

*St John's Church*

# PARISH NEWS

*Faith, Fellowship, and Friendship*

APRIL 2026 £1



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*If you need a wedding, baptism or funeral, please contact the Parish Office*

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## EASTER AT ST JOHN'S

 Dear Reader,

Easter is a time of renewal and new beginnings! Hopefully by the time you read this, the repair and maintenance works on the church roof will be complete, or very nearly complete. That being the case I should probably start by apologizing for my excess negativity in last month's column about the appearance of the scaffolding! It would also be appropriate to thank Danny and David who have tackled this not-insignificant repair work

In some ways, the completion of these works marks the climax of a larger season the church has been going through, of taking stock of the past in preparation for whatever next steps may be ahead of us in the future.

Last year we had our 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations and it was a chance to look backwards with gratitude. Although the Church buildings may

not move\*, the church communities that meet inside the buildings are dynamic, living things. Sometimes we are busy pressing forward; other times we are taking time to rest; sometimes we might feel the need to take stock and take a breath before taking our next step.



*Rev Greg*

I'm no prophet, but it may be that when we look back at St John's in years to come, we'll discover that 2025-26 was a time of doing just that: looking back (and in fact our 150<sup>th</sup> year would really run from June 24<sup>th</sup> 2025 to June 24<sup>th</sup> 2026). Looking back with thanks and taking stock, taking a breath and readying ourselves for the next step forwards (fixing the roof), before stepping out into the future to do what the church has always been called to do: love God; love neighbour; and share and embody the gospel.

That pattern has more than a little similarity with the story of Easter



This month's magazine is sponsored by

**PEGGY HURST**

**"IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY HUSBAND,  
TOM, AND SON DEREK"**

as well as our own lives.

In the death of Christ on Good Friday, there's a looking at the broken world around us: noting all the sins of the past (as well as the future) and a taking-stock and a taking-on of the awesome responsibility for them all.

When Jesus Christ died He died for all of us, for all of our sins, so that anyone and everyone who trusts in Him could receive full and total forgiveness. We look back at the cross. Holy Saturday could perhaps be seen as the moment of taking a breath and readying ourselves in anticipation of the great step into the future.

Then at last comes the resurrection on Sunday, on Easter Day. When Jesus rose from the dead He didn't come to life again with the same kind of life that we are all too familiar with here: infused with light and beauty at times but also marred by sin and subject to suffering and death. Instead, Jesus rose to live 'eternal life'— life beyond sin and sickness and suffering and death. His is the life of God's everlasting future.

Easter day is like a second Big Bang — a powerfully energetic and even explosive beginning of a whole new creation and mode of existence, filled with the triumph of life over death, love over hate, beauty over

disfigurement, goodness over evil, and truth over lies!

On a daily basis the Christian life of prayer can also have that three-part shape to it. In our own private prayer lives we can confess our sins and know we find God's forgiveness through Christ. We can pause in stillness and contemplation, taking a breath in the welcoming presence of God, before we launch into our requests for what is to come, whether that is for the world, the church, the causes in our hearts, our families and friends, and ourselves. Look back and take stock and bring it to God; pause in the loving presence of God; launch forward energized by the hope and faith of God.

Finally, we may find in our own lives that we are in a longer season of looking back or pausing, or pressing on. Which phase are you in? Have things been so busy it's time to change gear a bit, slow down, and take stock? Or has life been filled (perhaps at times unhelpfully so) with looking back; and might it be time not to suddenly charge into the future but to pause, to breathe, to be fully present in the present for a change? Or, lastly, is there perhaps an energy building within — a period of waiting feels like it is drawing to a close — and the time to take a step of faith and hope in the future

**“Jesus died  
for all of us,  
for all our  
sins, so that  
everyone  
could receive  
full and total  
forgiveness”**

feels like it is nearing?

We can all go through these seasons (and changes of season) in life. the good news of Easter is that, since Christ is risen and alive today, we can do it with His presence, following His lead, and knowing His help.

St Paul wrote to the church in Corinth: *“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...”* (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

May God bless us all this Easter!

*\*One notable exception to churches not moving is the historic church in Kiruna Sweden (pictured below): see [tinyurl.com/y25xxphp](http://tinyurl.com/y25xxphp) for details*



*“They crucified Him with the criminals. Which is more amazing, to find Jesus in such bad company, or to find the criminals in such good company? ...Jesus did not die for the sake of a good world, He died for the sake of an evil world”*

Karl Barth



# Deeper

Sunday 19th April

6:30-7:30pm

An informal gathering of sung worship, youth-accessible Bible teaching, and a chance to respond in prayer.

Also a space for those who've served on Sunday mornings in their home churches to come and find some input, encouragement and refreshment.

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday - Everyone is welcome

St John's Church, Hawthorn Bank, Spalding, PE11 1JQ

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Charity No: 1127799

Hawthorn Bank, Spalding, PE11 1JQ

Doors open 6.30pm, show starts 7pm

**Tickets: £5**

Tickets to be purchased in advance

**Raffle:** FABULOUS prizes to be won at the show!

For tickets and more information please contact:

Hilary Moriarty 01775762560 - [hilarymoriarty@gmail.com](mailto:hilarymoriarty@gmail.com)

Parish Office 01775718237



## APRIL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

### **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>**

5pm Evening Prayer  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup>**

10am Communion in the lounge  
6pm Maundy Thursday Service

### **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>**

9.30am Stations of the Cross  
2pm The Last Hour Meditation

### **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>**

7am Dawn Service  
9.15am Informal Service  
10.45am Choral Communion

### **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup>**

8.30am Drop in Coffee Morning  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup>**

7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>**

10am Communion in the lounge  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Friday 10<sup>th</sup>**

5.30pm TREK

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>**

8am Holy Communion  
9.15am Informal Service  
10.45am Choral Communion

### **Monday 13<sup>th</sup>**

9am Easter Holiday Club

### **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup>**

8.30am Drop in Coffee Morning  
9am Easter Holiday Club  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>**

9am Easter Holiday Club  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>**

10am Communion in the lounge  
11am Bible Study  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>**

9.15am Informal Service  
10.45am Choral Communion  
6.30pm Deeper Worship Evening

### **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup>**

8.30am Drop in Coffee Morning  
8.45am Little Seeds  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>**

7.30pm Prayer and Praise

### **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup>**

10am Communion in the lounge

### **Friday 24<sup>th</sup>**

1.30pm Games Afternoon  
5.30pm TREK

### **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>**

8am Holy Communion  
9.15am Informal Service  
10.45am Choral Communion

### **Monday 27<sup>th</sup>**

7.30pm PCC Meeting

### **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup>**

8.30am Drop in Coffee Morning  
8.45am Little Seeds  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>**

7pm The Bereavement Journey  
7.30pm Fellowship Group

### **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup>**

10am Communion in the lounge  
11am Bible Study  
7.30pm Fellowship Group



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ST JOHN'S CHURCH  
SPALDING


# Coffee

Everyone is welcome

TUESDAY MORNINGS  
8.30AM - 11.30AM



## THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS: ENVY

e continue our seven-part series with a look at envy.

*“A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones”*  
(Proverbs 14:30)

The Deadly Sin of envy is a consuming desire to have what others have got. It’s a major source of unhappiness.

Envy is not the same as jealousy:

*“Envy is wanting something that someone else has. Jealousy is the fear of losing something you already have to someone else”*  
(Brene Brown)

We can envy things like wealth, looks and, possessions, resulting in resentment, bitterness and anger. The pursuit of possessing what others have will always leave us empty and dissatisfied, as the use of social media demonstrates.

We can overcome envy in our lives by showing gratitude:

*“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus”*  
(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

A grateful heart has no room for envy, when we focus on God’s love for us and what He has given us, rather than looking at others’ gifts and opportunities.

God has created us uniquely to be the people we are and different to others. As a result, we are better able to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.

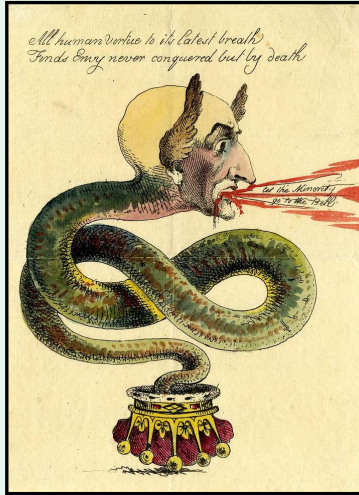
We can also show trust to overcome envy:

*“And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work”*  
(2 Corinthians 9:8)

One of the chief causes of envy is FOMO: fear of missing out! We can trust that God knows everything that we need so we don’t need to worry about missing out. By entrusting our lives to Him, we can confidently depend on God meeting all our needs. God truly is enough for me:

*“The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing”*  
(Psalm 23:1)

*By Canon Paul Hardingham*



# HE IS RISEN

**E**aster Sunday arrives with a message that has echoed through the centuries — a message so profound that it continues to shape the way we understand life, death, and everything in between: “Christ is risen!” These three words, simple yet world-altering, are at the heart of the Christian faith. They declare that death has not won, that suffering does not have the final word, and that God’s love is stronger than anything we can imagine.

For the disciples who first encountered the empty tomb, Easter must have been a bewildering shock. Imagine the confusion and the heartbreak of loss. It was only through the slowly dawning light of understanding that they grasped the true meaning of what had occurred.

The resurrection was not just a return to life; it was a radical transformation of reality itself. It turned everything they knew upside down.

As we celebrate Easter today, the message remains just as radical.

It speaks to us in the midst of our modern world, where many are still searching for hope in places where hope seems scarce. It raises many questions: how does this ancient truth shape us today? And, more importantly, how do we live in the light of Easter? How do we live as people who know, not just in theory but in the deepest places of our hearts, that death has been defeated and life has triumphed?

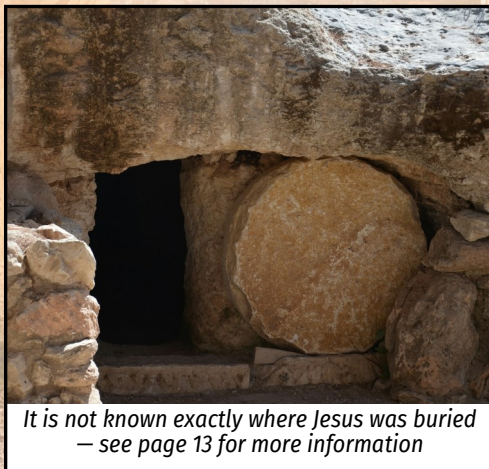
*“The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said’”*

Matthew 28:5-6

## The Power of Resurrection

Easter is not merely a historical event

we remember; it is a living reality that shapes the way we live today. We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, yes... but we are also invited to experience its transformative power in our own lives. Jesus's victory over death is not



*It is not known exactly where Jesus was buried  
— see page 13 for more information*

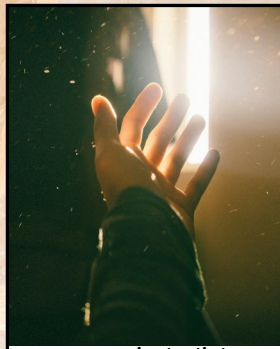
confined to the past. It is as alive and powerful today as it was on that first Easter morning.

Easter is an invitation; a call to live differently. To live as people who know that death and fear have been defeated, and that God's life-giving power is already at work in us, and in the world. The resurrection calls us to new life, not just in the afterlife, but here and now. It calls us to live as citizens of God's kingdom in a broken world that desperately needs that hope.

When Jesus was raised from the dead, everything changed. This is the good news: death and sin have been defeated but, more importantly, God's kingdom has been inaugurated. We don't need to wait for heaven to begin experiencing the effects of a resurrected life. We are already part of that new creation.

*"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die"*

John 11:25-26



*Heaven is the light at the end of the tunnel*

### **A Community Born of Resurrection**

Easter is not just about individual reflection; it is a communal reality. The first witnesses of the resurrection were not solitary figures. The risen Christ appeared to groups: breaking bread with them,

teaching them, and sending them out into the world to share the good news. The resurrection is a gift not just for the individual but for the whole community.

This communal aspect of Easter is one of its most important gifts. The resurrection invites us into a new kind of relationship — first with God and then with one another. We see that God's love extends beyond us and to all people, drawing us into a community of grace, healing, and transformation.

The first Christian communities were born out of this resurrection experience. They shared everything, served one another, and prayed together. They lived as a community defined by love and hope.

As we celebrate Easter today, we are reminded that we are part of that same living tradition — a community of believers, stretching across time and space, bound together by the resurrection.

However, Easter is not just a celebration of the past; it is a call to action today. It invites us to be a community that reflects

the hope and joy of the risen Christ to the world. To be a people whose lives together proclaim that resurrection is not just an oft-repeated story or a theological concept — it is a lived reality that changes everything.



*“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer”*

Acts 2:42



*Easter invites us to celebrate as a community*

### **Living with Hope and Purpose**

At the heart of Easter is hope. Hope that is not a mere wish or a faint desire for things to improve, but a profound and unshakeable confidence in God’s victory. This hope is grounded in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which promises that life will always win over death; love will always overcome hate; and goodness will triumph over evil.

Living in the light of Easter means living with purpose. It means being people who carry the hope of the resurrection into a world that desperately needs it. Our world is full of pain, suffering, and injustice; we need only turn on the news to be reminded of that. But it is also a world in which God’s love is already at work, transforming lives, renewing hearts, and healing brokenness.

Easter reminds us that God has not

abandoned the world to its suffering. The resurrection is the promise that all things will be made new, that God is at work in every corner of creation, even — and perhaps especially — in the places where we least expect it.

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”*

1 Peter 1:3

We are called to be people of resurrection — to live with joy, to live with hope, and to live with purpose.

Easter is not just a holiday. It is



*Easter is new beginnings*

a way of life. It’s a challenge, yes, but also an invitation to embrace the new life that Jesus offers. It’s the invitation to be transformed — to let the light of the risen Christ shine through us — and, as

we do so, we bring that hope to the world around us.

**“He is risen! He is risen indeed!”**

These words are not just a traditional greeting for Easter Sunday; they are a declaration of the world-altering reality we live in. They define the

reality of every day.

In this Easter season, as we bask in the glow of the risen Christ, may we live lives that reflect His light, carry His hope, and proclaim His resurrection in everything we do. After all, if Christ is truly risen, then the world is forever changed – and so are we.

The joy of the resurrection is not just a feeling we hold in our hearts for a day or a season. It is a truth we are called to live out every single day, bringing life, joy, and transformation to all we meet. So, as you walk through this Easter season and beyond, remember: Christ is risen. And in Him, we rise, too

## EXPLORING THE SITES OF BURIAL

Every year, as Holy Week approaches, Christians hear again the solemn words of the Creed: *“He was crucified, died, and was buried; on the third day he rose again.”* But where, exactly, was Jesus buried? And what might that place tell us; not only about history, but about hope?

### The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

The most widely accepted site is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Old City of Jerusalem.

This remarkable church stands within ancient stone walls, filled with chapels, incense, and centuries of prayer. It marks both the traditional site of Golgotha (Calvary) and the tomb in which Jesus was laid.

The site’s identification dates back to the fourth century. After Christianity was legalized under Emperor Constantine, his mother, Helena, travelled to the Holy Land around AD 326. Locals directed her to a site known as the place of Christ’s burial.

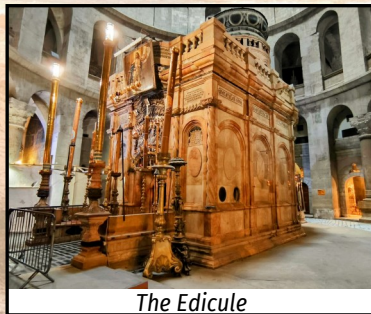
A Roman temple, built during the reign of Hadrian, stood over it. Excavations beneath the temple revealed rock-cut tombs from the first century, consistent with the Gospel accounts.

Critics once argued that the church lies within Jerusalem’s current walls whereas the Gospels indicate that Jesus was crucified outside the city. However, archaeological study has shown the city walls in Jesus’s time lay elsewhere, and the church was indeed outside the city in the first century.

Today, the tomb itself lies within a small shrine called the Edicule.

Restoration work completed in 2017 confirmed that the burial bed inside is hewn from original limestone rock, consistent with a tomb of the period.

For the majority of scholars – Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant alike – this remains the most credible location.



The Edicule



## The Garden Tomb

A second site, known as the Garden Tomb, lies just north of the Damascus Gate. Discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became especially popular among Protestant pilgrims. Nearby is a rocky escarpment that some believe resembles a skull, echoing the Gospel description of Golgotha (“the place of a skull”).

However, most archaeologists date this tomb to several centuries before Christ — likely from the Iron Age — making it unlikely to be the burial place described in the Gospels. While its devotional value is considerable, its historical credentials are weaker.



The Garden Tomb in Jerusalem

## What Matters Most?

For Anglicans, history and faith are not enemies; we care about evidence. The resurrection is not presented in Scripture as a poetic metaphor but as something that happened in space and time.

St Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15 that if Christ has not been raised, our faith is in vain. Christianity rests upon the conviction that the tomb was — and is — empty. Yet it is

striking that the New Testament shows little interest in preserving or venerating the tomb itself. The focus is never on the stone but on the risen Lord. The angel’s words are simple: “*He is not here; he has risen.*”

Even if archaeology was to produce new findings, the heart of Christian faith would remain unchanged. The resurrection is not dependent on marble shrines or precise GPS coordinates. It rests on the apostolic witness, the transformation of frightened disciples into bold proclaimers, and the living experience of Christ in his Church.


## Pilgrimage and Perspective

For those who have visited Jerusalem, whether standing within the ancient walls of the Holy Sepulchre or praying in the stillness of the Garden Tomb, there is a powerful sense of continuity. Here, in this city, something happened that changed the world.

Perhaps the most profound truth is this: Christians do not ultimately seek a place where Jesus was. We worship the One who *is*.

As members of the Church of England, we hold together reverence for history, openness to scholarship, and confidence in the creeds. The empty tomb — wherever precisely it stood — proclaims the same message today as it did on that first Easter morning. Death does not have the last word. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed.

## NEW ARCHBISHOP'S FIRST PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

 Sarah Mullally, the Archbishop of Canterbury, spoke at the February 2026 General Synod group of sessions. Here follows some highlights from the Archbishop:

“It is a humbling privilege to be called to serve in this role. It brings with it a huge weight of responsibility. But when the wind and the waves are rocking the boat, I am reminded that what I need to do is to focus on Christ, who calms the waters and stills the wind. With your help and with God’s grace, I pray I am able to approach this ministry with calm, consistency and compassion.

“I do not carry my new responsibilities alone. We serve God’s church together, lay and ordained; uniquely reflecting God’s image into one another, and remembering His prayer that we should be one in our love for God and of one another.

“The Church of England is a Christian presence in every community. In parishes and chaplaincies across the country, day in and day out, faithful clergy and congregations worship God and love their neighbours. We live out our calling to share the love of God with those around us.

“I believe that I have been called to love and serve the Diocese of

Canterbury, the Church of England, and the Anglican Communion, not through developing new programmes and initiatives, but by being a shepherd, who works collaboratively and in partnership, enabling others to flourish.

“I pray that the thread running through my time as Archbishop will be that of nurturing confidence and hope, rooted not in institutions, but in God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. With our confidence in God we can believe that the best is yet to come for the church we love and nurture and, therefore, for the world that the church is called to serve.

“As Archbishop of Canterbury, I commit myself to nurturing, supporting and praying for all our parishes, chaplaincies, cathedrals and schools, where quiet faithfulness is coupled with a readiness to respond to every opportunity, however small.

“I will strive to be calm, consistent and compassionate to all. I commit myself to enabling the Church to be the Church.

“May we continue to offer ourselves in God’s service for God’s world: our hope rooted in the Gospel, and our confidence rooted in God.

“Please pray for me as I pray for you. Amen.”



Archbishop Sarah Mullally



# PRAYERS FOR APRIL

*If you are unable to use all the prayers every day, then it is suggested that you use a prayer for that day and the Parish prayer, if possible. In this way we shall all be praying together to bring about God's kingdom*

## A PRAYER FOR OUR PARISH

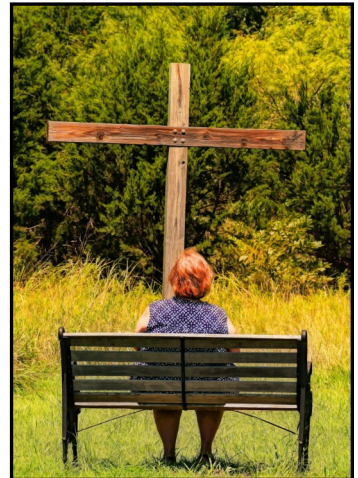
**Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God,  
Teach us to walk in your way more trustfully,  
To accept your truth more faithfully  
And to share your life more lovingly.  
By the power of the Holy Spirit  
Guide us in our work for our church  
That we may come, as a family  
To the Kingdom of the Father  
Where you live for ever.  
Amen**

*A Sunday prayer, from A Christian's Prayer Book*

God our Father, may the whole world join in a hymn of thanksgiving for the great love you have shown us in Jesus Christ our Lord, risen from the dead, and may our hearts and lives echo your praise, now and always.

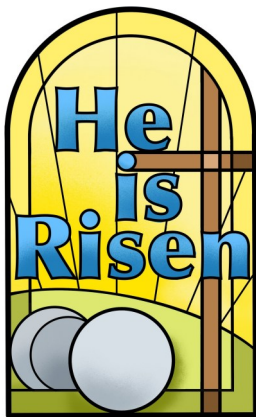
*A Monday prayer, from the 7<sup>th</sup> century Gelasian Sacramentary*

O God, who by thine only-begotten Son has overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life; grant, we pray, that those who have been redeemed by his passion may rejoice in his resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord.



*A Tuesday prayer, by Gregory the Great*

O God, who for our redemption did give your only-begotten Son to the death of the Cross, and by his glorious resurrection has delivered us from the power of the enemy, grant us to die daily to sin that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection: through the same Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.



*A Wednesday prayer, by Giles Harcourt*

Easter Light, Easter Joy,  
You bring the promise of sunlight,  
the resurgence of hope  
For in you all has been conquered,  
death and pain and doubt.  
For you are  
Easter Light, Easter Joy.

*A Thursday prayer, by Mothers' Union*

God almighty, we praise your name in this joyful Eastertide. We thank you , Lord, because through your death and resurrection we have won the victory and your redeeming grace and love. Loving Father God, fill us with new life so that we may love one another and do what you want us to do in sharing your love with those who don't know you. In Jesus's name we pray.

*A Friday prayer*

Jesus our Lord, we praise that nothing could keep you dead in the grave. You are stronger than death and the devil. Help us to remember that there is nothing to be afraid of, because you are alive and by our side.



*A Saturday prayer,*

*by Kate Compston*  
Spirit of God  
we thank you  
for raising up Jesus.  
Though we are yet in the body,  
raise us up too into newness  
of life.





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## THIRTY YEARS OF FIGHTING CHRISTIAN POVERTY

**C**ell-known charity Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

It was in Bradford, back in 1996, that a local Christian, John Kirkby, felt called to leave his career in finance and to use his knowledge to help local people deep in debt.

With a modest donation and a lot of faith, John set out to make himself available to parents who couldn't feed their children, families facing eviction and desperate people living without hope. John used his expertise to negotiate with creditors, set up budgeting systems and offer a lifeline to those trapped in debt.

However, John knew people all over the country were struggling in a similar way, so he began looking to expand the work across the UK. With the vital ingredients of a church to partner with, a passionate person to be trained as a debt counsellor and the faith that God would provide, four new CAP centres were opened at the end of 1998.

Since then, CAP has rapidly grown its Debt Centre network, with services to tackle the causes of debt and poverty also introduced.

Its Debt Help department offers practical advice on how to live well on a low income, through CAP Life Skills groups, as well as supporting people stepping into employment through CAP Job Clubs.

Through a UK-wide network of CAP projects, it has a vision of transformed lives, thriving churches and an end to UK poverty.



*Get help from CAP before things get too bad*

CAP has been accredited by the Money and Pensions Service, and it has won national awards for excellence. Over the past 30 years, it has helped tens of thousands of families and

individuals to break free from debt and poverty.

Today CAP provides free debt counselling, job clubs, and life skills training through local churches. The service is open to anyone who needs it.

For more details visit [capuk.org](http://capuk.org)

**PARISH NEWS** is available to read online at

**[www.stjohnsspalding.org](http://www.stjohnsspalding.org)**



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*The*  
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**CREW**

**St John's Church**  
SPALDING

**Easter Holiday Club**  
Mon 13<sup>th</sup> April - Wed 15<sup>th</sup> April  
9:00am - 12:00pm  
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SIGN UP  


*"Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning.  
But for children, play is serious learning"*  
Fred Rogers



**St John's Church**  
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# Games Afternoons

1.30pm to 4.30pm

- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April
- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May
- Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June
- Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July
- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August
- Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September
- Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October
- Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November
- Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December



## GENERAL SYNOD ROUNDUP

In February, General Synod met in London for its usual group of sessions. Here are some of the highlights:

### *Synod on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February*

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, welcomed the 106<sup>th</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally, paying tribute to her long ministry in nursing and public service.

### *Synod on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February*

Sarah Mullally gave her first presidential address (see page 15).

Prayers were said for the Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson, following his announcement of an untreatable cancer diagnosis.

There was an extended Q&A on *Living in Love and Faith* (LLF). The House of Bishops' January 2026 statement had concluded the LLF programme in its current form, agreed the continued monitoring of Prayers of Love and Faith within regular services under Canon B5, and the establishment of new governance structures.

Synod supported the Archbishop's Commission on Reimagining Care, and also emphasized the importance of listening to disabled and older people in shaping the future of adult social care.

### *Synod on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February*

Persecution of Christians around the world, the impact of the mental

health crisis in UK and the Church's own progress on establishing an independent safeguarding body, were among subjects discussed.

There was then a major debate on mental health and the Church. A motion was passed that called for those training for ordination to have specific courses on how to support people facing mental health challenges, and also for counselling and therapy to be available to clergy.

General Synod overwhelmingly approved a motion to establish a new independent oversight body for church safeguarding, brought by Dame Christine Ryan, the independent executive chair of the Church's Safeguarding Structures Programme Board.

### *Synod on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February*

Synod debated the Sustainable Flowers initiative, which encourages churches to source local flowers and foliage. It also debated the problem of poverty in the UK in the light of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Faith in the City report.

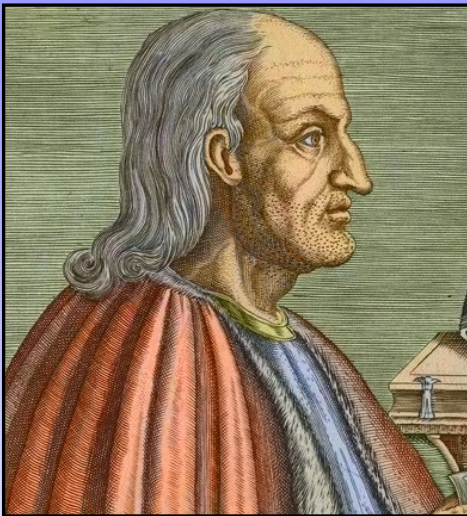
Finally, it approved a motion on *Living in Love and Faith*, affirming that the programme will conclude by July. It commended the House of Bishops in establishing the Relationships, Sexuality and Gender Working Group, and Relationships, Sexuality and Gender Pastoral Consultative Group, for continuing work.



## March 25<sup>th</sup>: Anselm, the man who proved there is a God

Anselm is a good saint to remember next time someone asks you to prove that there is a God. His brilliant and original *Proslogion*, written 1077-78, sets out the ontological proof for God's existence. Nearly 10 centuries later, it is still studied by theological students as one of the great philosophical proofs of God's existence.

Anselm was born at Aosta in 1033, the son of a spendthrift Lombard nobleman, whom Anselm detested. In time he decided to become a Benedictine monk, and so joined Lanfranc's famous monastery at Bec (c1060). He became prior, then abbot. He was loved by his monks, and appreciated for his sensitivity and



intuitiveness. He remained friends with Lanfranc, who had gone on to be Archbishop of Canterbury. After Lanfranc's death, Anselm reluctantly agreed to accept the job.

Archbishops did not have press offices in those days, but Anselm made his views on Church-versus-King known all the same, and they did not please royalty. William Rufus exiled him in 1097 and King Henry I exiled him in 1103.

Anselm was utterly committed to what he saw as the cause of God and the Church, and therefore had no time for temporal politics. Peace between archbishop and monarch was not achieved until 1106.

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

## April 23<sup>rd</sup>: St George, our Patron Saint who isn't English

The English have a patron saint who isn't English, about whom next to nothing is known for sure, and who, just possibly, may not have existed at all. But that didn't stop St George being patriotically invoked in many battles, notably at Agincourt and in the Crusades. It is, of course, his cross that adorns the flags of English football fans to this day.

It's most likely that St George was a soldier and a Christian who was martyred for his faith somewhere in Palestine, possibly at Lydda, in the early fourth century. At some point in the early centuries of the Church, he became associated with wider military concerns, being regarded as the patron saint of the Byzantine armies. There is no doubt that St George was held as an example of the 'godly soldier' — one who served Christ as bravely and truly as he served his king and country.

The story of George and the dragon is of a much later date and no one seems to know where it comes from. By the Middle Ages, when George was being honoured in stained glass, the dragon had become an invaluable and invariable visual

element. They're so ingrained that for most people the two are inseparable. Pub signs have a lot to answer for here: 'The George and Dragon'.

However, it's probably more profitable to concentrate on his role as a man who witnessed to his faith in the difficult setting of military service, and in the end was martyred for his faithfulness to Christ.

The idea of the Christian soldier

was, of course, much loved by the Victorian hymn-writers — 'Onward, Christian soldiers!' The soldier needs discipline. The heart of his commitment is obedience. The battle cannot be avoided nor the enemy appeased. He marches and fights alongside others, and he is loyal to his comrades. In the end, if the battle is won, he receives the garlands of victory — the final reward of those who overcome evil.



St George's Day presents a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to distance the message of his life from the militarism and triumphalism that can easily attach itself to anything connected to soldiers and fighting. The opportunity is to celebrate the ideal of the Christian soldier — one who

submits to discipline and sets out to obey. God truly does not avoid the inevitable battle with all that is unjust, wrong and hateful in our world, and marches alongside others fighting the same noble cause.

Discipline; obedience; courage; fellowship; and loyalty: they're not the most popular virtues today, but that doesn't mean that they don't deserve our admiration.

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# Little Seeds

Baby & Toddler Group

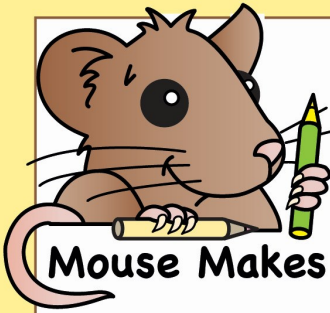
Tuesdays 8:45 - 10:30

**Come and play!**

Join Anthony (former EYFS Teacher) for:

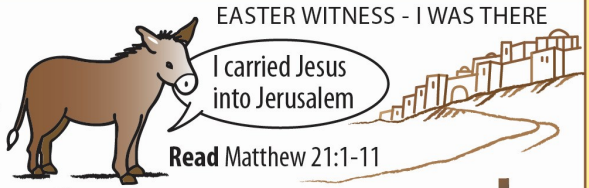
- Number and Letter of the Week
- Small World & Role-Play
- Imagination Station & Moving + Grooving
- Reading Nook & Active Area
- Designated Bouncing Babies space
- Bible Stories & Refreshments.





GOOD NEWS  
 OHOSANNA  
 DEATHQBV  
 VNCOEUI  
 UAHNAARO  
 MIREVSU  
 ALIVETDR  
 RISENEOK  
 YOTHORNS  
 PALMSQKA  
 RPILATEN  
 CRUCIFYG  
 RHQUAKE  
 OCJESUSL  
 STOMBVDY  
 SRYEMPTY

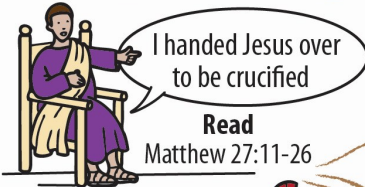
JESUS • DONKEY • PALMS  
 HOSANNA • PILATE • THORNS  
 CRUCIFY • NAIL • CROSS  
 QUAKE • DEATH • BURY  
 TOMB • STONE • EMPTY  
 ANGEL • MARY • HEAVEN  
 RISEN • ALIVE • GOD  
 GOOD NEWS • CHRIST  
 SAVIOUR • EASTER • JOY



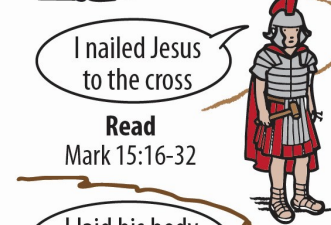
EASTER WITNESS - I WAS THERE

I carried Jesus into Jerusalem

Read Matthew 21:1-11



Read Matthew 27:11-26

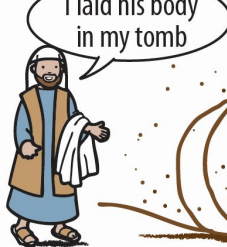


Read Mark 15:16-32



We watched Jesus die

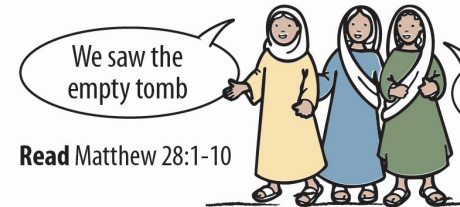
Read Mark 15:33-41



Read Mark 15:42-47

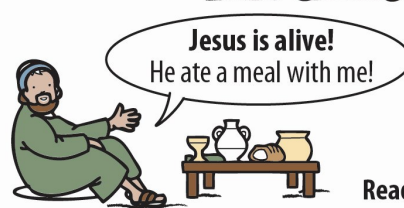


Read Matthew 27:62-66



Read Matthew 28:1-10

and spoke to the angel



Read Luke 24:13-35



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# ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL

BY PETUNIA FLOWERS

APRIL

*“Winter’s done, and April’s in the skies,  
Earth, look up with laughter in your eyes!”*  
Charles GD Roberts

*“In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt”*  
Margaret Atwood

April’s here and spring has sprung at last! The clocks have changed and the days are noticeably longer. As the weather warms up and early flowers start to bloom, all of a sudden there’s a load of jobs to do outside. It’s an exciting month in the garden but watch out for late frosts and those April showers. Enjoy the new growth and the promise of more to come.



## A GARDENER’S PRAYER FOR APRIL

Lord, bless this April soil and the seeds I sow.  
Grant gentle rains, warm sun,  
and the patience to watch them grow.  
May my garden flourish,  
and my heart with it.  
Amen

## FLOWERS

Divide primroses once they have finished flowering.

Lift and divide established border perennial plants now, like Hostas, to improve vigour and create new plants for your garden.

Pinch out the tips of fuchsia plants and sweet pea plant shoots, to encourage bushy growth this summer.

Trim winter-flowering heathers as the flowers disappear, to prevent plants becoming leggy.

Continue to remove faded flowers from winter pansies to stop them setting seed. This will encourage flushes of new flowers throughout the spring.

Deadhead daffodils and tulips as the flowers finish, but leave foliage intact, allowing it to die back naturally.



## TREES and SHRUBS

In cooler areas, and earlier in the month, you can still move and plant evergreen trees and shrubs, provided the soil is not waterlogged.

Lightly cut back lavenders to prevent them getting too leggy and woody.

Twining climbers (such as honeysuckle and clematis) need regular tying-in and twining around their supports.

Tie in climbing and rambling roses as near to horizontal as possible. This will restrict sap flow, causing more sideshoots to grow along the length of stem, and so producing more flowers.

Feed trees, shrubs and hedges with a balanced fertilizer, sprinkling it over the root area before hoeing into the soil surface.

Mulch rose and shrub beds with a 5-8cm (2-3in) layer of organic matter. This will help retain moisture during dry spells and reduce weed build-up. Pay particular attention to mulching around rhododendrons, azaleas and camelias.



## FRUIT and VEGETABLES

Mulch fruit trees with well-rotted manure or garden compost, taking care not to mound mulch up around the trunk.

Top-dress patio fruit-trees with fresh compost and a slow-release fertilizer.

Feed raspberry canes, fruit bushes and fruit trees to encourage good crops this season. Apply a slow-release fertilizer around their base.

Prepare vegetable seed beds by removing all weeds.

Dig a 5cm+ layer of compost, well-rotted manure, or green waste into beds.

Cover prepared soil with sheets of black plastic to keep it drier and warmer in preparation for planting.

Support pea and bean plants now. For quick and easy pea supports, push some twiggy sticks around your plants.

Thin carrot seedlings to achieve good-sized carrots; do this in the evening when fewer carrot flies are around.



## GREENHOUSE

Don't forget to prick out seedlings before they get too crowded – and then to pot them on as individual plants as soon as they are large enough.

Make sure you give greenhouse plants more space as they put on new growth. This will help to prevent disease and to contain early pest infestations.

Check if plants need watering at least every few days; seedlings will need daily attention.

Remember that temperatures can still drop at night. Seedlings, in particular, object to wide temperature fluctuations. A heated propagator, or fleece cover, could be a cost effective answer if your greenhouse is mostly full of hardy mature plants.

## LAWN



Repair any bare patches in your lawn – try sowing lawn repair grass seed.

Apply a high-nitrogen fertilizer to your lawn for a boost at the start of the season.

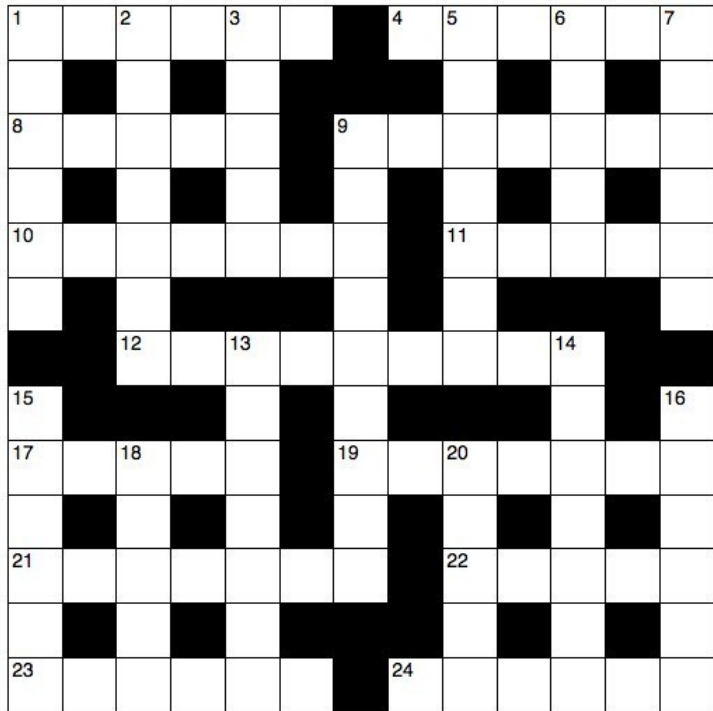
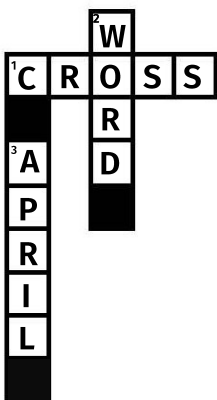
Mow your lawn more regularly, as required. Lower your mower blades towards the end of the month.

Recut lawn edges to straighten them up.

## TIPS

- \* Apply weed killer to perennial weeds in paving and patios.
- \* Look out for signs of pests and diseases, early prevention is easier than curing an infestation.
- \* Keep on top of weeding now that the weather is warming up. Run a hoe through beds and borders.

Happy Gardening  
***Petunia Flowers***



**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, CS 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)

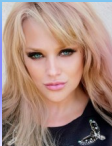
## Down

- 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 (anagram) (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 (anagram) (5)

## MARCH CROSSWORD ANSWERS

**ACROSS**    1 Awaken    4 Quench    8 Hit me    9 Sadness    10 Semitic  
11 Ridge    12 Testimony    17 Psalm    19 Indulge    21 Deserve    22 Ariel  
23 Rose as    24 Beggar

**DOWN**    1 Aghast    2 Attempt    3 Eject    5 Undergo    6 No end    7 Hasten  
9 Sacrifice    13 Samaria    14 Yelling    15 Spider    16 Dealer    18 Asses  
20 Drake



**Material for the MAY magazine should be with Heather Brookes**

email: [heather.brookes@stjohnsspalding.org](mailto:heather.brookes@stjohnsspalding.org)  
by 5pm on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April

## FEBRUARY LOTTERY WINNERS

**£20**    17    **Michael Moriaty**  
**£10**    2    **Margaret Calkin**  
**£5**    1    **Yvonne Edgoose**  
**£5**    31    **George and Jacqui King**



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(refreshments from 6:45pm)

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