

A MARTYR'S MESSAGE

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FROM ST. GEORGE'S PARISH CHURCH - NEW MILLS



CALM BEFORE THE STORM | TORR VALE MILL | FEBRUARY 2022 | NEW MILLS | PHOTO BY LEON SHUFFLEBOTHAM

“Offering a welcoming, God-centred environment to the people of New Mills”



FROM THE VICARAGE

Spring is rapidly approaching, and I am reminded once again that God's creation is a beautiful and an amazing thing. This rhythm of the world around us gives us hope - things come and go in life, there is constant change. But God is constantly present in the background, quietly working to bring about new life.

This month, the season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. At the imposition of ashes, the priest, making the sign of the cross upon the penitents forehead, says, "Remember that you are but dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ." We are reminded of our mortality, of our fallen nature. We are all made by God, we are all fallen, but we hold fast to our faith, and seek to be faithful to Christ. This, sadly, is part of the rhythm of humanity's broken lives. But when we acknowledge our failings, we are given a fresh start.

As we enter into the penitential season of Lent and once again reflect upon the ways we let God, one another and ourselves down, we also enter into the season of Easter. Easter is the Church's celebration of Christ's victory over sin. Through Christ's resurrection, spiritual death is overcome. This gives us hope, the hope of our salvation. Christ, our Saviour, gives us the opportunity to share in the fullness of life both now and in the world to come. He offers us a new beginning in every moment of every day.

So we can be of good cheer. We can be encouraged and can take comfort from the buds on the trees, the snowdrops in our gardens and the expectant animals in the fields. We can especially find comfort and be encouraged by the slow but steady return to normality following the past two years of coronavirus restrictions. The cycle of life continues steadily, perhaps all too often unnoticed. And for this we give thanks to God.

Do not fear. Be faithful to Christ and firm in the faith. As we see the signs of new life appearing in the world around us, we can take hope. We can join with the whole creation in glorifying God with thankful hearts. For God's goodness and generosity are abundant. Through the Sacraments of His Church, Christ is cleansing and healing us. Through the working of the Holy Spirit within us, we receive grace, the comfort, strength and inspiration to keep trying to be the people God created us to be. As often as we fall and bring death to our soul, we are given the opportunity to receive forgiveness, and a new birth, a new beginning in Christ. The God of our creation, redemption and sanctification is at work, offering us life in all its fullness.

With my prayer and blessings,

Fr. Owain



A free phoneline of hymns,
reflections and prayers



LENT & EASTER



AT ST. GEORGE'S PARISH CHURCH, NEW MILLS

Wednesday 2nd March - Ash Wednesday

9.15am Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

7.00pm Sung Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

Tuesdays during Lent

1.00pm - 2.30pm Lent Course

Wednesdays during Lent

6.30pm - 7.10pm Stations of the Cross - Starting Wednesday 9th March

Sundays during Lent

8.00am Said Eucharist

10.00am Sung Parish Eucharist

6.30pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 27th March - Mothering Sunday

10.00am Sung Parish Eucharist

Sunday 10th April - Palm Sunday

10.00am Sung Parish Eucharist with Procession of Palms

Thursday 14th April - Maundy Thursday

7.00pm Sung Parish Eucharist followed by 1 hour Vigil

Friday 15th April - Good Friday

2.00pm Good Friday Liturgy

Sunday 17th April - Easter Day

8.00am Said Eucharist

10.00am Sung Parish Eucharist

Sunday 24th April - Second Sunday of Easter

8.00am Said Eucharist

10.00am Sung Parish Eucharist

6.30pm Choral Evensong for our Patronal Festival - St. George the Martyr



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LENT



MAUNDY THURSDAY

THURSDAY 14TH APRIL 2022

LENT

Lent encourages us to examine how we're getting on. It's especially useful for people who have been practising Christians for some time. We're used to saying prayers, going to church and trying to express our faith in action, but the routine may have become a bit jaded. We would like to beef it up, but the very busyness of living gets in the way.

Self-examination doesn't demand grovelling or self-abasement or flagellation. It means going into the open space of the wilderness with Jesus and trying to imagine what He was facing, as He prepared Himself "in the power of the Spirit" to embark on His life's work.

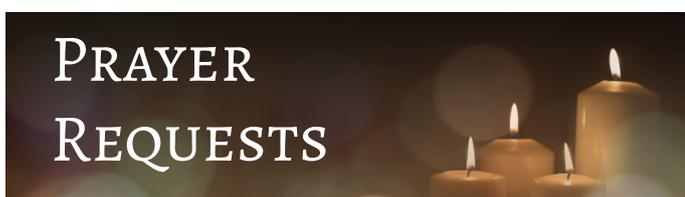
What might His temptations mean for us here and now? They offered Him short cuts. Turning stones into bread could solve the world's poverty gap in a stroke. It would relieve us of our responsibility to combine generosity with ingenuity and put right the world's grotesque inequalities. Jesus responded to that temptation by quoting scripture, "Human beings cannot live on bread alone". It speaks volumes for the 21st Century.

Then Jesus was tempted to do a deal with the devil, on the pretext that collaboration would deliver results. "God alone is due our homage", was His rebuff, quoting scripture again. Since everyone worships something or someone, it would be a valuable exercise to consider carefully what or who takes pride of place in our schedule. It's a tough one. What do we love most, and do we need to adjust our priorities?

Magic was the next option. Jump off the temple roof and you'll be OK. Jesus dismissed this offer with the words, "Don't put God to the test". While that stunt wouldn't appeal to many Christians, there's a breed of phoney preachers today who promise financial success and perfect health to their followers.

Others reduce the Gospel to the single word, 'love', as though acquiring a sunny disposition could solve humanity's problems. The definition of love in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, suggests something quite different. That Chapter could provide the whole agenda for Lent and beyond.

EDITOR | THE VEN JOHN BARTON



Please submit your prayer requests to Fr. Owain by calling the vicarage on: (01663) 743225 or email: vicar@newmillschurch.co.uk

Maundy Thursday is famous for two things. The first is one of the final acts that Jesus did before His death: the washing of His own disciples' feet (see John 13). Jesus washed His disciples' feet for a purpose: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is 'mandatum novum do vobis'. The word 'mundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (or command). The ceremony of the 'washing of the feet' of members of the congregation came to be an important part of the liturgy (regular worship) of the medieval church, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

But Thursday was also important because it was on that night that Jesus first introduced the Lord's Supper, or what we nowadays call Holy Communion.

Jesus and His close friends had met in a secret upper room to share the Passover meal together – for the last time. And there Jesus transformed the Passover into the Lord's Supper, saying, 'this is my body' and 'this is my blood' as He, the Lamb of God, prepared to die for the sins of the whole world. John's gospel makes it clear that the Last Supper took place the evening BEFORE the regular Passover meal, and that later Jesus died at the same time that the Passover lambs were killed.

A PRAYER BEFORE THE CROSS

(Thoughts on the Passion of Christ)

Dear Lord, my sin is mine and mine alone:
That folly of my humanness which I must own
As having moved against the best-self
You, Lord, worked within my heart,
'til now my worst-self forms the greater part
Of what I see, and you must judge.

My Lord, it is no more than I deserve
For I indeed do let old Adam hide
Within the New Man you would forge.
So, Lord, my sin, in each and every part
Betrays that loyalty displayed upon the cross
Before which I, in penitence, now plead.

Dear Lord, forgive my fall from grace
And as I look into your eyes
Restore to me the robe of love you gave
That I may walk, full face, along your way
Towards our Father's house
Wherein a joyful welcoming will say –
'My child, now you are home at last.'

THE PARISH PUMP

He Is Risen: An Empty Egg

Materials:

Paper plates, 2 per student	Scissors
Crayons	Paper fastener

FAITH CONNECTION

Read or summarize the story of Jesus' Resurrection from Luke 24:1–8.

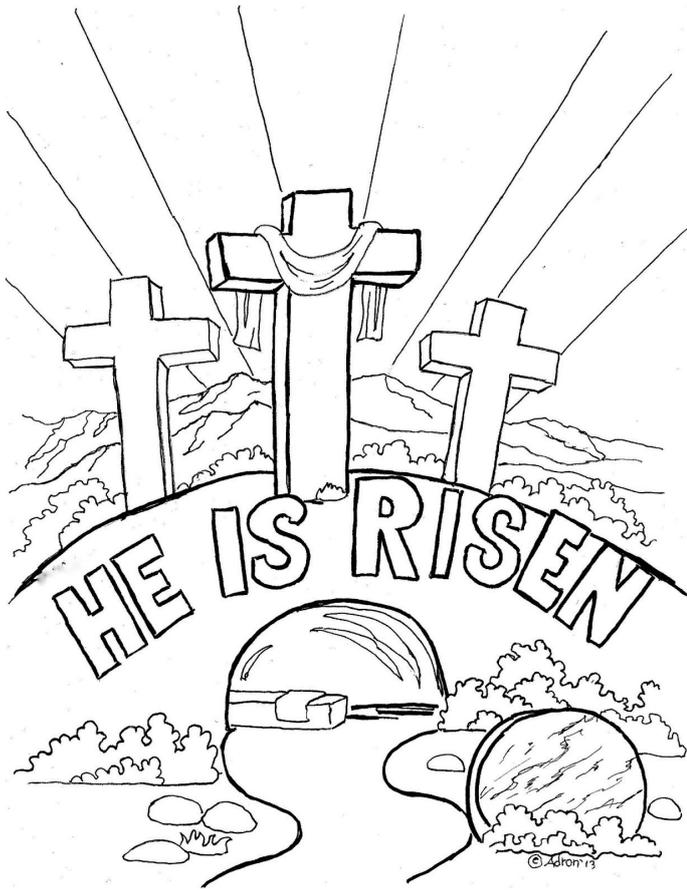


Directions:

1. Use light-colored crayons to decorate the outside of one plate to look like an Easter egg.
2. Cut the first plate in half. Fasten the sides to the bottom center of the second plate with a paper fastener as shown.
3. Open up the egg and write “He Is Risen” on the bottom plate.
4. Show your Easter egg to others to share the message of the angel on that first Easter morning.

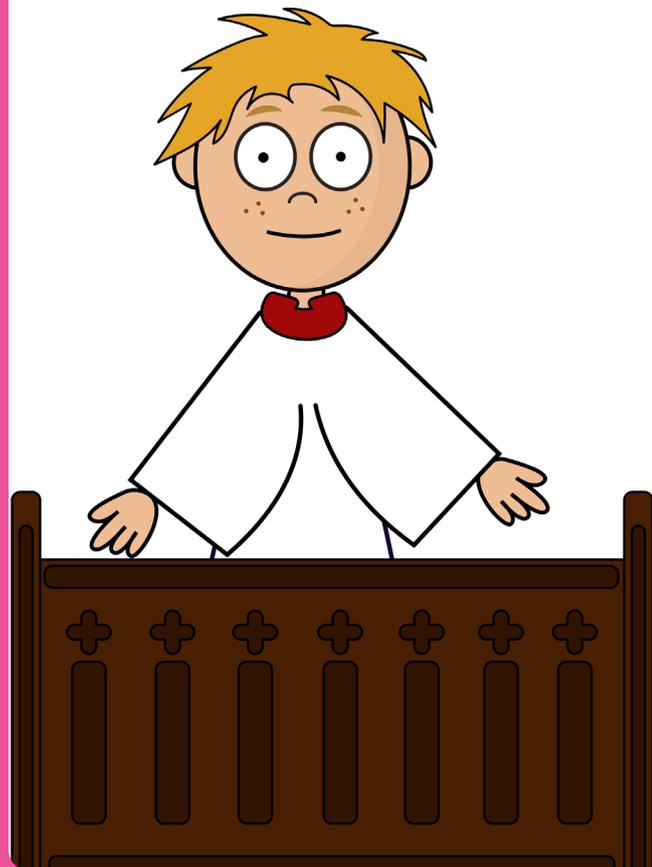
Suggestions:

1. If you wish, decorate the outside of the bottom plate too.
2. Use stickers or markers to decorate your egg.
3. Wet the plate with water, then put colored bits of tissue paper over it. Remove the tissue when dry.
4. Glue on pieces of colored tissue paper with a mixture of water and white glue.



f	c	l	o	t	h	e	s	d	x	h	v
o	e	y	t	s	o	r	r	y	v	u	b
t	l	e	e	a	n	g	r	y	m	g	w
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p	b	l	o	i	n	f	a	t	h	e	r
f	r	y	o	u	n	g	e	r	n	d	h
e	a	o	o	s	n	g	v	o	p	o	o
a	t	c	p	o	t	d	m	x	n	l	u
s	e	n	s	e	s	l	a	v	e	d	s
t	e	w	w	o	r	k	m	a	n	e	e
i	n	h	e	r	i	t	v	h	u	r	r
n	i	h	u	n	g	r	y	p	i	g	s

inherit	clothes	hugged
feeding	money	feast
sorry	younger	house
celebrate	found	nothing
hungry	senses	father
workman	angry	slaved
property	country	pigs
son	older	lost



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S. George's Parish Church, New Mills

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St. George's Parish Church relies entirely on the generosity of our regular congregation giving because we do not receive any funding from the government. The money we receive goes towards the community work, pastoral work, missionary and ministry work within the parish of New Mills.

We are also responsible for the upkeep of this beautiful and historic building of St. George's. The money that our regular congregation gives also has to cover the electric, lighting, heating and repairs. This special building is here as a place of prayer, sanctuary as well as being a useable space for the whole community.

For the work and life of St. George's to continue, we need your help.

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REMEMBERING MOTHERS

SUNDAY 27TH MARCH 2022

The honouring of mothers goes back to Roman times. Each Spring, a pagan festival honoured Cybele, supreme Goddess of Fertility and Mother of all the Gods. Other celebrations paid tribute to Mother Earth. From the Middle Ages, in England, it became traditional for outdoor labourers and craftsmen to have a day off in Lent. Later, domestic servants were also given short leave to visit their mother and family.

These brief holidays became opportunities to go to church. This might have been their home church or their nearest cathedral. The Services at the 'mother' church symbolised the coming together of families. The term 'Mothering Sunday' dates from the 16th century. This year it falls on the 27th March.

'Mother's Day' is a secular festival. It originated in 1908 after a woman called Anna Jarvis held a church memorial service for her mother in West Virginia, USA. She was a peace activist and a nurse. She founded Mother's Day Work Clubs to address public health issues. Anna wanted people to honour the mother of the family, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society. Before she died Anna regretted the commercialism that followed and expressed that this was never her intention.

Many mothers are mentioned in the Bible along with interesting stories about them. These include Eve, Hagar, Leah, Ruth and Bathsheba, to mention only a few. A few times God enabled childless women to have a baby: Rachel, Rebekah, Manoah's wife (unnamed) and Hannah who eventually gave birth to Joseph, Jacob, Samson and Samuel respectively. There was also Sarah, wife of Abraham, who aged 90 became the mother of Isaac.

It is possible that these miraculous births were remembered by the Virgin Mary. She was certainly aware that her elderly relative was pregnant. These events foreshadowed angel Gabriel's announcement that Mary was going to have a baby. Then added "For nothing is impossible with God." (Luke 1:37)

On our Mothering Sunday, what else can we remember about mothers and give thanks to God for them?



GOOD FRIDAY, JESUS AND THE THIEVES ON THE CROSS

GOOD FRIDAY 15TH APRIL 2022

Luke's account of the crucifixion (Luke 23:32-43) emphasises the mocking of the crowd, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself' (35,37,39). In their view a Messiah does not hang on a cross and suffer. In considering the two men who were crucified with Jesus, we are also confronted with the issue of how Jesus secures salvation for us.

The words of one of those crucified with Jesus reflected the crowd's taunts: 'Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us.' He highlights the question of Jesus' identity: how can He save others, when He cannot save Himself from death? He failed to see that the cross itself was the means of salvation.

So – what kind of Messiah was Jesus?

The other criminal's response in his last moments is a moving expression of faith. When challenging the other man, he spoke of the utter injustice of the crucifixion: 'this man has done nothing wrong.' He perceived the truth that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. In a wonderful picture of grace, 'remember me when You come into Your kingdom', the second thief confessed his guilt and secured Jesus' forgiveness and mercy.

In reply, Jesus promised the man life from the moment of death; 'Today you will be with Me in paradise.' Jesus used the picture of a walled garden to help the man understand His promise of protection and security in God's love and acceptance eternally.

Each one of us has to choose how we react to Jesus on the cross. Do we want Him to 'remember' us when He comes into His kingdom, or not? If you were to die tonight, how confident would you be of going to be with Jesus? 'For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God' (1 Peter 3:18).

EASTER - THE MOST JOYFUL DAY OF THE YEAR

SUNDAY 17TH APRIL 2022



Easter is the most joyful day of the year for Christians. Christ has died for our sins. We are forgiven. Christ has risen! We are redeemed! We can look forward to an eternity in His joy! Hallelujah!

The Good News of Jesus Christ is a message so simple that you can explain it to someone in a few minutes. It is so profound that for the rest of their lives they will still be 'growing' in their Christian walk with God.

Why does the date move around so much? Because the date of Passover moves around, and according to the biblical account, Easter is tied to the Passover. Passover celebrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, and it lasts for seven days, from the middle of the Hebrew month of Nisan, which equates to late March or early April.

Sir Isaac Newton was one of the first to use the Hebrew lunar calendar to come up with firm dates for the first Good Friday: Friday 7th April 30 AD or Friday 3rd April, 33 AD with Easter Day falling two days later. Modern scholars continue to think these two Fridays to be the most likely.

Most people will tell you that Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, which is broadly true. But the precise calculations are complicated and involve something called an 'ecclesiastical full moon', which is not the same as the moon in the sky. The earliest possible date for Easter in the West is 22nd March, which last fell in 1818. The latest is 25th April, which last happened in 1943.

Why the name, 'Easter'? In almost every European language, the festival's name comes from 'Pesach', the Hebrew word for Passover. The Germanic word 'Easter', however, seems to come from Eostre, a Saxon fertility goddess mentioned by the Venerable Bede. He thought that the Saxons worshipped her in 'Eostur month,' but may have confused her with the classical dawn goddesses like Eos and Aurora, whose names mean 'shining in the east'. So, Easter might have meant simply 'beginning month' – a good time for starting up again after a long winter.

Finally, why Easter eggs? On one hand, they are an ancient symbol of birth in most European cultures. On the other hand, hens start laying regularly again each Spring. Since eggs were forbidden during Lent, it's easy to see how decorating and eating them became a practical way to celebrate Easter.

NATIONWIDE DIGITAL CHURCHYARD MAPPING PROJECT BEGINS



The first few of 19,000 churchyards have been surveyed as part of a Church of England project to create a free digital map of every grave and feature in every churchyard in the country.

The ancient church of St Bega on the shores of Lake Bassenthwaite in the Diocese of Carlisle was the first churchyard to be scanned by the surveyors, using sophisticated laser equipment, as part of the national programme.

A new website will go online in the new year, giving free access to the map. It is expected to be of special interest to local community groups, conservationists, and those researching family history. The website will also enable the charting of biodiversity and green technology.

The Church of England has partnered with Cumbrian-based surveying company Atlantic Geomatics who will use back-pack mounted laser scanners to map churchyards. They will also photograph all the visible headstones.

There are around 19,000 Anglican burial grounds in England, and the ambitious scheme will aim to digitally survey the majority over the coming seven years. Data on burials will be combined with other information, such as the National Biodiversity Network Atlas, to present the most complete picture of churchyards to date.

The project will come at no cost to parishes or dioceses in the Church of England and parishes will have free access to the map through a new web-based record system which is set to launch in Spring 2022. There will also be the option to subscribe to additional services.

Substantial funding for the programme has been given by Historic England, with the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Caring for God's Acre supporting the pilot phase, as well as support from genealogy research websites.

As well as details of burials, the online interactive map will detail biodiversity in churchyards, including ancient trees and plant-life, as well as green technology such as solar panels.

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-NEW MILLS-

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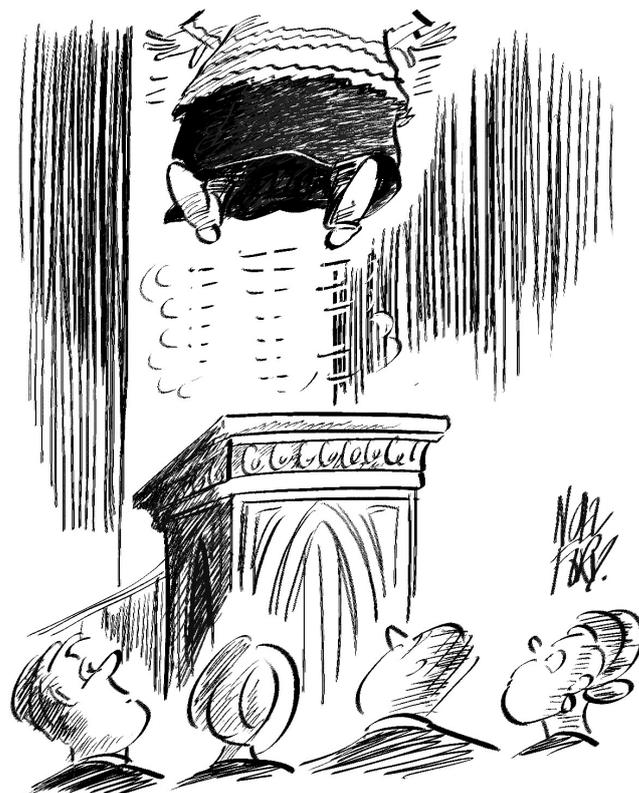
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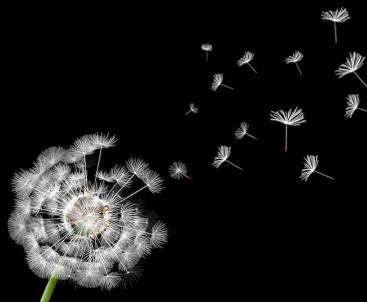


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9.15am - Said Holy Communion

Sundays

8.00am - Holy Communion

10.00am - Sung Parish Holy Communion

6.30pm - Evening Prayer

Please keep an eye on our website and Facebook pages for up-to-date information and events.

Times of our Lent, Holy Week and Easter services can be found on page 3 of the magazine.

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The Deadline for the next issue of 'A Martyr's Message' is Friday 20th May 2022

This magazine is also available to download and view on our website.