was most cheering. It also meant that wedding parties did not linger after the Service but disappeared with commendable speed to safe havens.

I anticipate that now we have the thing, a sub-committee will inevitably form to devise a commissioning Service for the person who will be in charge of its maintenance. I can already foresee Lady Bartlett proposing an appropriate set of robes for the office holder – although it will need some tact to select suitable insignia on the sleeves.

In fact, the project has not been entirely successful; we still need to have a lock fitted and so at present, occupants have been advised to sing hymns loudly, preferably something rousing; “Onward Christian soldiers” would be ideal. A hymn book has been installed as an aide memoire.

The greater difficulty arises from our antiquated plumbing system. A member of the congregation can leave a Service perfectly discreetly;



## GOD AND THE ARTS

By The Rev Michael Burgess

### Behold the handmaid of the Lord

'*Ecce Ancilla Domini*' (Behold the handmaid of the Lord) is the title of this month's painting of the Annunciation by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.



We shall hear those words in the Gospel for this feast on 25<sup>th</sup> March, when Mary responds to Gabriel's message that she is to be the mother of our Saviour.

It is a scene that has inspired artists throughout the history of Christianity. Over those years certain traditions emerged: in many paintings Mary was often shown at prayer, dressed in blue, in a room that was filled with elaborate furnishings of the period, all opening out onto the wider world.

Rossetti's painting of 1850 is very different. He was a founding member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and as both a poet and a painter, he soon became its recognised leader. But the work of the Brotherhood was not without its critics. When Rossetti's painting was exhibited, it was dismissed as 'absurd, affected, ill-drawn, insipid, crotchety and puerile' because it was such a contrast to the more traditional portrayals of this scene in Luke's Gospel.

Here there is a claustrophobic feel to the painting. Mary and Gabriel fill the tiny, cell-like room. There is a window, but it does not open out to scenery and nature: just a solitary tree. Rossetti called '*Ecce Ancilla Domini*' his 'white picture.' That is the colour that dominates: the robes of Mary and the angel, the stones of the floor, the paint on the walls, the flowers that Gabriel offers. Blue, the traditional colour for Mary, is relegated to the screen behind and the sky outside. Other colours are provided by the yellow flames of Gabriel's feet and the tapestry in the

foreground on which Mary has embroidered lilies. These flowers, like the whiteness, are symbols of purity.

The model for Mary was Christina, his sister, the author of 'In the bleak mid-winter', and in portraying her, Rossetti has captured the adolescent vulnerability of Mary. A small dove linking the two characters is a sign of God's spirit coming to bring new life to this young girl. How does she respond? What is the expression on her face? Does she see the adult world of responsibility and motherhood opening up before her? Is it anxiety or wonder or awe? Or are all of these responses captured in her expression?

The stillness of the scene, the whiteness of the room – they are like a blank canvas on which God can paint His Gospel, His Good New of life and hope. Just as it opened up a new world for Mary, so the Gospel can open up a new world for all of us. We may respond with anxiety and worry, or with wonder and awe to that invitation. Or those feelings may be transformed into trust and service like Mary in Luke's Gospel: 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord: let it be with me according to your word.'

### SOLUTIONS TO WORDSEARCH



## 8<sup>th</sup> Felix of Burgundy, apostle to East Anglia

Felix came from Burgundy in France. At some point he was consecrated bishop, and went to Canterbury, to see Honorius, the Archbishop of Canterbury. In 630 the Christian King Sigebert returned from exile in Gaul to rule the East Angles, and Honorius sent Felix along with him, to evangelise the people. According to local legend, Felix went by boat, and arrived at Bablingley in Norfolk.

Felix may well have known Sigebert back in Gaul, for the two men worked exceptionally well together. Sigebert settled Felix in Dunwich, which became the centre of his diocesan 'see'.

Then, with the support of Sigebert, Felix set up the first-ever school in East Anglia. He brought teachers up from Canterbury to staff it, and the school became, according to Bede, the place "where boys could be taught letters".

Felix had a fruitful ministry to the Anglo Saxons for 17 years. He preached Christianity, encouraged the school to grow, and did a lot of other good. All in all, Felix brought the love of God, the good news of Jesus, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, delivering "all the province of East Anglia from long-standing unrighteousness and unhappiness," according to Bede. Certainly, the people came to love Felix.

When Felix finally died on 8<sup>th</sup> March 647 or 648, he left the Christian faith firmly embedded in East Anglia. Six ancient English churches are dedicated to Felix, and Felixstowe bears his patronage.



### SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE

**ACROSS:** 1, Planet. 4, Rugged. 7, True. 8, Augustus. 9, Attitude. 13, Bed. 16, Participation. 17, War. 19, Hillside. 24, Baldhead. 25, Bede. 26, Census. 27, Arisen.

**DOWN:** 1, Path. 2, Adulterer. 3, Tract. 4, Rigid. 5, Gust. 6, Exude. 10, Irish. 11, Uriel. 12, Esau's. 13, Blindness. 14, Deny. 15, Spew. 18, Awake. 20, Ideas. 21, Lydia. 22, Odes. 23, Lean.



### MOTHERING SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup> March

The old Gospel reading for this Sunday was about the feeding of the five thousand so it was called Refreshment Sunday. Over time this Sunday became associated with family reunions and gatherings and became Mothering Sunday.

Mother's Day, which in this country is on the same day as Mothering Sunday, is an American invention which was started in 1906. Mother's Day is about the mother of a family but Mothering Sunday is more connected with Mother Church, the family meaning has been added on.



Whatever we think about commercial inventions, it is still good to thank those who care for us, no matter how old we are.

### MOTHER'S DAY CARD

Nice cards for Mother's Day can be rather expensive so why don't you make your own? You don't have to be artistic to make this simple lacy card. You will need some coloured card, glue and a paper lace doily.

Cut a piece of card twice as big as the card you want and fold it in half. Then cut up the doily to make the decoration – some have lovely patterns of harts, flowers and leaves.



Put a very small amount of glue on the back of the 'lace' and press it onto the card. Finish off the card by writing a nice message inside.



### THE OTHER MUMMY?

**Why do mummies tell no secrets?**

Because they keep everything under wraps.

**How can you tell when a mummy is angry?**

He flips his lid.



FROM THE REGISTERS

*Baptisms*

-

*Weddings*

-

*Burials*

-

*Year's mind for March 2020*

16<sup>th</sup>                      *James Taylor*

23<sup>rd</sup>                      *Tecwyn Jones*

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