

Parish News

April/May 2009

CELEBRATING 140 YEARS



Not here . . .

Gautama Buddha, Guru Nanak, the prophet Mohammed - you can visit the tombs of the founders of all the great world religions except one. Or rather, you can visit his tomb, but it's conspicuously empty. Right at the heart of the Christian story is *nothing* - an empty space. And it's that empty space which Christians all over the world celebrate at Easter.

When a group of women disciples visited the tomb of Jesus on the third day after his death, they were surprised to find the huge stone at its entrance rolled back. They were even more surprised to discover a 'young man in white robes' sitting inside it. The third surprise - the greatest of them all - was what he told them. '*You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified*', he said. '*He is not here; he is risen.*'

The women had come to anoint a corpse, but instead they were to celebrate a new life. '*Go and tell his disciples*'. Nothing could more powerfully express the heart of the Easter message than those simple but mind-blowing words: '*Not here.*'

Rather like those women, at Easter many of us go to the cemetery or the crematorium as an act of love, to leave some flowers and perhaps say a prayer at the grave of a loved one. But in our heart of hearts we know that they are not there. They have '*gone*' - but where?

According to the apostle Paul, they have '*departed to be with Christ, which is far better*'. Perhaps the very best notice for the gates of a churchyard would be those simple words: 'They are not here. They are risen' - seven words that speak the heart of the Easter faith, for what was true of Jesus is true for all those whose faith is in the risen Saviour.

In many a village church up and down Britain the Easter hymns are sung and the message of the resurrection celebrated in a building literally surrounded by the churchyard.. What a wonderful paradox! In the heart of the place of death we boldly assert that in the truest sense of the word those graves are as empty as was the grave of Jesus.

That - not hot cross buns, chocolate rabbits or fancy bonnets - is what Easter is all about. The Final Enemy has been defeated.

[Editor: Canon David Winter, former Head of Religious Broadcasting for the BBC, considers the implications of Easter for all of us today....]



Jesus said to her, “Mary”

John 20:16

At the cross

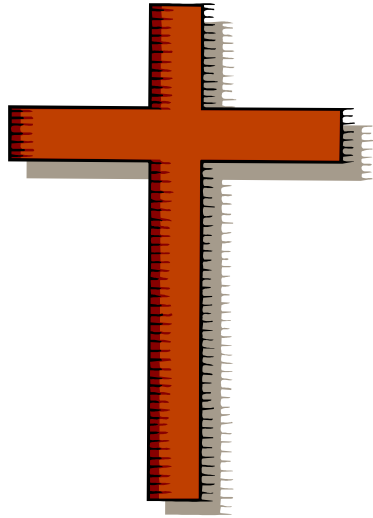
I see Christ crucified still – today:
where the hungry cry for food,
die for food,
though there's plenty.
Where people are yelled at,
jeered at –
bricks through their windows
because their skin isn't white, isn't right.
Where abuse and rape occur,
where gay men are beaten up,
where lust kills love –
I see him crucified still.

I see Christ crucified still – today:
where wars scar people, lands,
God's hands –
the endless, killing politics of hate.
Where the cry for justice
is unheard, oppressed, beaten down
by cold, world systems.
Where power comes first,
where religion twists faith,
where fear kills trust –
I see him crucified still.

I see Christ crucified still – today:
where creation's fabric shreds,
is bled,
by 'must have now', 'must use'.
Where earth's beauty is destroyed.
Where trees burn,
where water poisons,
where greed kills need –
I see him crucified still.

And I try – a little –
to stem the deadly tide
as I give – a little,
write to those in power – a little,
take my bottles to the bottle bank,
and try to love as he said;
try to love – a little.

O God, for all these crucifixions
may there one day be resurrection.



Vicar's Letter

Dear Friends

It seems as if Easter eggs have been in the shops for ever and hot cross buns have been on the menu for weeks now. Of course the shops want to make sure that they get the full advantage from any marketing possibility, but in the church as we approach Easter we move through the solemnity of Holy Week before we realise the full wonder and joy of Easter Sunday.

We share with the disciples on Maundy Thursday as we remember our Lord's last earthly meal. It was a time of celebration for them, the night before the Passover was due celebrated, the time when the Jews remember freedom of God's people from slavery. And the meal, the Last Supper, has become central to worship, a remembrance of the freedom from slavery of sin that Christ brings us.



We also remember how Jesus washed his disciples' feet, a parable acted out in humility and service. Here Jesus acts as servant, giving us a model for service which we need to follow, not just on Maundy Thursday, but each and every day amongst our families and our communities. Jesus tells us that, 'the greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.'

And then on Good Friday we remember Jesus' ultimate act of service and sacrifice. We share in the frenzy of the crowd as they cry for blood; we experience the injustice of the trial; we identify with Peter's betrayal; we follow on the road to Calvary helpless and full of

despair; we stand at a distance yearning for him to do something miraculous; we share in Mary's agony as Jesus hangs on the cross and we finally return home, the future that we had hoped for having been snatched away.

And yet we have the hope of Easter Sunday, we know that Good Friday is not the end, just the start of something amazing, yet if we don't share in the agony of Holy Week, how are we to truly appreciate the wonder of that day of resurrection?

The celebrations of Easter are the highlight of the Christian year – this is what it's all about. The Easter bunnies and chicks are just symbols of that celebration – the symbols of new life, the new life which is won through the events of Holy Week.

I hope you enjoy your Easter eggs and chocolates but as you enjoy the richness of the chocolate remember the richness that we have in Jesus Christ, the risen and living God who is servant to all of us, yet is the risen and ascended Lord of all.

Wishing you a happy and holy Easter,

Yours in Christ



Have you been asked to join the PCC?

Almost every Church of England parish has a Parochial Church Council (PCC). Established early in the 19th century, to give a voice to lay people in the running of their parishes, PCCs have the responsibility of co-operating with their parish priest 'in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.'

The PCC's powers and duties are defined by legislation, including the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and the Synodical Government Measure 1969. A helpful publication, the Church Representation Rules (Church House Publishing, ISBN 0 7151 1012 8), gives excellent advice on the law relating to PCCs – each parish should have a copy.

As well as the general responsibility for the parish, PCCs are responsible for the maintenance of the church buildings and churchyard, and for managing the church's money and deciding how it is to be spent. If a parish has paid staff other than the clergy (such as a youth worker, an organist, a vergers or an administrator), the PCC will be the employer. PCCs appoint a secretary, to convene meetings and keep the minutes. (A parish administrator (if there is one) may be expected to act as PCC secretary.) The PCC also appoints a treasurer.

The PCC must meet four times each year, usually quarterly. In small parishes, the PCC may make all the decision about the church at its meetings. But even small parishes may find that they run their affairs better with a series of committees – dealing with matters such as mission, work with children and young people, property maintenance and finance.

Committees can benefit from the expertise of parishioners who aren't members of the PCC. Any committees should operate on clear terms of reference and refer important matters to the full PCC for approval. With a good committee structure, the PCC can concentrate on major issues of policy or strategy. Members of the PCC include the clergy, churchwardens, the parish's representatives on the Deanery Synod and the elected representatives of the laity. Members must be on the parish's electoral roll, be over 16 and must not be disqualified from being charity trustees under the terms of the Charities Act 1993. If the parish is fortunate enough to have a Reader, he or she will usually be a member of the PCC.

The parish priest is automatically the chairman, but a lay person must be elected as vice chair. Many PCCs find that their meetings flow much better if the vice chair regularly chairs meetings, allowing the parish priest to speak to the main business without also having to keep an eye on the efficient transaction of business.

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Is your home properly protected?

It is a sad fact that burglaries cause a lot of grief and take up a significant amount of police time. Neighbourhood Watch Associations have an important role in reducing crime, but we can all help the police by taking appropriate precautions in respect of our own property. So here are a few tips based on the advice of crime prevention officers:

1. Letter boxes can be used by criminals to extract goods close to the door, commonly door or car keys, or even to work vulnerable locking devices from the inside. So letter plates should not be closer than 400mm from the door lock (an internal cover plate provides additional security). Some people who have a letter basket remove the bottom it, allowing mail to fall to the floor (preventing theft of the mail).

2. To make a door secure, a rim latch (Yale type) on its own is not sufficient. The door should be fitted with a 5-lever mortice deadlock, though insurance companies will accept a rim automatic deadlock. The rim latch and the mortice should be fitted 18-24 inches apart. For added safety fit a spy hole and door chain or limiter.

3. The back door should be fitted with a 5-lever 2-bolt mortice sash lock, half way up the door. This should be to British Standard 3621. Bolts should always be fitted at 90 degrees to the grain of the wood, reducing the likelihood of the wood splitting under pressure.

4. Patio doors are often used as a means of entry, so unless yours is fitted with a multi-locking system, it is advisable to fit extra locks. These are usually “push to lock and key to open” which makes them easy to use. If in doubt, consult the installer to manufacturer.

Many police stations have a dedicated Crime Prevention Officer who will be pleased to advise anyone who feels vulnerable.

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What everyone wants: an allotment

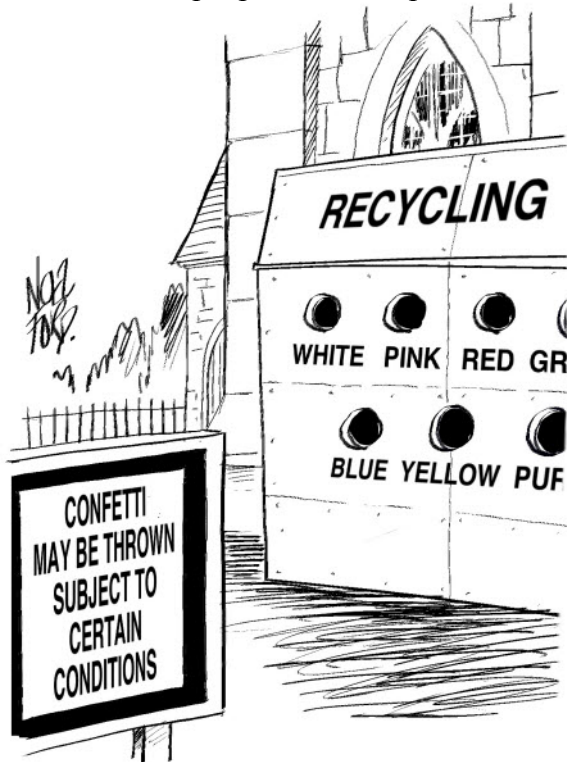
As Spring gets underway, it seems that thousands of us are dreaming of one thing: the chance to dig over our very own allotment.

The latest figures show that now up to 100,000 people in Britain have their names down for an allotment. A survey of councils by the National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners shows that in just a quarter of England's local authorities, some 24,000 people are waiting hopefully for a plot, compared with only 2,700 in 1997.

Waiting lists are longest in Sheffield, where 2,200 people want a plot, compared with only 35 a decade ago. More than 1,000 people are waiting in Blyth Valley, North Tyneside, Sunderland and Wandsworth, south London.

In the 1980s and 1990s councils sold off almost 200,000 plots because they were unwanted, leaving a total of only about 330,000. But the appeal of vegetable growing has rocketed, as people seek cheaper food.

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Parish & Deanery Roundup

The Puzzle of Pastoral Care: A diocesan course for anyone wanting to find out more about pastoral ministry. Saturday 25th April from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm at Woodhouse Close Church, Bishop Auckland. Led by Alison Moore, there is no charge for the course. If you would like further details please pick up a leaflet from the back of church and have a word with Carole if you would like to go.

Archbishop's Lent Appeal for Zimbabwe: The appeal will enable the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe to reach out to communities that are facing a humanitarian crisis. We have decided to support this as our Lent USPG appeal this year.

Mothers' Union

St. Mary's Mother's Union members joined members from other branches in the Sedgefield Deanery for a very uplifting Lady Day Service at St. Helen's, Kelloe. The procession of banners was led by Mrs Kathy Edmenson, Deanery Leader. Following the service, the ladies of Kelloe Mother's Union provided most enjoyable refreshments. We thank them most sincerely for their hospitality

Volunteers for Church duties

Thursday Coffee Morning - Dorothy Simpkin & Pat Burgess.

Flowers - Jean Young

Cleaning - Dorothy Simpkin & Joyce Levy

Special Wedding Anniversaries

Diamond Wedding 60 years Milly & Tommy Cole

Special Birthdays

80 th	Mrs Norma Short
80 th	Mrs Réne Willey
100 th	Mrs E Young

March Tuesday & Thursday Coffee Mornings

The amount realised for the above coffee mornings was: **£273.95**

Thank you to everyone for your continued support!

Church Flowers



Sunday	Altar	Pulpit	Chancel
5th April	LENT		
12th April	Mrs S. Prest	Mrs D. Fitzen	
19th April	Mr W. Jeffries		
26th April	Mrs E. Vaulks		
3rd May	Mrs C. Taylor		

Donations to the Flower Fund will be most welcome and should be given to Mrs Iseton.

Parish Registers

Holy Baptism – Welcomed into God’s family

15th March	Jessie Victoria Purvis
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APRIL CALENDAR

2	Thursday	7.00 pm	Lent Evensong
9	Thursday	7.00 pm	Maundi Thursday Service
21	Tuesday	7.00 pm	PCC Meeting
27	Monday	7.00 pm	Mothers' Union Service & Meeting

(Refreshments served after each evening service)

COFFEE MORNINGS

Tuesdays and Thursdays

10.00 - 11.00 am

CONTACT INFORMATION

You can contact Rev'd Carole Lloyd on:

Tel : 01388 720243

email: carole.lloyd@amos.co.uk

A Church Warden is usually available at Church each Tuesday between 10.00 - 11.00 am to assist with enquiries.

Magazine/Website information

email: editor@stmaryscoxhoe.co.uk

St. Mary's Church

Sunday Services

05/04/09	Palm Sunday	09.15 am	CL	Sung Communion
12/04/09	Easter Sunday	09.15 am	MD	Sung Communion
19/04/09	Easter 2	11.00 am	CL	Family Communion
26/04/09	Easter 3	09.15 am	CL	Sung Communion
03/05/09	Easter 4	09.15 am	Lle	Communion by Extension
10/05/09	Easter 5	09.15 am	KL	Sung Communion
17/05/09	Easter 6	11.00 am	CL	Family Communion

Weekday Services

Tues days	Holy Communion	09.15 am	CL	Holy Communion
02/04/09	Evensong	7.00 pm	CL	Evensong
09/04/09	Maundi Thursday	7.00 pm	CL	Sung Communion

Maundi Thursday: Thursday 9th April we will be celebrating our Holy Communion Service with our friends from Chilton and Kelloe. The service is at 7.00 pm at St Mary's, Coxhoe.

Good Friday: Friday 10th April 10.30 am Reflective Good Friday Service at St Helen's, Kelloe.

Sing for Life: Support the **Anthony Nolan Trust** by joining our Hymnathon on May 9th from 2pm onwards. If you would like to join in the singing please take a sponsor form from the back of church. Otherwise you may want to sponsor someone who is singing.

Please do something to help this charity which has done so much to increase the availability of bone marrow transplants

CL	Carole Lloyd	
DG	David Garratt	
MD	Mike Dixon	
LL	Keith Lumsden	
Lle	Les Lewis	
TBA	To be Advised	
EL	Eric Lynn	