



THE WORD

Editor: Stuart Baker: stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com



**THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
ST. JOHN'S ROAD, BIRKDALE. PR8 4JP
Charity Number 1128171**

St. John, Chapter 1, verses 1 and 14:

***"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....
The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."***

ISSUE No. 244

APRIL 2023

ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming



Spring has arrived at last although the weather remains distinctly wintery. The joy of Spring, for Christians, is Easter, the celebration of the resurrection of Christ after his brutal execution. It is matched in the natural world by regrowth and regeneration which is why so many symbols associated with Easter involve spring flowers, eggs and chickens. But the triumphal symbol of Easter is the cross on which Jesus bore the punishment for the sins of all mankind and led to Him rising again so that all who believe in Him may be redeemed.

Here at St John's we have opportunities for growing our faith and for taking the Gospel message to others. The new Bible Study meetings, the Growth Groups, Cake Coffee and Chat, our Memorial Service (open to anyone who would like to spend time in prayerful recollection of a lost loved one), and our various social activities all give us a chance to share the message with each other and with those who may be waiting for a chance to find out about our faith.

In April we shall start a new series of Sunday sermons based on the Old Testament Book of Nehemiah. These talks will last until mid June and our preaching team will explain how Nehemiah set about an enormous task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem which had been destroyed by the Babylonians. The talks will show how Nehemiah was selected for the job, how he prepared for it, how the work was carried out, how he coped with discouragement and criticism, how he persevered, and how he planned to protect what he had built after the job was complete. There are many lessons which we can all learn from this. Above all, with God's help no task is too big.

**FOR ALL ENQUIRIES TO OR ABOUT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH PLEASE CONTACT US
BY EMAIL info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk OR PHONE: 07732 691542**

WHO'S WHO AT ST. JOHN'S

Priest (retired) Rev. Roy Doran (572387)
 Reader: Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)

Churchwardens: Stuart Baker (560518)
 Clive Morris (564206)

Deputy Warden: Tim Wright (553977)
 Wardens' Assistant:: Miss Lucy Wright (553977)

Treasurer: Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)

PCC Secretary: Alex Vernon

Parish Hall Secretary: Mrs. Jean Morris (564206)

Electoral Roll Officer: Stuart Harris

Safeguarding: Stuart Baker (560518) and
 Ms. Michelle Baldeh

Church of England
 Children's Society: Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)

Mothers' Union: Mrs. Linda Caton (564737)

Girl Guides Mrs. Janette Law (565951)
 St. John's Brownies: Mrs. Helen Jones and
 Brownie Guiders: Mrs. Lesley Scott
 St. John's Rainbows: Mrs. Lesley Scott

Church Flowers: Mrs. Cath Whiteside (568874)

Magazine Editor: Stuart Baker (560518)

Magazine Printer: Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)

Notice boards, I.T,
 Website developer: Mrs. Sally Wright (553977)

Buildings Inspector: David Halsall

Growth Groups

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 7.30pm
 @ 32 Hartley Crescent

*Finding out more
 Together*



WE'D LOVE YOU TO JOIN US

*We believe in
 the power of
 prayer*

PRAYER TIME @ ST JOHN'S

Led by the leadership team

**1st and 3rd Thursdays
 7.30pm**

SEE WEBSITE FOR ZOOM DETAILS



Thursday Evening Prayers

The next prayer meeting by **zoom** and telephone
 will be at 7.30pm on 20th April.

**There will not be a prayer meeting on Maundy
 Thursday (6th April).**

If there is anything which you would like to
 pray about with others contact Sally, Tim or
 Lucy Wright, or Christine, Clive or Roy.



WHAT'S NEW AND COMING SOON

TOGETHER @ 7

*A time for Worship
and Fellowship*

Can we encourage you to come to worship and have fellowship together across the three churches?

Please join us for an informal service with a time for refreshments. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet others from our partner churches and build up our relationships with the other Christians in Birkdale.

As we move towards the goal of appointing new clergy to our parishes it is our responsibility to make sure we are ready. Our new vicars will be working across the three churches and will be encouraged from the start of their ministry to see that we, as three congregations, have prepared the way for that new ministry.

So please make 'Together @7, and other joint services, your priority as we all embark on this journey.

5 March - St John's

2 April - St James'

7 May - St John's

4 June - St Peter's



St John's Church Birkdale

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

2nd & 4th
Wednesdays

2-4pm
St John's small hall



FRIDAY

Coffee, Cake & Chat

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, ST JOHN'S RD, BIRKDALE PR8 4JP

ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE

MONTHLY

2ND FRIDAYS

10.30AM

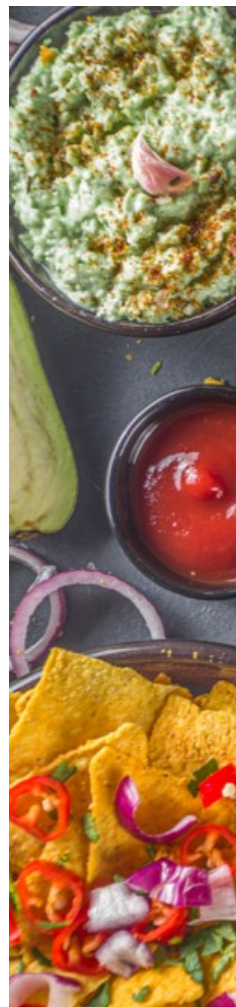


St John's, Birkdale

MAUNDY THURSDAY

*Come and join us for
a light supper and a
thought for the day*

Thursday 6 April
St John's hall
7.30pm



WHAT'S ON AT ST. JOHN'S



Visit our new website

stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk

- Find out about what's going on at St John's
- Check out the calendar for upcoming events
- Listen to the weekly talks
- Find out about booking the hall
- Free on-line bible
- Show it to your friends and family

God centred, Relationship driven,
Life transforming

St John's Presents FILM NIGHTS

Come and join us as we enjoy great
films and refreshments @ 6.30pm
film begins at 7pm

For details of our screenings
see our church noticeboards

17 February

17 March

28 April

26 May

23 June

Free entry, refreshments available

ST JOHN'S INVITE YOU
TO JOIN US IN OUR

SOCIAL EVENTS

If you'd like further details or to
book a place please contact
Christine 07821 982477 or Sally
07800 550097



Friday 13 January @ 7pm

Friday 24 February @ 7pm

Saturday 11 March @ 7pm

Friday 21 April @ 7pm

Friday 5 May @ 7pm

Date to be confirmed

Saturday 8 July @ 2pm

Friday 22 September @ 7pm

Friday 20 October @ 7pm

Friday 17 November @ 7pm

Friday 1 December 6-9pm

Saturday 2 December 10-3pm

Early, Early Burns Night

Late, Late Pancake Party

Andy Dean's Quiz Night

Italian Food Night

Coronation Bangers & Mash

Summer Fair & Afternoon Tea

Strawberry Tea

Harvest Supper

Just Desserts

Bingo and Beetle Night

Christmas Tree Festival and
Christmas Fair

YOUNG ADULT SOCIALS

2023

Saturday 15th April
Ghetto Golf & Baltic market

Saturday 13th May
Knowsley Safari park

Saturday 17th June
Pizza and games @ Lucy's

Saturday 15th July
Rivington

Friday 11th August
BBQ @ Lucy's

Saturday 23th September
Bowling and Nando's

St John's Church, Birkdale

Reflecting faith – Easter Flowers

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



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

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

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

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

Easter Lilies in our Church

If you would like to commemorate anyone at Easter please contact **Cath Whiteside** who will be organising the arrangement of Easter Lilies.

Donations will be very welcome.

Parish Register

Death

Doreen Pennington, died on 11th March 2023 aged 94 years.



WhatsApp

For the last three years St John's has had a WhatsApp messaging group which proved to be a very useful way of keeping in contact during the covid pandemic. Although the lockdowns are now (we hope!) a long way behind us our WhatsApp group continues and is much used.

If you have a mobile phone and would like to be part of this group please contact Roy Doran

St John's April Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Palm Sunday service at 10.30am followed by Holy Communion Together @7 at St James'. Joint informal service with St James' and St Peter's	3	4	5	6 Maundy Thursday Service in the church hall: 7.30pm (speaker: Roy) NO 7.30PM ZOOM PRAYER TIME TODAY	7 Good Friday: Joint service at Liverpool Road Methodist Church at 10.45am	8
9 Easter Sunday service at 10.30am including Holy Communion	10	11	12 Bible Study 2pm in the church hall Growth Groups 7.30pm at 32 Hartley Crescent	13	14 Coffee, Cake & Chat 10.30am in the church hall	15
16 Sunday service at 10.30am Memorial Service at 4.00pm	17	18	19 Midweek Holy Communion (BCP) at 10.30am in church	20 Prayer Time @ 7.30pm (on zoom)	21 Italian Night at 32 Hartley Crescent	22
23 Sunday service at 10.30am Annual Church Meeting and APCM at 11.30am	24	25	26 Bible Study 2pm in the church hall Growth Groups 7.30pm at 32 Hartley Crescent	27	28 Film Night in the church hall at 6.30pm for cake and tea or coffee. Film starts at 7.00pm	29
30 Joint service at St James' at 10.30am Note: there will not be a service at St John's today						

Hope for our diocese

*An Easter Message from Bishop Beverley Mason,
Bishop of Warrington*

Easter is the greatest ever story of hope! Jesus's story is one where his resurrection smashes through the despair of death. It's a story of life overcoming death and goodness triumphing over evil.



And, my word, we need hope!

We are surrounded by tales of woe - because life is tough. We can't switch off to what's happening round about us - that would be to deny our lived reality. But without hope, we may find ourselves spiralling into despondency. The ongoing cost of living crisis is biting hard. So many of us are making tough decisions to try to mitigate sinking into debt, and to compound this, we hear talk of decline and financial challenge in our churches and in our diocese. The very places designed and intended for blessing and singing the song of Easter hope, risk becoming obstacles, locking us in the emptiness and despondency of Holy Saturday.

For the disciples, the crucifixion of Jesus, plunged them into grief and despair. On Holy Saturday it probably felt like there was no way out and no hope. Dreams were shattered; they were at once without direction or purpose. Everything would have felt meaningless. Some walked away. I wonder how this resonates for so many of us in our churches and beyond.

For us, we are resurrection people. We know the story of Jesus overcoming death itself as the one who is The Resurrection; of his coming alongside those who were walking away, so that they would return and sing the song of life overcoming death and of God's mighty deeds in Jesus. We know the story that God is outworking his purpose in the world and that by the gift of the Holy Spirit in us, we the baptised are participants in Jesus' mission, today and tomorrow and until he comes in glory.

Our churches all have stories of hope because Jesus is in the church. Where Jesus is present we can expect to see the transformation and signs of resurrection. Our diocese, too, has a story of hope emerging from those engaging with the Fit for Mission priorities: introducing people to Jesus, growing Christian leaders, deepening discipleship and working for justice. Stories of hope are emerging in every worshipping community; stories of kindness; stories of activity and activism and stories of conversion.

All this is bound up in the story of the one who was crucified for us; who rose on Easter Sunday and who equipped his disciples to sing the song of God's wondrous love for humanity and the world. Today, as disciples of Jesus, we are tasked with the same mandate to serve in his name, to call people back to the Cross of Christ so that all may know the love and life-giving-ness of the Resurrection and by Jesus' love mingled with ours, to show that love in the world.

This Easter, I pray you may know the hope of Christ in fresh and palpable ways so that your heart is set on fire with love for Him, and as you share this same hope in the community you love and among the people you serve.

Christ is Risen and his Spirit is with us.

An Easter Meditation

by Dr Herbert McGonigle, formerly Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology & Church History, Nazarene Theological College, Manchester.

In the New Testament the resurrection of Jesus is presented as a simple historical fact. He did rise from the grave on that first Easter morning.

The four evangelists, and Paul, carefully lay out the evidence. They record for us the details of the empty tomb, the names of those who visited it, the various appearances of the risen Jesus and how He was seen by more than five hundred witnesses. But the New Testament tells us more than that. It tells us, not only of the power of God that raised Jesus from the grave (eg. Romans 1:4) but also of that same power being invested in the Church. Christians are new people! We are 'made alive' in our Risen Head (Ephesians 1:1). His victory has become our victory! As Jesus promised: 'Because I live, you will also live' (John 14:19).

Until our Lord returns again one day, Christians will die physically, but their victory over death is already guaranteed. As Paul demonstrates in 1 Corinthians 15, death is 'swallowed up in victory'! Death's sting is abolished! And so Paul proclaims our victory anthem. 'Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' (vv.55-57)!

Down through 2,000 years Christ's people have lived in that glorious victory. One example was **Donald Cargill** (1619-1681). Cargill was a Presbyterian minister and a Covenanter in the years known in Scotland's history as 'the killing times.' The Covenanters opposed all attempts by the English parliament to impose Episcopacy on Scotland. With other Covenanters, Cargill strongly denounced the immorality and irreligion of the court of King Charles II. Hundreds of Covenanters were imprisoned at this time, and many were executed, both men and women.



Cargill's fearless itinerant preaching made him a marked man. He moved from place to place, preaching in cottages, fields, and town squares, protected by loyal friends. Then in July 1681 he was arrested and imprisoned. The outcome of his trial was never in question. The government of the day was determined to silence this influential 'rebel.' He was sentenced for execution on July 27th of that year.

On the scaffold in Edinburgh, Cargill spoke to the large crowd that had come to support him. "I climb this ladder," he declared, "with less fear than ever I entered a pulpit to preach." Then, raising his eyes to a blue July sky over his beloved Scotland, he cried out: "I have gotten me Christ and Christ has gotten me the victory." The blade fell and the brave soul of Donald Cargill joined the martyrs who lived and died in the victory of the Risen Christ.

Thanks be to God indeed! That glorious victory is not only for all the brave martyrs, but for all of us who belong to Christ. Death is defeated. The grave is conquered. Christ lives for ever in the power of an endless life. And we live in Him! We can all say: '*I have gotten me Christ and Christ has gotten me the victory.*'

Worship on Palm Sunday

SUNDAY 2nd APRIL: HOLY COMMUNION

10.30am service IN CHURCH and via
zoom & phone

Worshippers in church are invited to remain in
church after the first part of the service has
concluded and receive Communion.

Collect for Palm Sunday

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah: grant us the faith
to know you and love you, that we may be found beside you on the way of
the cross, which is the path of glory.

**The subject of
Sally's talk:**

**The King Has Come:
Be The Donkey**

The Reading: Matthew ch.21 vv.1-11

1 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of
Olives Jesus sent two disciples,
2 saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a
donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me.
3 If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will
send them right away."
4 This took place to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet:
5 "Say to Daughter Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on
a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"
6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them.
7 They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for
Jesus to sit on.
8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut
branches from the trees and spread them on the road.
9 The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,
"Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"
10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked,
"Who is this?"
11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in
Galilee."

TOGETHER @ 7

*A time for Worship
and Fellowship*

Can we encourage you to come to worship and have
fellowship together across the three churches?

Please join us for an informal service with a time for
refreshments. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet
others from our partner churches and build up our
relationships with the other Christians in Birkdale.

SUNDAY

2nd APRIL

@ 7PM

AT ST JAMES'

Worship on Maundy Thursday

THURSDAY 6th APRIL

7.30pm

IN THE CHURCH HALL

Collect for Maundy Thursday

God our Father, your Son Jesus Christ was obedient to the end and drank the cup prepared for him: may we who share his table watch with him through the night of suffering and be faithful.

The subject of Roy's Talk:
Reflections in Holy Week



We have invited worshippers from St James', St Peter's and Liverpool Road Methodist Church to join us for this informal service at which light refreshments will be provided (no charge).

If you would like to come please contact Christine Baker or Sally Wright so that we can have a good idea of how many to cater for.

Worship on Good Friday



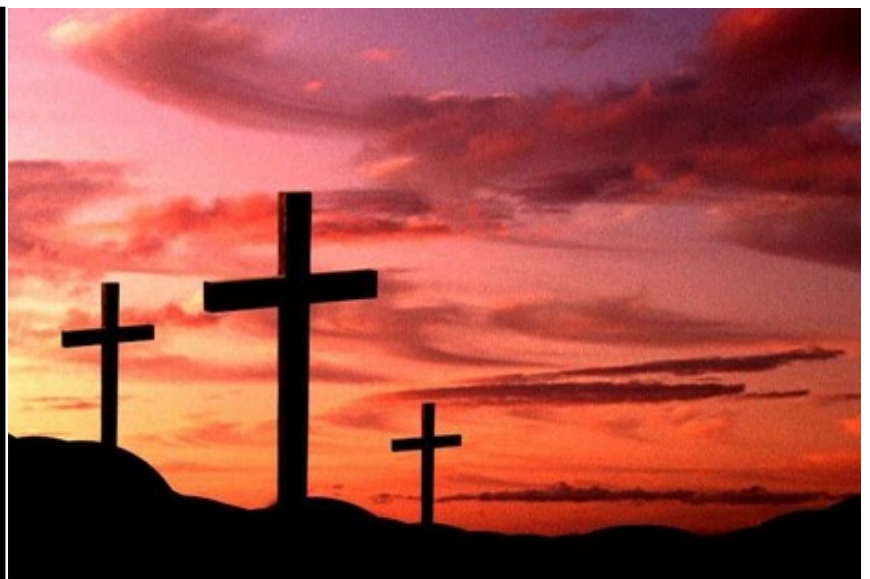
FRIDAY 7th APRIL

10.45am service AT LIVERPOOL ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

Collect for Good Friday

Eternal God, in the cross of Jesus we see the cost of sin and the depth of your love: in humble hope and fear may we place at his feet all that we have and all that we are, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There will not be a service at St John's on Good Friday. We will be joining Liverpool Road Methodist Church in their service



Worship on
Easter Day



SUNDAY 9th APRIL

10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone, followed
by Holy Communion.

Collect for Easter Day

God of glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**The subject of
Christine's Talk:**

**Promises, Promises:
The Empty Tomb**

Readings:

Mark chapter 15:25-28

It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS. They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left.

Matthew chapter 28:1-6

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.

John chapter 20:3-7

So Peter and the other disciple (John) started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen.



Worship on the Second
Sunday of Easter

SUNDAY 16th APRIL

**10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone**

Collect for the Second Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred: open the doors of our hearts, that we may seek the good of others and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace, to the praise of God the Father.

**The subject of
Lucy's talk:**

'Nehemiah – Is it too big a task?'

The Man for the Hour

The Reading: Nehemiah ch.1 vv.5-11

5 Then I said: "LORD, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments,

6 let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you.

7 We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

8 "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations,

9 but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'

10 "They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand.

11 Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favour in the presence of this man." I was cupbearer to the king.

Memorial Service

At 4.00pm in church: see
more details on page 13



**Midweek Book of
Common Prayer
Holy Communion**

WEDNESDAY 19th APRIL

10.30am service IN CHURCH

ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE PR8 4JP



Memorial Service



**Come and join us to remember
and celebrate the life of loved
ones - gone but never forgotten**

***Sunday 16 April @4pm
St John's Church
Birkdale***



@stjohnsbirkdale



St John's Birkdale

www.stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk

Worship on the Third
Sunday of Easter

SUNDAY 23rd APRIL
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Third Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ, you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope:
strengthen us to proclaim your risen life and fill us with your peace, to the
glory of God the Father.

**The subject of
Roy's talk:**

'Nehemiah – Is it too big a task?'

Preparation for The Work

The Reading: Nehemiah ch.2 vv.1-10

1 In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before,

2 so the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart." I was very much afraid,

3 but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?"

4 The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven,

5 and I answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favour in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it."

6 Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, "How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?" It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time.

7 I also said to him, "If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah?"

8 And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal park, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?" And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests.

9 So I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates and gave them the king's letters. The king had also sent army officers and cavalry with me.

10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about this, they were very much disturbed that someone had come to promote the welfare of the Israelites.

Worship on the Fourth
Sunday of Easter

SUNDAY 30th APRIL

10.30 at St James'

Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father.

Because this is the 5th Sunday in the month we shall not have a service at St John's today. We shall have a joint service with St James' and St Peter's and Liverpool Road Methodist Church at 10.30am at St. James' Church

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The APM and APCM will be held on **Sunday 23rd April immediately after the 10.30am service in church has concluded and will also be on zoom.**

Nomination forms are available in church for election to the Parochial Church Council and for the election of Churchwardens and Deanery Synod Representatives.

Stuart Baker was elected as a warden in 2017 and will have completed six successive terms of office by the date of the Annual Meeting and he is thereby not eligible for re-election. **This will leave a vacancy and it is important, particularly during the Interregnum when we have no Vicar, that this vacancy is filled. Members of our congregation are all urged to give serious thought to whether they would be willing to become a churchwarden. Stuart Baker and Clive Morris will be very pleased to discuss this with anyone who might be interested and willing to take on this role and to provide advice and guidance as to what is involved.**

All of our congregation are urged and invited to attend the APCM at which you will hear about what has been happening at St John's during the last year and what is on the horizon. You will have a chance to ask questions and, importantly, your presence will show that we have an active and interested church family. Please do not leave it to the usual suspects to be the only ones there. **We would love to see YOU at the meeting!**

Interregnum News

The position of Vicar of St John's is currently being advertised again. The closing date for applications is 5th April. If there are any applications there will be a shortlisting meeting on 21st April and any candidates will be interviewed on 2nd May.

We ask our parishioners to pray that our advertisement is read prayerfully by someone who feels driven to minister to our parish. Any further news can be mentioned at the APCM.

St John's Church, Birkdale

Italian Night

FRIDAY 21 APRIL

32 HARTLEY

CRESCENT

7 PM



TICKETS

£10



Please let us know of any food allergies
when booking

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The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'

Beware When The Choirs Meet

The Rectory,
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

You agonised recently over your ecumenical service: who should be invited? Who should preach? What about the order of service? If you had attended our recent combined churches' choir festival, your own dilemmas would have seemed a little less acute.

At the pre-meeting, there was heated discussion about whether those choirs who normally wore robes would be comfortable standing among those who didn't. The more aesthetically sensitive worried whether St Agatha's pea green cassocks may clash with our red ones. Intending to be helpful, but phrasing it rather badly, someone suggested that the normally robed choirs should wear nothing. Colonel Wainwright was a little too quick to chuckle.

I began to wonder if a prize was to be awarded to the person who raised the greatest number of concerns: Should the choirs stay separate? Would the tenors be next to the altos or the basses? Where would extra seating be placed? Would the heating be on for the rehearsal? Then came what you would call the 'elephant in the room': of all the choirmasters, *who would conduct and who play the organ?*

Tension mounted, and expressions grew grim. But before the committee started to dig trenches in my carpet and position howitzers under the desk, I briefly left the room, turned off all the electricity and claimed we'd had a power cut. This is a useful device for truculent committees; sadly, it can be used only rarely.

Come the day, an uneasy truce lasted while everyone adopted the traditional solution to disagreement within congregations, and simply did exactly what they wanted. Some were robed, some were not, some choirs congealed in their own huddles, while others joyfully sat next to people from other churches – mainly so they could point out their neighbour's wrong notes. Some sang in the right key, some sang in the wrong key, some sang what sounded like quite different songs altogether.

The service ended with one choir thinking that the organist had played too loudly, while another choir thought that the conductor wasn't up to much. Everyone agreed afterwards that we must do it again, while firmly stating that if their own choirmaster didn't conduct next year, they wouldn't be there.

Thankfully, one fundamental thing on the day united them: they all said that our church was too cold, and they all went down to the pub afterwards to warm up.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

They have Dial-a-Prayer for atheists now. You call up, and it rings and rings but nobody answers.

GOD in the Arts

*The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a look at “**The Funeral of Phocion**” by Nicholas Poussin.*

In the 17th century the name Arcadia evoked an earthly paradise that was celebrated in art and literature as an idyllic place of peace and harmony where humanity and nature were at one. To live in such beautiful surroundings was to find heaven on earth.

We often have that feeling when we are out in the countryside amid the hills and woods, the valleys and lakes. The sun shines benevolently down on the scene, and we feel nothing can destroy that happiness and sense of unity we have with creation around us.

That is the mood shown to us when we first look at this month's painting, 'The Funeral of Phocion.' It is by the Baroque artist, Nicholas Poussin, who was born in France but spent most of his working life in Rome, where he died in 1665.

In the distance are friendly hills, and then closer at hand we see the trees and bushes, a winding river, the shepherd and his sheep, a couple walking and talking, and the farmer and his cart. There are also signs of civilization – it is the city of Athens with its temple and buildings, a place where harmony and reason rule.

Poussin presents us with a calm, ordered landscape. But in the foreground, we see something that jolts us out of this reverie. Two slaves carry off a body for burial. It is Phocion, an Athenian general. He was known as 'Phocion the good,' admired for his honesty and integrity and for his simple way of life.

In the 4th century BC Phocion argued for peace when the city around clamoured for

war with Macedon. His enemies won the day and they intrigued to have him condemned. As a traitor, Phocion was denied a burial in Athens, and so his body is being taken outside the city.

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

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



W CROSS R D

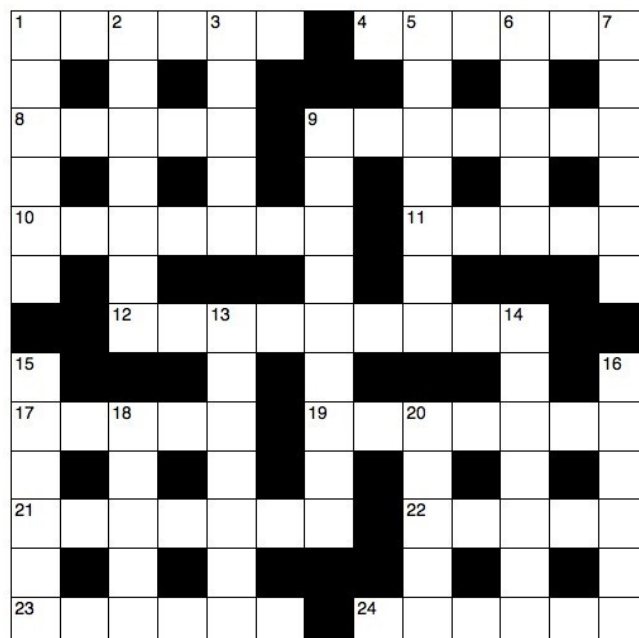
Solution on page 30

Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
 12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)
 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)
 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)
 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)



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

In our Book of Remembrance in April

- 2nd Harry Tucker, 1986
 Mark Harding, 2003
 3rd Henry Prescott, 1988
 8th John Hamer, 1972
 9th Ruby Bennett, 2000
 Harriet (Pat) Hind, 2007
 12th James Canadine, 1986
 Elizabeth Powney, 1990
 William Baker, 2000
 13th Eric Whitehead, 1983
 15th Alan Short, 1977
 17th Bernard Rimmer, 1996

- 18th Elizabeth Critchley, 1989
 19th Annie Rimmer, 1986
 20th Samuel Maguire, 1996
 21st Dora Gott, 1987
 George Hamer, 1983
 22nd Robert Rimmer, 1974
 23rd Aubrey Hanoman, 1997
 24th Ruth Beaumont, 2009
 26th Joyce Crosby, 2010
 30th Ada Whitehead, 2013

If any of our readers wish to have the name of a deceased relative inscribed in the Book of Remembrance please contact Stuart Baker.

Anonymous Wisdom

The world needs more warm hearts and fewer hot heads.

Keep the faith – but not from others!

God wants what's right – not what's left.

Canon Paul Hardingham continues his new series on the spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and deepen our faith. It will run throughout this year.

Spiritual Disciplines – Confession

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The story behind the story of *Ben Hur*

There is a story to be told of the writing of *Ben Hur*, the book that became the 1959 block-buster film featuring Charlton Heston. It was written in 1880 by Lew Wallace, an American lawyer, Union general during the Civil War, and then governor of the New Mexico Territory. (His statue still stands today on Washington's Capitol Hill).

Wallace had told his wife that he intended to examine the New Testament, and then write a book that would explode what he called "the myth of Christ's resurrection". Wisely, his Christian wife did not argue with him, but simply prayed. The months passed, and Wallace read and reread the New Testament, and wrote and rewrote his draft chapters. Finally, he confided to his wife that he could not refute the resurrection of Christ, and that therefore his book would not be written.

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

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

Beware of False Prophets

By Dennis Davis

There are 30 references in the scriptures to alert us to beware of false prophets in their various forms. I do not profess to be a Theologian or a Philosopher nor even a scholar knowledgeable in the scriptures or Church protocol, but just a voice crying in the wilderness who is concerned about how the Church (like many other organisations) seems to have become infiltrated by subversive influences and minority group pressure to bring things in line with their own unspecified control.

Recently I decided to read my old 1936 version of the Church of Ireland Book of Common Prayer. Since coming to Southport and having read my bible from cover to cover many times over the years, this prompted me to read the preface which gives an account of previous revisions in 1549, 1662, 1878 and 1926. Most of these revisions covered the period of the Reformation and removing the errors from that period and clarifying the rites of Holy Communion. Dwelling on the truth, there were two issues that gave me some concern about the future.

The 1878 Revision states: "Any changes made and not censured upon the former book as anything contrary to the scriptures containing". It exhorts Bishops to take heed that the persons they present unto us shall be apt in exercising the ministry to God and edifying the Church. The prayer that follows is applicable to clergy and laity alike:

"O God, Father of Heaven, have mercy on us miserable sinners, from all blindness, pride, vain glory and hypocrisy, envy, hatred, malice, Good Lord Deliver us".

It further exhorts: "With all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's law". I raise this not to judge but to clarify for the non-clergy what our clergy promise to do, as a yardstick to measure if they fail in this promise, as they may well do so due to over familiarity with God's word and a loss, over time, of drive to achieve. It happens in every walk of life.

For years now it has become more noticeable how much the teachings of the Church have been watered down to

appease pressure groups and for fear of being castigated as being racist or sexist; an example of this is that some minority groups want to delete the word Father from the prayers and scriptures, and recently the General Synod passed a vote to bless certain people who according to the scriptures are living in sin, the Archbishops, Bishops and Clergy being in favour and the laity voting 93% against.

Forgiveness and blessing is available to all who confess their sin. This makes me wonder, has the Church lost its way due to the outside pressures of the media and vocal minority groups who pursue their drive for political correctness and wokeism. Over the years the Church has watered down the teaching to appease an anti-Church movement which is world wide. Or is there a subversive group within the Church trying to bring about change as they see it and not as the scriptures prescribe.

We are told and believe that the scriptures are the word from God the Father handed down to us over the years through the word of the Holy Ghost, through Patriarchs and apostles both in the Old and New Testament. To bring about these changes and to alter the structure of the teachings of the Church may be considered Heresy by some and definitely against God's Law. Who are these nameless, faceless agitators who try to re-write not only history but now the scriptures to comply with their own beliefs.

Recently I have read certain changes that make me wonder if our Church Leadership has lost its way by considering such changes to the Bible. The fact that when a vacancy occurs for a new Archbishop the current Prime Minister selects from the last 2 candidates brings into play a political tendency to suggest a candidate who would support the Prime Minister's party's policies.

If change is needed then the whole Church should vote; after all, we are told that it is not the buildings nor the clergy but the whole membership. This could be done by each church presenting their nominated candidate thus eliminating any political involvement and removing this political pressure from the Archbishop.

Continued no next page

I am sure many of the Clergy are as worried as we are, but how many will defy their Bishop for fear of retaliation or loss of promotion or of putting political beliefs before God and the Church. Each is allowed to have their own thought and ideas but if in position of power they should not impose them on others.

We have the evidence of those who have gone before us and taken their stand. No example is greater than that of the Lord Jesus Christ and many others who gave their life for the Church.

The section of the Prayer Book on the Ordering of Priests makes interesting reading as it sets out what they are undertaking and urges diligence to minister in the Doctrines and Sacraments and to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines. They also have to obey their Bishop and submit themselves to their Godly Judgements. Bishops also have to undertake to obey the Archbishops.

Of the 3 religions of the "BOOK" (the Old Testament) Christianity is the easiest target for anti religious elements, mainly because it seemingly has a laissez faire approach and preaches peace and good will to all and to turn the other cheek. This anti war approach may be seen as a form of weakness to be exploited. However, we read there is a time for war, and a time for peace. Most of the rousing militant Hymns have already been air brushed from use, such as "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus", "Fight the Good Fight", "Ho, My Comrades! See the Signal waving in the Sky" to name but a few.

The Church must stand firm by declaring clearly what the scriptures tell us starting from Genesis as this may be the next target for those intent on destroying religion; not to do so leaves them suspect as to where their true beliefs lie. As the bible tells us: "We are known by our good works." That does not take away any person's right to believe they are different but they must accept that we should be also allowed to express our beliefs in the same way as they are doing. These things are not the works of God but of wayward man. Failure will result in an earlier day of reckoning.

A group of African and Asian Anglican Churches have declared that they have disqualified the C of E from being its

mother Church. As leader of the Church "The Buck stops with the Archbishop". Not to stand up to these attacks on what is seen as the word of God could be seen as a betrayal of God and his word, and of all those martyrs who went before us.

Are some of those who are in favour also some of the false prophets we are warned about? I hope not and if so, any that are, and The Archbishop deserve our prayers that all may once again see the light and come back to God's word in the scriptures.

It is sometimes claimed that change is needed to encourage more people, especially the young, who no longer understand the language of the King James Bible or The Book of Common Prayer. The result of this has been falling numbers and where are these children now that used to go to our Sunday schools and choirs? Recently Roy finished his talk with the warning found in Revelations 22-18/20. I quote:

"For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophesy of this book: if anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book: and if anyone takes away from the word of this book of this prophesy, God shall take away his part from the book of life from the holy city and from the things which are written in this book."

I would advocate that consideration be given to a greater use of the laity in future appointments of Archbishops by each individual Church so that they may make their choice and the final decision should be made by the outgoing Archbishop to declare who his replacement would be, thus removing the political hold and pressure in future appointments. The Church of England must wake up to the truth of the word of God and not bow down to any distortion of the word in order to please man.

I ask: Who is on the Lords side and will buckle on the whole armour of God, for His name's sake? Good Lord Deliver us. Peace and blessing on all who believe. Amen.

(This article raises issues which may be controversial and which are now within the political and religious domain. If any of our readers wish to contribute their thoughts on these issue please submit them to the editor).

God in the Sciences

Dr Ruth Bancewicz, who is based at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge, writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

How can a Christian be a Scientist?

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



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

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

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

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

WORD SEARCH

Solution on page 26

Even as Jesus ate that last Passover meal with His disciples, He warned them He was about to be betrayed. He took the bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to them; He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them to drink. The Old Covenant, based on Law, was ticking away its final hours; the New Covenant, based on Christ's body and His blood, was about to be ushered in. Jesus prayed in Gethsemane that this fearful cup of suffering might be removed from Him, but even more, that God's will might be done. And it was. Because of Easter we can approach God through his Son, Jesus Christ. He has opened the gates to heaven for us!

Jesus
Ate
Last
Passover
Meal
Disciples
Warned
Betrayed
Bread
Blessed
Wine
Thanks
Drink
Covenant
Law
Old
New
Body
Blood
Gethsemane
Cup
Removed
Will
Easter
Approach
God

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Y	A	P	P	M	A	T	K	E	D	O	M
D	G	S	U	S	E	J	W	N	C	M	A
O	S	O	T	C	K	A	I	T	I	E	N
B	L	E	D	D	O	N	L	L	S	R	E
U	R	D	N	D	D	S	L	C	E	U	D

Our next series of Sunday sermons will be based on the book of Nehemiah.

Who was he?

The book is set in the 5th century BC. Judah is one of several provinces within a larger administrative unit within an ancient empire. The capital of the empire was at Susa. Nehemiah is a cup-bearer to king Persia – an important official position.

At his own request Nehemiah was sent to Jerusalem as governor of Judah. Jerusalem had been conquered and destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC and Nehemiah found it still in ruins. His task was to rebuild the walls and to re-populate the city. He faced opposition from three powerful neighbours, the Samaritans, the Ammonites, and the Arabs, as well as the city of Ashdod, but managed to rebuild the walls. He then purified the Jewish community by enforcing its segregation from its neighbours and enforced the laws of Moses. Come and hear about how he did this huge task.

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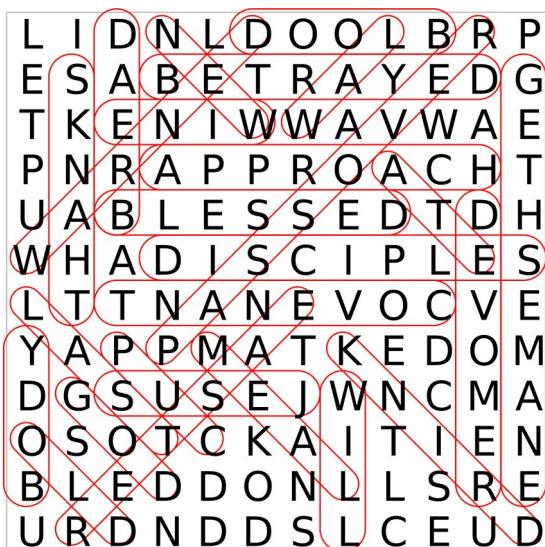
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HYMNS ETC

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TO GO TO CHOIR
PRACTICE'. ONLY
TURNS UP ON
SUNDAY AND SINGS
THE WRONG HYMN
AT THE WRONG TEMPO
IN THE WRONG PLACE

THE MUSIC
SORTER:
ARRANGES
PAPERS INTO
ALPHABETICAL
ORDER DURING
THE PRAYERS

THE OLD-TIMER:
HAS BEEN SINGING
IN THE CHOIR FOR
MANY DECADES
AND REMEMBERS
THE WAY THINGS
USED TO BE DONE

THE REBEL:
LOOKS ANGELIC
BUT CREATES HAVOC
WHEN THE CONDUCTOR'S
BACK IS TURNED

THE CLUMSY:
DROPS BOOKS
DURING THE
QUIET BITS

THE 'COMPLETELY
INAUDIBLE':
NO-ONE HAS EVER
HEARD A NOTE
FROM HER

THE NEWCOMER:
DOESN'T KNOW
ANY OF THE MUSIC
AND SO COPIES
EVERYONE ELSE



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From Our Own Correspondent

Doris Brookfield

The Joy of Music

There are times in everyone's life when we can be reduced to tears.

I discovered a programme on Channel 4 which did exactly that. It was during a chilly and dull afternoon here in Ilkley that I flicked my remote control for the TV and decided to watch **"The Piano"**.

I've always loved music although I never mastered playing a piano. My father bought me one from a friend of his but it was past its best. He knew I would like it. I tried playing it one handed and eventually got the beginning of Tchaikovsky's piano concerto off by heart. He said I needed piano lessons but in 1947 times were hard and unfortunately on February 23rd he died. So piano lessons didn't ever come to pass. The piano was riddled with woodworm so my Mother had it taken to the tip.

Luckily I had a very good music teacher who knew that my friend and I really appreciated classical music so she took us to piano recitals which were being held in Southport, one a month at the old Scala cinema. It opened up a new world for me, so watching this programme brought back those memories. Listening to different people playing all kinds of music just blew me away. All age groups with different styles, just immersed in the joy of playing.

The first one was in St. Pancras Station, and the young man who won it was from the Isle of Wight. He had moved to London as there was little work for young people on the island, and some of those who stayed got mixed up in the drug trade. He was a contemporary player and very different, not really my type of music but the two judges thought he had a wonderful style of playing and performing.

The second one was from Leeds station, again a wonderful group of young and old, all with different styles of playing. A lady brought her daughter to play. She had been damaged from birth and was totally blind and could not communicate with anyone but she sat down with help and put her hands on the keys. Then: magic. It was so wonderful to watch and listen to her playing, her head rocking from side to side. That was the moment when I was reduced to tears. She was talking through her music. How many experiences can do that to you? She, of course, won it.



The third was in Glasgow and again I was enthralled. Young and old, immersed in just playing a piano and saying how it had helped them. What a joy listening to music. A young man who won it seemed quite lost, but to sit him in front of a piano just made him come alive.

The final was held in the Festival Hall in London, and the four young people gathered there with their families to play for us all watching on T.V. It was so nice to see the three young men so relaxed and friends with one another, and the young girl with her mother who was so proud.

They all performed so well, and had had the support of the two judges who helped them with their technique. But again I was brought to tears when I watched the young girl from Leeds play, in fact it touched everyone in the audience who gave her a standing ovation. Of course she was picked as the winner. The programme made me realise that God gave her the ability to talk through her piano.

The whole programme was a joy to watch and listen to, it was wonderful.

I also discovered on the television Andrea Bocelli who was on a journey through Italy on horseback. Beautiful music once again. He is such a devout Christian.

Music has been a big part of St. John's. How lovely it was to listen to Julie Ann Carr playing the organ at St. John's and in Liverpool Cathedral, and how lucky I was to see her and hear her. And your own Lucy (Wright) singing to us in church for special occasions. Bob and I loved listening to her from such an early age. It just shows you that we can be moved to tears with music, and also feel so happy.

Happy Easter to you all, from Doris.

St John's Quiz Night

On 11th March there was fierce but friendly competition in the small hall. Our genial quizmaster Andy Dean, not to mention his ever glamorous assistant Cheryl, had come all the way from Gloucestershire to enable members of St John's and some welcome visitors from St James' to pit their wits against each other and lock horns in a quiz competition. The little grey cells of the competitors were fully engaged and battle commenced.

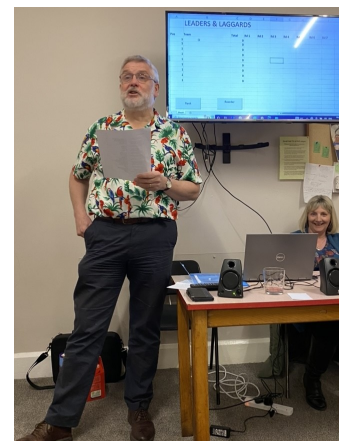


The Wannabee Winners whose wish came true!

It was a very close contest which was narrowly won by The Wannabee Winners who fortunately included Lucy and Wendy Wright on the team! It is a well known fact that eating fish is good for the brain so The Wannabee Winners recommend the consumption of anchovies on toast before the next competition.

The evening included a meal of chilli and rice followed by apple crumble which were all prepared by Sally and Christine. Sadly, our numbers were slightly depleted as a result of covid preventing some from attending, but it was a very enjoyable evening.

Our thanks go to all who helped with the washing up and the clearing away at the end and especially to Andy and Cheryl for making the evening such fun. And Andy... where did you get that shirt?



Make a note in your diary for the next social occasion at St John's: our Italian Night on 21st April. These events are a great way of developing friendships within our church, so do come and join in if you can. As always: we would love to see you!

Holy Week at St James' Church

During Holy Week (Monday 3rd - Friday 7th April) St James' will be open between 10am and 12 noon for personal prayer. There will be various prayer activities to engage with (including some child-friendly ones) or you can simply pray in church.

On Good Friday (7th April) between 10am - 12 noon there will also be readings from the Passion narrative every 30 minutes. However, you do not need to stay for the entire 2 hours and you are welcome to come and go as you see fit.

Lent At St Peter's Church

Evening Lent Series

This series will conclude on Maundy Thursday, April 6th, at 7pm: Holy Communion and address by Revd Canon Dr Rod Garner.



Ainsdale Methodist Church

EASTER Family Fun Day



Activities for children and grown ups!

FREE Community Lunch (served 12:30pm-1:30pm)

Fundraising stalls

Arts & crafts

Easter egg hunt



Everyone welcome!

FRIDAY 14TH APRIL 2023, 12PM-3PM

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688 LIVERPOOL RD, SOUTHPORT PR8 3NQ

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT COMPASSION ACTS (01704 264505) OR AINSDALE LUNCH & LEISURE (01704 574838)

LUNCH FUNDED BY TOGETHER LIVERPOOL FEAST OF FUN GRANT

Compassion Acts Registered Charity Number 1172948
Ainsdale Lunch & Leisure Registered Charity Number 1129183
Southport Methodist Circuit Registered Charity Number 1134383

Chester Mystery Plays



Rev Loxham at St Peter's has a few tickets available for the Chester Mystery Plays at Chester Cathedral on 8th July.

There will be a coach leaving St Peter's at 10.15 on the morning of July 8th - cost depending on how many people choose to go by coach - but no more than £15 and probably less.

A Coronation Celebration Date at St John's for your Diary

BANGERS & MASH

Friday 5 May 7pm

Tickets £10 - Bring your own drinks

www.stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

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

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

ALTRUISM AND EGOTISM

By John M. Shakespeare

I would like to think that the articles I write, by and large, show an unselfish concern for the well-being of my readers. In all consciousness there is some egoism in the offering of thoughts and ideas of my own, aligned to the Bible, philosophers and poets that I have learned from, during this life of mine.

As a student I can still remember the words of a sociology lecturer who told me that there is "No such thing as a free lunch." How true to life this has been, as I have seen it in action, during the varied occupations I have had in my life.

One of the circumstances often told to me by the students I took for "Assertiveness Training" was that their passivity arose from comments made to them, e.g. the aggressive approach that took the form of, "Don't you remember what I did for you?" or, more bluntly, "You owe me."

The truly Altruistic person who shows concern for others in the help they give does not seek reward for their actions. We have been very fortunate throughout this horrible viral pandemic to have witnessed, I believe, a great deal of genuine Altruistic behaviour.

That well known poem "Daffodils", by William Wordsworth (1770-1850) I see as being Altruistic in his wish to share his joy with others about the daffodil, plus his little Egotistic contribution in the telling of his own personal delight at the vision. There is insufficient space for all of his verses here, so perhaps the final one will suffice to express the ambience of the poem.

"For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude
And then my heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the daffodils."

I suggest that the difference between the practice of Altruism and Egotism is well illustrated in Matthew (Chapter 6 verses 2-4):



"So whenever you give alms do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly, I tell you they have received their reward. But when you give alms do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

If you don't believe in yourself, the question might be asked, then why should anyone else? The Egotists, it may well be said, are setting themselves up for a fall, by proclaiming an unjustified confidence in themselves, or in a proposed action.

The dilemma must surely arise when one is faced with a promotion board or a job interview at which you obviously wish to be able to present a positive and confident self. I suggest that Egotism has perhaps reaped a bad press from those false prophets who claim to be something that they are not deserving of? An old proverb poses:

"What would you do under the following circumstances, if there was a precipice in front of you and a pack of ravenous wolves behind you?" This is a question that on occasions I have faced. At such times my Faith has come to my aid.

As a postscript to the thoughts that I have expressed about what I see as Egotism, I would like to quote Albert Einstein (1879-1955):

"If A is success in life. Then A equals X plus Y plus Z. Work is X, play is Y and Z is keeping your mouth shut."



Joining the Sunday morning services and Thursday evening prayers by zoom or by telephone

To join the **weekly Sunday morning services** by **ZOOM**:

The Identification Number every Sunday will be: 827 7997 1592

The Password every Sunday will be: 860066

To join the **weekly Sunday morning services** by **TELEPHONE**:

The telephone number you must ring is: 0131 460 1196

The Meeting Identification Number every Sunday will be: 827 7997 1592

When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)

The Password every Sunday will be: 860066.

When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)

To join the **twice-monthly Thursday evening prayers** at 7.30pm by **ZOOM**:

The Identification Number every Thursday will be: 879 8059 1143

The Password every Thursday will be: 966358

To join the **twice-monthly Thursday evening prayers** at 7.30pm by **TELEPHONE**:

The telephone number you must ring is: 0131 460 1196

The Meeting Identification Number every Thursday will be: 879 8059 1143.

When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)

The Password every Thursday will be 966358.

When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)

BUT PLEASE CHECK YOUR CALL PACKAGE CHARGES WITH YOUR PROVIDER

IF YOU NEED ANY HELP: Please contact Clive (564206) or Sally (553977) or Lucy (553977) for any further details you require.

Hearing the Word by telephone

If you would like to hear a recording of the Sunday morning talks telephone **0151-329-2184** at any hour of the day or night.

The calls are **free**. Each talk lasts about 15 minutes and is available for a week.

Each recording becomes available during the afternoon of the Sunday on which it is given.

Can it really be that long ago....?

70 years ago, on 16th April 1953 Queen Elizabeth II launched the Royal Yacht Britannia. It was decommissioned in 1997. The Royal Family no longer owns a royal yacht.

40 years ago, on 1st April 1983 tens of thousands of anti-nuclear weapons protestors formed a 14-mile human chain in Berkshire. They linked the US airbase at Greenham Common, the nuclear research centre in Aldermaston, and an ordnance factory in Burghfield.

25 years ago, on 10th April 1998 the Good Friday Agreement was signed in Northern Ireland.

20 years ago, on 14th April 2003 the Human Genome Project was successfully completed, with over 99% of the human genome sequenced and mapped, including all of the genes.

Birkdale's First Library

Birkdale has had three libraries, the present one in the Station Master's House next to Birkdale Station, the previous one based on Liverpool Road (opposite the Krakajak garage) which opened in 1974 and closed in December 2013, and one that you may not have heard about. It was based in the village, "over the line" where Carnegie Court flats are now on Weld Parade and adjacent to Birkdale Town Hall and Police Station.

The original Birkdale Carnegie Library opened on December 2, 1905, a fine looking building with a clock tower. The library was built with finances given by Andrew Carnegie, a Scottish-American, who lived from 1835 to 1919, and is seen as the world's biggest-ever philanthropist. He made his money from the American steel industry but, by the time he died, he had given away \$350m (about \$5.5 billion in 2021) to charities, foundations and universities. He said, "to die rich, is to die disgraced." and ...there was no use to which money could be applied so productive...as the founding of a public library." Wise man!

Some Birkdale residents may remember the old Carnegie library in Birkdale, designed by two Manchester architects George Brown and Leonard Dutch. The green-tiled entrance hall led into a children's library on the left and a large adult reading room on the right, with a reference section upstairs. A postcard of The Town Hall and Carnegie Library in Birkdale c 1910 can be found on the internet.

There is also a picture of the Reading Room at the library and an interior shot of the building on Sefton Council's digital archive website. The library was a feature of village life for many years before being demolished in 1970. Birkdale lost other municipal buildings, such as the police station and the town hall during the 1960s and '70s.

The Birkdale Carnegie Library and the library on Liverpool Road may both have gone, but the village has a book lending service thanks to the volunteers who campaigned and fundraised to enable the Birkdale Community Hub and Library to be set up at the Station Master's House.



Henry James

*This article was first published in Edition 002 of **"Birkdale Buzz"**, a community magazine sponsored by the Birkdale Community Hub and Library at the Stations Master's House.*

*It is reproduced in **THE WORD** by kind permission of the author, Henry James, and Phil Margham, the editor of **"Birkdale Buzz"** and to both of them we give our thanks.*

Church Hall Users (Note: with the exception of the Friday Film Nights the activities listed below are NOT run by St John's Church. They are run by independent groups who use our hall). Contact details are provided in case readers wish to enquire about or join these groups.

Monday

9:45am-10:30am (6weeks- pre-walking) and **11:00am-11:45am** (6months - pre-school).

Moo Music Southport and Preston

Fun, interactive music classes for babies, toddlers and preschool age children.

Contact: <https://moo-music.co.uk/areas/sp/>

1.30pm to 3.30pm *Ainsdale Bridge Club*

Ideal for keen players of the game and those who want to improve their play within a friendly setting of duplicate bridge.

Contact: Dave Pountney 01704 577843 or via email:

jandavepountney@gmail.com

7.00pm to 8.00pm *Zumba@Fitness*

A fun and friendly class and a great workout.

No dance experience needed. All ages and all fitness levels welcome

Contact: Kay Bennett on 07716312909

Tuesday

4.30pm – 5.30pm *Kiwi Sports Coaching*

Tag Rugby class for boys and girls aged 5-7

School holiday classes sometimes available

Contact: shanehuttonnz@gmail.com

7.30pm – 9.00pm *Connected Voices Choir*

We are a non-audition choir for adults, singing a range of uplifting music – from pop and rock to soul and funk. We are open to anyone who loves singing, whether they think they can sing or not!

Contact: info@connectedvoices.co.uk or for more information visit the website

www.connectedvoices.co.uk

Wednesday

Morning, monthly class. *All Aglow Weaning Workshop*

Start your baby on solid food with confidence with an interactive, relaxed and informal class. Suitable for babies 4-10 months.

Contact: Jennifer@allaglow.co.uk

10.30 – 12 noon

2nd Wednesday of the month only. *Elderberries Gardening Club*

A social gardening club, where speakers are invited to talk on various topics, and visits and social events throughout the year.

Contact: Shelley Lewis Lavender on 01704 560590 or via email:

shelleylewislavender@yahoo.co

7pm – 8pm *Functional Yoga*

Exploring joint mobilisation, functional movement and relaxation – suitable for beginners.

Contact Lindsay: 07747038613 or email lindsay@wobblytreeyoga.com

Thursday

11am – 12noon *Daisy Baby Tinies & Wrigglers*

A weekly baby class to help you learn tools such as baby massage, yoga, rhythm, rhyme, story and sensory experiences to help aid your baby's development with ease.

For all babies from 6 weeks old.

Contact: Emma Lowe – 07866926223

6.00-9.00pm: *St John's Rainbows* (6.00-7.00pm) *St John's Brownies* (6.00-7.15pm) and *Girl Guides* (7.15-9.00pm).

Contact: Janette Law 01704 565951

Friday

6.30-9.30pm Once per month *St John's Film Nights*

A chance to see some great modern films. Tea, coffee and homemade cake available.

Contact: Christine Baker 01704 560518

Saturday

7.30 – 9.00pm *Sequence Dancing*

Traditional & Modern Sequence & Ballroom Dancing. Beginners and experienced dancers welcome.

Contact: Phone or text: John Gaffney 07786 640683. Email: johngaffney3@icloud.com

★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY!

To John Shakespeare on 13th April
Andy Dean on 21st April
Tim Wright on 22nd April
Cath Whiteside on 26th April
Lucy Wright on 27th April



To Bob and Linda Caton who will celebrate
their 36th (Bone China) Wedding
Anniversary on 18th April

If there are any birthdays, anniversaries or other reasons to celebrate which our readers would like to share with others **DURING MAY** please let the Editor know by email to stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com

The Last Laughs

A devout cowboy lost his Bible while he was mending fences out on the range. Three weeks later a cow walked up to him, carrying the Bible in its mouth. The cowboy couldn't believe his eyes. He took the book out of the cow's mouth and exclaimed, "It's a miracle."

"Well, hardly that," said the cow. "Your name was written inside the cover."

At the Pearly Gates, St Peter greeted a minister and a Member of Parliament and gave them their room keys. "Vicar, here are the keys to one of our nicest single rooms. And for you, Mr MP, the keys to our finest penthouse suite." When the vicar protested that this was unfair, St Peter explained: "Look, ministers are a ten a penny up here, but this is the first politician we've ever seen."

STOP PRESS!

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation who have been donating to the Family Emergency Fund our church is able to give 31 Easter bags to local families who are in financial difficulty. We are sure that these will be appreciated by the children and their parents who receive them. They are small gifts but they will mean a lot to people who have very little.

If any of our readers would like to contribute to the Family Emergency Fund but have not yet done so there is a collection box on the table near to the entrance of the church.





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462222**

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