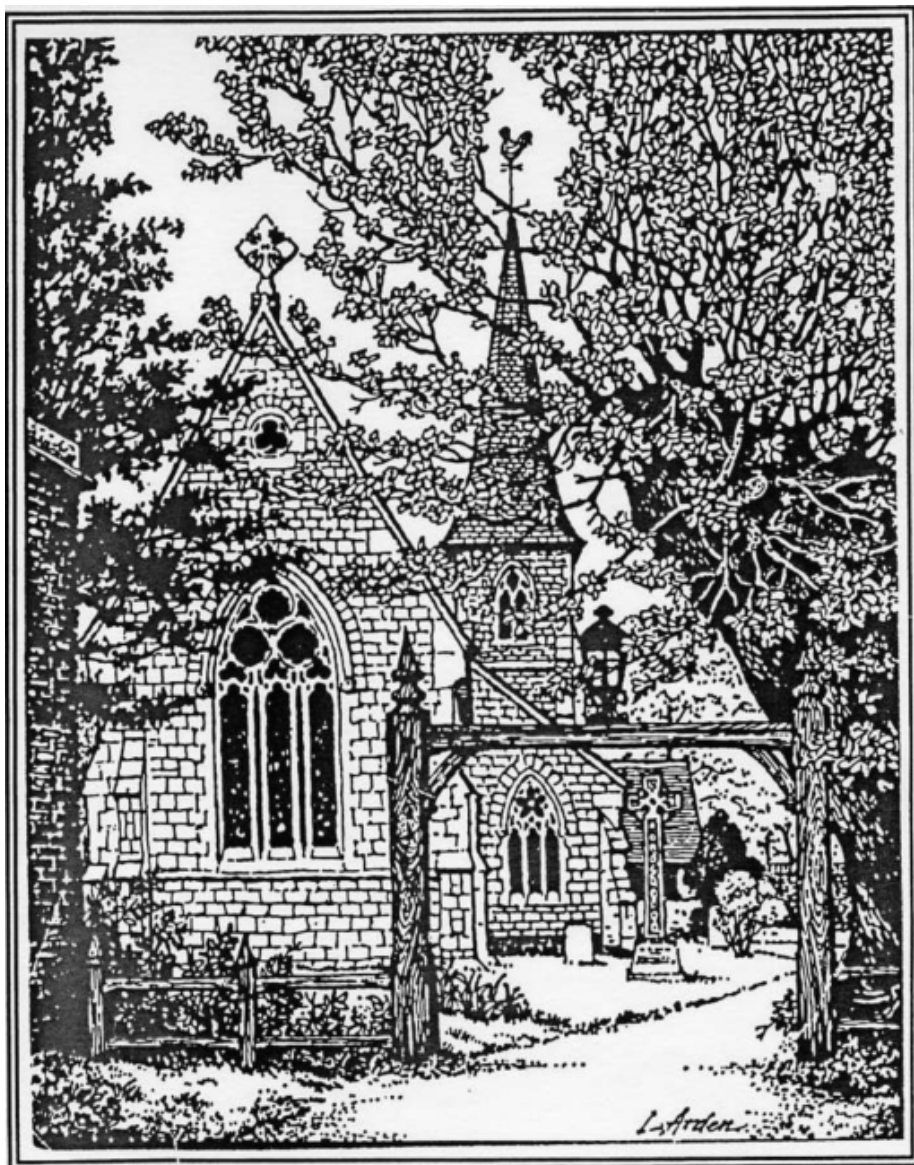


**The Parish Church of  
*St. James, North Cray***

**50p  
*March, 2022***

***(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 2022



My brother passed this poem onto me. He knows he wrote it down from a country church somewhere, but he can't recall which one. We've done our best to track down the author, and the copyright, but have been unable to do so. Has anyone come across it?

I will be happy to acknowledge the author!

I commend it to you for your quiet reflection this spring, and encourage you to find God, not just in the church building, but in all the glory of his wonderful creation.

### **Over the Downs**

*Over the Downs at lambing time  
The bells of a Sunday call  
Whether or no I must bide from church  
With my ewes and the lambs and all.  
Fine folk passing, shaking their heads  
God folk's kind hearts grieve  
I'd like to be doing my bit of praise  
If my ewes would give me leave.  
But he that took on him shepherd's job  
Still walks with my flock and me  
Every Sunday at lambing time  
I can say my prayer at his knee  
And when my time comes place in my hand  
A lock of wool from my sheep  
Bury me where the Downs shall watch  
Mother-like o'er my sheep.  
And when I come to the gates of Heaven  
St Peter will not refuse  
To let me in, though I strayed from church  
Because of my lambing ewes.*

**Reverend Ren Harding (Team Rector)**

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

01322-528923

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

## The Vernal Equinox

In the season of the Spring  
The day is equal to the night;  
Summer's song we soon shall sing!  
Evenings filled with summer light!

Winter's cares seem long ago  
Mornings spiked by bitter frost  
But we shall bask in summer glow  
For the seasons have now crossed.

Thank you, Lord God, for the Spring  
And for all the seasons, too,  
Of life's rhythms we shall sing  
Giving all the praise to You.

*By Nigel Beeton*



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## SERVICES AND EVENTS FOR MARCH 2022

### **Wednesday 2nd March, Ash Wednesday**

10.00am Team Ash Wednesday Holy Communion at St John's. Bexley  
7.30pm Team Ash Wednesday Holy Communion at St James, North Cray

### **Sunday 6th March, First Sunday of Lent**

9am Short Morning Service on Zoom  
9.30am Holy Communion Service in Church

### **Wednesday 9th March**

8pm – 9.15pm Lent Course on Zoom

### **Thursday 10th March**

10am – 11.15am Lent Course in Person at St Mary's Church

### **Saturday 12th March**

8.30am Men's Breakfast at St Barnabas

### **Sunday 13th March, Second Sunday of Lent**

9am Short Morning Service on Zoom  
9.30am Holy Communion Service in Church

### **Monday 14th March**

7.30pm Ladies Club at St Barnabas

### **Wednesday 16th March**

8pm – 9.15pm Lent Course on Zoom

### **Thursday 17th March**

10am – 11.15am Lent Course in Person at St Mary's Church

### **Sunday 20th March, Third Sunday of Lent**

9am Short Morning Service on Zoom  
9.30am Holy Communion Service in Church  
3.00pm Forest Church at St James

### **Wednesday 23rd March**

8pm – 9.15pm Lent Course on Zoom

### **Thursday 24th March**

10am – 11.15am Lent Course in Person at St Mary's Church

### **Sunday 27th March, Fourth Sunday of Lent,**

### **Mothering Sunday**

9am Short Morning Service on Zoom  
9.30am Holy Communion Service in Church  
4pm Sunday @ 4 at St Barnabas

### **Wednesday 30th March**

8pm – 9.15pm Lent Course on Zoom

### **Thursday 31st March**

10am – 11.15am Lent Course in Person at St Mary's Church

# 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 9<sup>th</sup> March.

Course dates: 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> March, and 6<sup>th</sup> April.

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

Course dates: 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> March, and 7<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:matthodder10@gmail.com) - 07889873125

Or let any of the other Team Clergy know.

## **Choir competition launched to record a Platinum Jubilee anthem**

Choirs across the UK are invited to record a specially-written Platinum Jubilee anthem, to be released on YouTube featuring choirs from around the world.

The competition, supported by Premier Christian Radio, will bring together choirs from around the Commonwealth. The new anthem 'Rise Up and Serve' has been commissioned by HOPE Together and partners, and written by song writers Graham Kendrick, Mal Pope and the contemporary worship band Rend Collective.

The lyrics, music and resource track are available at [theplatinumjubilee.com/sing](http://theplatinumjubilee.com/sing), so choirs can start to practise this new song for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, to honour the Queen's 70 years of faith and service.

Competition winners will be chosen for the YouTube video, which will feature choirs from around the Commonwealth singing the new anthem. The video will be produced by Les Moir from the Word & Worship Trust who played a significant role in bringing together The UK Blessing, which has been watched by nearly 5 million people. Churches are also invited to bring their communities together to sing the anthem at street parties and special events over the Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend. Recording guidelines are available to download from [theplatinumjubilee.com/sing](http://theplatinumjubilee.com/sing), The competition deadline is Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022.





# News and Issues



## **Your sacrifices have saved lives**

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, has thanked front line workers, parishes, and all who have made sacrifices to help protect one another from Covid-19, as England recently began to move away from 'plan B' restrictions.

Bishop Sarah, who chairs the Church of England's Covid Recovery Group, said: "When the first measures to curb the spread of Covid-19 were introduced in March 2020, few would have imagined that we would still be making adaptations to the way we live our lives – including our worship – two years on. It has been a very challenging time.

"People have made huge sacrifices to protect one another – not only those they know and love but strangers they might never meet. We've learnt again as society something of what it means to love our neighbour, as Jesus taught."

## **World Watch List for 2022 names worst 50 countries**

Afghanistan is now the worst country in the world for the extreme persecution of Christians.

So says Open Doors, which has recently released the 2022 World Watch List, its annual ranking of the top 50 countries where Christians face the most extreme persecution.

For 2022, Afghanistan comes top because the Taliban are back in control. North Korea now comes second, followed by Somalia, Libya, Yemen, Eritrea, Nigeria, Pakistan, Iran, and India in the top ten.

But the problem is worldwide. "At least 360 million Christians around the world experience high levels of persecution and discrimination," says Open Doors. "That's an astonishing one in seven of the global Christian population.

"Persecution of Christians has reached the highest levels since the Open Doors World Watch List began nearly 30 years ago."

And Open Doors warns that the Taliban victory in Afghanistan has "bolstered Islamic militants in neighbouring Pakistan and may well



embolden jihadist groups in other regions. The Taliban's success encourages extremists around the world."

Certainly, Christians across sub-Saharan Africa also face increasing violence from Islamic militants. In Nigeria, more Christians are killed for their faith than in the rest of the world combined. But they are also badly persecuted in Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Mali, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso.

### **New 'cathedral' of digital worshippers emerges from online broadcasts**

Members of a new 'cathedral' of online worshippers, formed since the first lockdown, have played a key role in the Church of England's recent 100th national online service.

The first national online service was broadcast from the crypt chapel at Lambeth Palace on Mothering Sunday 2020 as the nation went into lockdown. Since then, a service has been broadcast every Sunday – with additional services broadcast over Easter, Advent and Christmas.

The success of the online broadcasts has been described as "bit like an online cathedral - we have a solid core of worshippers and lots of visitors who stream a service occasionally."

### **The Real Easter Egg celebrates its 12<sup>th</sup> year with an invitation to 'Let's Celebrate'!**

For the first time since the pandemic began, churches and communities across the UK will be coming together to celebrate Easter as restrictions are relaxed. So, no wonder that the theme for the Real Easter Egg this year is 'Let's Celebrate'! The Real Easter Egg was created in 2010 as a way for churches, groups and individuals to share the Easter story while supporting Fairtrade. 12 years on, it has a network of thousands of churches. More details at [www.realeasteregg.co.uk](http://www.realeasteregg.co.uk)

## **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**



# **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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BIGGIN HILL**

## 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: -

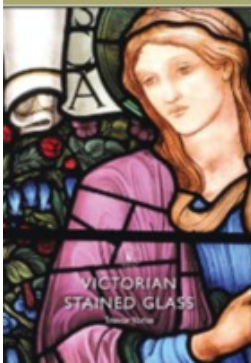
**“May you be given the gift of simple faith. When the world around you is full of uncertainty, may God remind you that you are not alone and you do not need to be dominated by fear. May you find peace amidst chaos from God's promises. Hold onto the God who holds you.”**



# Book Mark



## **Victorian Stained Glass by Trevor Yorke, Shire Publications, £8.99**



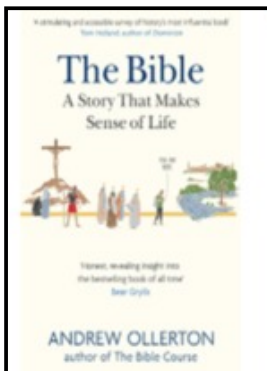
This beautifully illustrated guide will introduce you to the world of Victorian stained glass.

Victorian stained glass is often magnificent, and can still be found in countless British churches, municipal buildings and homes. It is often glowing with colour, with designs influenced by the Gothic Revival, the Arts and Crafts Movement, and even the Art Nouveau, as a new century dawned. Its famous designers include A.W.N. Pugin, and Pre-Raphaelites

William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones.

Trevor Yorke, a historian, tells how Victorian craftsmen re-learned the lost medieval art of colouring, painting, and assembling stained glass windows. But also, as this was an age of industry of how windows became templated, and mass produced.

## **The Bible: a story that makes sense of life by Andrew Ollerton, Bible Society, £11.99**



The Bible has been called the greatest story ever told. This book explores how the story of the Bible not only helps us understand our own lives, but also gives us a framework for making sense of life in general. We can see how the narratives in the Bible mirror the narrative arcs we go through.

Wherever you stand with the Bible, whether you are seeking to find out its meaning for your own life or just want to know more about its stories, this book is a fantastic starting point.

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## Remembering Aretha Franklin

By Tim lenton



Eighty years ago, on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1942, Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul, was born. The American soul/R&B/pop/gospel singer was known for her many hit songs including 'Respect' and 'I Say a Little Prayer'. She died in 2018.

Aretha began her career as a young child, singing gospel songs at New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan, where her father C L Franklin was a minister. His emotional sermons led to him being known as 'the million dollar voice', and he earned money preaching in churches across the country, making him something of a celebrity.

That led to his becoming friends with such luminaries as Martin Luther King, Sam Cooke, and Clara Ward – a singer who acted as a role model to Aretha, who then achieved widespread commercial success after she signed for Atlantic Records in 1966.

Her successes as a singer are too many to document fully, but she won 18 Grammy Awards, and was the first female artist to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

She was also inducted into the UK Music Hall of Fame in 2005 and into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2012. In 2010, *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked her top of its list of the 100 Greatest Singers of All Time. A year after her death the Pulitzer Prize jury awarded her a posthumous special citation "for her indelible contribution to American music and culture for more than five decades".

Life was not always easy for her. A fear of flying stopped her travelling overseas after 1984, and she performed only in North America after that.

Aretha was a Christian who believed in supernatural healing and regarded her singing abilities as a gift from God. "My faith always has been and always will be important to me," she said.

## ALL IN THE MONTH OF MARCH

500 years ago, from 9<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> March 1522 Martin Luther preached his *Invocavit* Sermons. He urged citizens to adhere to the core Christian values and trust in God, rather than using violence to bring about change.

175 years ago, on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1847 Alexander Graham Bell, Scottish-born American engineer, and scientist, was born. Credited with inventing the first practical telephone.

150 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1872 the first FA Cup Final was held at the Oval in Kennington, London. Wanderers beat the Royal Engineers 1-0.

100 years ago, on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1922 Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi was arrested and charged with sedition for his campaign of non-cooperation against the British Indian government. He was sentenced to six years in prison but released after two years as he needed surgery.

80 years ago, on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1942 that Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul, was born. The American soul/R&B/pop/gospel singer was known for her many hit songs including *Respect* and *I Say a Little Prayer*. (Died 2018)

75 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1947 the International Monetary Fund began operating.

65 years ago, on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1957 the Treaty of Rome was signed, creating the European Economic Community (EEC) which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1958. It was renamed the European Community in 1993 and dissolved in 2009, having been replaced by the European Union.

40 years ago, on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1982 the Barbican Centre in London was opened. It is the largest arts and conference venue in Europe.

25 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1997 Queen Elizabeth launched the official Royal website: [www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk)

## Reflected Faith Series

*The Rev Dr Jo White*

### the Ashing Service



Such a strange name for a church service! Why would anyone be attracted to attend such a thing?

This year Ash Wednesday is close to the start of March; on the Second of the month. As the first day of Lent the service is used to physically place a sign of the cross on each person's forehead using ashes made from the previous year's palm crosses.

The use of ashes has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship; the Old Testament referring to sackcloth and ashes over twenty times. There is clearly a visual link with the blackness of evil and sin but also the 'dirtiness' that spreads everywhere from it. We all know how a small amount of mud on the shoes walked into the house will soon go everywhere and take a much harder and longer clean-up operation than if it was wiped off before entering.

In Christian records, ashes are used for penitents by the sixth century, but it is not until the beginning of the eleventh century that the faithful took part in a ceremony on the Wednesday before Lent that included the imposition of ashes. Still later this came to be called Ash Wednesday.

Over the centuries the emphasis of meaning for the imposed ashes has changed, from a preparation for baptism, a renewal of baptismal vows, to an understanding of a community's preparation for the event of the Paschal mystery of rebirth at Easter.

It reminds of what is past and what is to come, and it encourages us to think again of how we can change that journey should we wish to do so.

*This month:*

*The Imposition of Ashes is a powerful nonverbal and experiential way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. It is 'felt' in the heart and soul – as well as on the skin.*



*And can be one of the most profound experiences of humility as we enter together as a Christian community across the globe our journey towards the Cross and the Resurrection.*

As the priest says the traditional words over you, “Remember that you are but dust, and to dust you will return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ. Amen.” what will you be focusing upon?



**Grace of Love**

The God of life to encompass thee,  
Loving Christ encompass lovingly,  
The Holy Ghost encompasser be  
Cherishing, aid, enfolding to send  
To defend.

The Three be about thy head to stand,  
And the Three be about thy breast,  
The Three about thy body at hand  
For each day, for each night of rest,  
The Trinity compassing strong  
Thy life long.

*From Poems of the Western Highlanders*

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## MARIE CURIE AND THE NATIONAL DAY OF REFLECTION



This March the UK's leading end of life charity Marie Curie will once again be asking people across the UK to support its Great Daffodil Appeal.

Money raised from the flagship fundraising appeal will help the charity's doctors, nurses and hospice staff continue their vital work providing expert care to people at the end of life, and their families. Funds raised also go towards the Marie Curie Information and Support Line, which provides support for people dealing with all aspects of end of life including bereavement.

Last year Marie Curie provided direct support to more than 69,000 people – a 15% rise on the previous year – which is more than ever before.

Marie Curie would like to encourage as many people as possible to give their money or time through volunteering, donating, and fundraising. This could include taking part in a Step into Spring challenge, organising a fundraising event, purchasing products from the Marie Curie online shop, or donating.

This year, for the first time in two years, Marie Curie's volunteer collectors will be back on the streets donning their daffodil hats and selling the charity's iconic daffodil pins.

During the Great Daffodil Appeal, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, Marie Curie is inviting everyone in the UK to take part in the National Day of Reflection. It will be a day to come together and support the millions of people who are grieving and remember those we have lost.

You can show your support for the day by wearing a daffodil pin and joining the minute's silence at 12 noon. Or take part by joining one of the many local events happening across the UK or join one of the online talks for inspiration, support and reflection.

For more information on the National Day of Reflection and how to support Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal this March, visit: [mariecurie.org.uk](http://mariecurie.org.uk)

## WORDSEARCH



|             |            |            |         |           |
|-------------|------------|------------|---------|-----------|
| lent        | fasting    | repentance | mothers | learning  |
| spiritual   | prayer     | seeking    | love    | teaching  |
| easter      | desert     | finding    | care    | disciples |
| preparation | selfdenial | growing    | nurture | worldwide |
| flowers     | thankyou   | nursing    | family  |           |

(Solutions on page 30)

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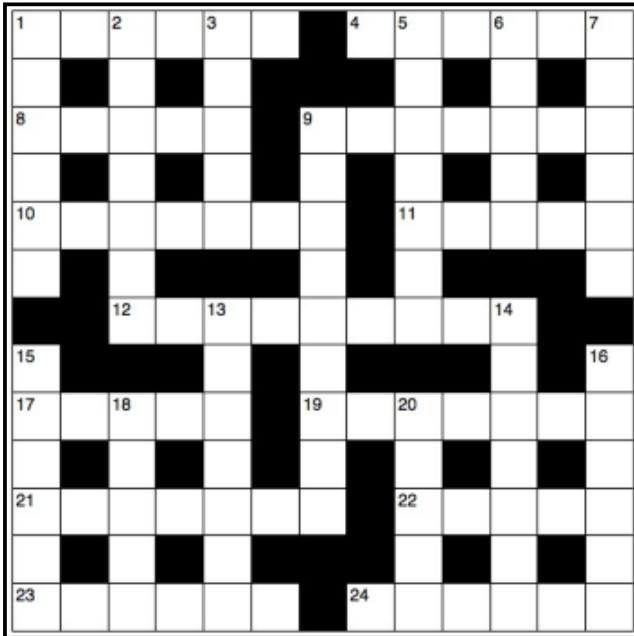
## MARCH CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### Across

- 1 Arouse (Song of Songs 2:7) (6)
- 4 Extinguish (Isaiah 1:31) (6)
- 8 “They — — ,” you will say, “but I’m not hurt!” (Proverbs 23:35) (3,2)
- 9 Unhappiness (Nehemiah 2:2) (7)
- 10 Jewish (7)
- 11 Dirge (anag.) (5)
- 12 ‘A truthful witness gives honest — , but a false witness tells lies’ (Proverbs 12:17) (9)
- 17 Paul quoted from the second one in his address in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:33) (5)
- 19 ‘Do not use your freedom to — the sinful nature’ (Galatians 5:13) (7)
- 21 ‘As you can see, he has done nothing to — death’ (Luke 23:15) (7)
- 22 Name applied by Isaiah to Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:1) (5)
- 23 ‘All the people — — one man, saying, “None of us will go home”’ (Judges 20:8) (4,2)
- 24 Lazarus, who was carried by angels to Abraham’s side when he died, was one (Luke 16:20) (6)

### Down

- 1 Appalled (Job 26:11) (6)
- 2 ‘In an — to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea’ (Acts 27:30) (7)
- 3 Expel (Acts 18:16) (5)
- 5 ‘But I have a baptism to — , and how distressed I am until it is completed!’ (Luke 12:50) (7)



- 6 'Of the increase of his government and peace there will be — —  
' (Isaiah 9:7) (2,3)
- 7 Hurry (Psalm 119:60) (6)
- 9 'For I desire mercy, not — , and acknowledgement of God  
rather than burnt offerings' (Hosea 6:6) (9)
- 13 One of its towns was Sychar, where Jesus met a woman at  
Jacob's well (John 4:5) (7)
- 14 Shouting (Acts 7:57) (7)
- 15 Arachnid (Isaiah 59:5) (6)
- 16 One of Paul's first converts in Philippi was Lydia, a — in purple  
cloth (Acts 16:14) (6)
- 18 Donkeys (5)
- 20 Raked (anag.) (5)

(Solutions on page 30)

## 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.

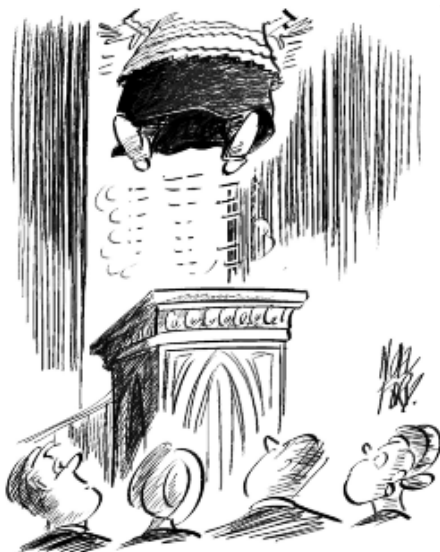
In fact, the project has not been entirely successful; we still need to have a lock fitted and so at present, occupants have been advised to sing hymns loudly, preferably something rousing; “Onward Christian soldiers” would be ideal. A hymn book has been installed as an aide

memoire.

The greater difficulty arises from our antiquated plumbing system. A member of the congregation can leave a Service perfectly discreetly; they can enter the lavatory unseen by anyone, but on flushing, water is drawn through pipes running the length of the inside of the building with a thunderous roar that obliges me to stop preaching until the cataract has subsided. By the time the customer returns quietly into church, all noise has ceased and they remain oblivious of the chaos they caused and the stoic politeness of the congregation.

I am sure that in your worship centre you will have lavish cloakrooms furnished with colour co-ordinated walls and towels, baby changing facilities and video monitors relaying everything going on, so that users will not be denied a single second of your hour-long sermons. Our congregation should be grateful for what they now have. And to think that someone even suggested it should have heating!

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace



The fan-heater under the cassock idea proved not to be such a good one

## **GOD AND THE ARTS**

*By The Rev Michael Burgess*

### **Enter my rest**

At this time of the year, we are planning our gardens for the Spring and Summer ahead. The book of Genesis opens with a glorious account of God's work of creation, and it also tells us that God rested on the seventh day.

We all need to find that balance of work and rest, of activity and slowing down in our lives. And we are not always good at that because our world seems to be in the fast lane. We rush everywhere, we rush out of habit, and we rush because everyone around us is rushing.

This month's painting, 'The Potato Planters' by Jean-Francois Millet, a 19<sup>th</sup> century French artist, portrays two peasants at work. They don't seem to be rushing, but Millet has certainly portrayed the hard toil of their work, digging in the earth from sunrise to sunset to eke out a living. Millet was the son of a farm labourer and many of his paintings convey the severe realism of peasant life. We can sympathise with the couple working on the land, and our eyes focus on them as they dominate the canvas.

But in the corner under the shade of a tree there is a donkey and a sleeping child. The donkey knows only too well the reality of toil and work, but here he is resting, enjoying the peace and the shade. Andy Merrifield, an American philosopher, has just published an account of his travels with a donkey, Gribouille. As they journey together, the donkey teaches him the value of patience, the importance of going slowly through the world, and the preciousness of tender friendship between humans and animals. They are all caught up in the little donkey in this painting.



The man and woman in the foreground may reflect our own lives with the duties, the expectations and the demands called of us at work. Take time to focus on the donkey, enjoying his rest. Take time this Spring and Summer to find relaxation and recreation. The world may carry on spinning around us, but we can stand apart, and enter into the rest that God enjoyed after His work of creation.



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## 20<sup>th</sup> Cuthbert, beloved monk and bishop of Lindisfarne



Cuthbert of Lindisfarne (c 634-87) was born into a fairly well-off Anglo-Saxon family, and he became a monk at Melrose in 651. He and another monk, Eata, were sent to start a monastery at Ripon, but Alcfrith, who owned the land, insisted that they adopt the Roman customs, which Cuthbert's Celtic church did not allow. So, Cuthbert and Eata quietly returned to Melrose, where Cuthbert became prior in about 661. Then came the Synod of Whitby in 663/4, and the Celtic Church formally decided to adopt the

Roman customs. After this, Cuthbert was sent on to Lindisfarne as prior, where he sensitively introduced the new ways, and won over the monks there.

Cuthbert was very much loved at Lindisfarne. His zeal was evident in his constant preaching, teaching, and visiting of the people. He was also said to have gifts of prophecy and healing. Occasionally, Cuthbert reached 'people overload'. Then he would retreat to a tiny islet called Inner Farne, where he could pray in total seclusion. When, to his horror, he was told he had been made Bishop of Hexham, he immediately 'swapped' sees with Eata, and stayed on at Lindisfarne as Bishop. Sadly, Cuthbert died on little Inner Farne, only two years later, on 20 March, 687.

Cuthbert was buried at Lindisfarne, but that is not the end of his story. For it was only now that his travels began. After the Vikings destroyed Lindisfarne in 875, several monks dug him up and set out to find Cuthbert a final, and safe, resting place. For the next 120 years Cuthbert was deposited in various monasteries around the north of England and southwest Scotland. Finally, in 999, Cuthbert was allowed to rest in Durham, where a Saxon church was built over his shrine.



## TRAVELLING WITH THE WORD

We take cars, buses and trains for granted today but years ago it was far more difficult to get around. Let me tell you about 2 people who lived centuries apart but travelled all over England spreading the good news.

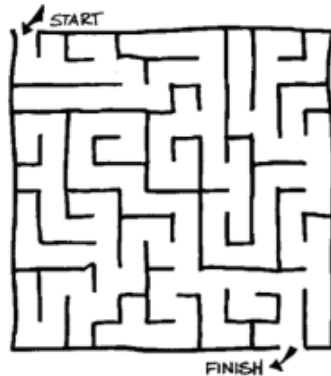
The first is St Chad who lived in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and walked every where throughout the Midlands converting the ancient kingdom of Mercia to Christianity. When he was given a horse he didn't want to ride until the Archbishop insisted that if he rode it would help him to convert more souls for Christ.

The 2nd is John Wesley who travelled the length and breadth of England on horseback. In the 50 years before he died in 1791 he travelled over 250,000 miles preaching some 40,000 sermons saying 'I look upon the world as my parish'.

Both covered huge distances and reached out to so many people way before the advantages of modern communication like the Internet!

## WHERE TO?

Can you travel your way through the maze to find your way to the jokes?



**What do you give a horse with a cold?**  
Cough Stirrup!

**Which snakes are found on cars?**  
Windscreen vipers!

**What do you call a laughing motorcycle?**  
A Yamahahahaha!

**What do bees do if they want to use public transport?**  
Wait at a buzz stop!



## SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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## SOLUTIONS TO WORDSEARCH

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