

Brookfield News

April 2016
No 336
Price 50p



Breakfast ± with Jesus Christ

“It is the Lord!” (John 21:7)

There is something very reassuring in the simple scene by Galilee’s lake, described on that post-Easter morning. Taking place there was the birth of a mighty world-wide adventure that has not ended yet! Was there ever a breakfast like it? They’d been fishing all night, but in vain.... until they heard a distant call from the shore:

“How are you doing, guys?”

There is even the little detail in the instructions from the beach that it was to be on the right side of the boat that the net should be thrown out this time.

That Stranger. That voice! Suddenly the net was full of wriggling fish. It was like coming in at the start of the film again – (see Luke 5:6). Then Peter’s hundred yard splash to the shore... the charcoal fire and ‘large’ tilapia fish... the typical action of fishermen in counting the catch – how we love the Bible, with its teeming stories.

And now breakfast on the beach, with Jesus Christ!

It was a re-commissioning for the apostle Peter, who only days earlier had denied any knowledge of Jesus. From now on it would be different. “Feed my sheep,” said Jesus.

1. Whose call but Christ’s call? Peter would never be the same again. Those who have truly heard the call of Christ, will still be standing firm when revolutions explode, when finances plunge, when a church falls apart.

2. Whose word but Christ’s word? ‘Feed my sheep,’ were His words. Whoever we may be teaching, Christ’s servant is to see to it that what is taught is Christ’s word and not one’s own. The power that brings forgiveness and resurrection life can only come from one source!

3. Whose flock, but Christ’s flock? ‘MY lambs... MY sheep’ – they were never ours! Realise this – and

This Month.....Praise my Soul the King of Heaven.....Page 4

Services

Sundays

11.00am Sung Eucharist

"Sunday Supplement" the children's activity takes place every Sunday in the sacristy during the service

Weekday Services

Said Eucharist

Tuesday 7.30pm

Wednesday 9.30am

Friday 7.30am

Saints' & Holy Days

Monday 4th April. The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary
11.00am Funeral of Tom Welsh

Clergy Day off: Fr. Guy is off duty on Monday but don't hesitate to call him in emergencies.

The Vicar is usually available in the Vicarage, 85 Dartmouth Park Road, from 8:00pm until 9:00pm on Tuesdays for the purpose of interviews, arranging Baptisms, reading of Banns and Weddings etc. he is also available to hear confessions then or by appointment.

Contents

Thy kingdom come.....	Page 3
Life begins at 60.....	Page 3
The way I see it.....	Page 4
Praise my Soul the King of Heaven	Page 4
From the Vicar's Desk.....	Page 5
Leave Easter alone.....	Page 5
Just pray.....	Page 6
Top 10 Bible stories.....	Page 6
He gave us eyes.....	Page 7
Tea or coffee?.....	Page 7
Heritage grants.....	Page 7
Don't be afraid of clouds.....	Page 8
St George.....	Page 9
Young carers.....	Page 9
Saint Banned.....	Page 9
Christians in India.....	Page 10
Holy Wells.....	Page 10
Amazing coincidences.....	Page 11

so much of the conflicts that can occur between the friends of Jesus will cease overnight.

Can you smell the tilapia fish grilling on that little fire by Galilee's beach? The Stranger on the shore is calling YOU. Along with John, dripping wet in the boat, recognise that He is no stranger. "It is the Lord."

Nun and jeep

Found in a diocesan magazine: A nun driving her jeep in the Middle East ran out of petrol. The only container she could find was a chamber pot, in which she collected petrol and with great difficulty refilled the jeep. Some Sheikhs looking on observed: 'Sister, we don't share your religion, but we admire your faith.'

Thy Kingdom Come - a week of prayer is called for May

Churches across the country have been invited to spend the week before Pentecost, 8th to 15th May, in praying together.

Writing to all the Anglican church leaders in England, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York explain: 'Throughout history any movement of the Holy Spirit to draw increasing numbers of people to faith in Christ has always begun with prayer....

'Christ's love compels us' to offer ... hope, joy and salvation to others, that the world maybe transformed by God's love. In prayer we are reminded that the "God of mission has a Church, not the Church of Mission has a God". In prayer we are reminded that when we pray for new and renewed life in others, so it must first be sparked and kindled in us.'

And so it is that the Archbishops, in partnership with 24-7 Prayer, HOPE, the World Prayer Centre,

the Neighbourhood Prayer Network, the National Day of Prayer & Worship and others, are inviting the Church of England to spend focused and dedicated time in prayer in the week running up to Pentecost Sunday, 8th - 15th May, as part of a united effort to see more of the Kingdom of God come in our day.

The focus for our prayer during this time will be for "all Christians to deepen their relationship with Jesus, so that we may have confidence to share our faith, that all may respond to the call of Jesus Christ to follow Him."

All serving clergy have been invited to be involved, together with their parish churches, Fresh Expressions of church, and chaplaincies.

The week of prayer will be different in every context. For some places it might be a focused single event, perhaps adapting or building on an existing group or meeting, or holding something special. The hope is that in many places Chris-

tians across denominations and streams can pray together, as the unity of the whole Body of Christ is a powerful reality and symbol to the world.

Beacon Events are to be held in five or six cathedrals (or neighbouring venues) over the Pentecost week-end, celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church and praying for the renewal of the Spirit, and for Christians to deepen their relationship with Jesus and to have the confidence to share their faith. The hope is to inspire worship and intercession for a generation to rise up with a fresh passion and confidence for the proclamation of the Gospel.

The locations for 'beacon events' are to be Canterbury, St. Paul's, York, Durham, Winchester, and Coventry (in the final stages of confirmation), with Canterbury, York, Durham and St Paul's being intentionally aimed at the younger generation.

Why life now begins at 60!

The baby boomers are postponing old age. Many of them are instead embracing new life events, and carrying on with middle age until their 68th year.

A recent study has found that older people are simply refusing to slow down, and instead are making ambitious plans for their 60s, including changing careers and moving home. The study re-examined the premise of Walter B Pitkin, the psychologist who coined the phrase 'life begins at 40' in 1932,

and who said that the machine age had freed many workers from back-breaking labour. Since then, life expectancy has extended by 20 years.

So – no surprise that baby boomers approaching retirement have far more ambitious plans for their future than any previous generation. 60 year-olds these days have a similar outlook and lifespan as 40 year-olds did in the 1930s.

The report, commissioned by Cigna Insurance Services, found

that people over 50 are expecting at least five more significant life events, and more than half of 65 year olds are enjoying life more since passing 50. "This is a generation that views maturity as empowering, and retirement as liberation."

Happy Ending

Comment from a parishioner: 'Our vicar's sermons always have a happy ending. The moment they've ended, everyone feels happy.'

The story behind the Hymn ± 'Praise my Soul the King of Heaven'

Praise my soul the King of heaven,
To His feet thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, for
 given,
Evermore his praises sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the ever-
lasting King.

Praise him for His grace and favour
To our fathers in distress;
Praise Him, still the same as ever,
Slow to chide and swift to bless.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Glorious in his
faithfulness.

Fatherlike, He tends and spares us;
Well our feeble frame He knows;
In His hands He gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Widely yet his
mercy flows.

Angels in the height, adore Him,
Ye behold him face to face;
Sun and moon bow down before
 Him,
Dwellers all in time and space;
Praise Him! Praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace!

By Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

This stately poetic paraphrase of Psalm 103 has been included in probably more solemn ceremonies than any other hymn in the English language. It was even chosen by Queen Elizabeth for her wedding to the Duke of Edinburgh in 1947.

Henry Lyte had been a brilliant theological student at university in Dublin, with a gift for versifying. After graduation he moved to a tiny and remote parish in County Wexford to serve his curacy. It was here, when he was about 25, that

Henry had a religious experience which would transform his life.

A close friend of his, another clergyman, had fallen ill, and was clearly dying. Henry went to visit him. The friend was not as distressed as Henry had imagined he would be. Instead the friend confessed that he had been re-reading the New Testament, with an eye on eternity, and had made a great discovery. There was no need to rely on religious duties and formalities and good deeds to gain peace with God. Instead, we can trust completely in the mercy of Christ and his saving power.

Henry was sophisticated and had been very formal in his ministry. But this encounter with his friend's faith at death's very door, made him reconsider his faith. He wrote later that his dear friend 'who died happy in the thought that there was One who would atone for his delinquencies' made him 'study my Bible and preach in another manner than I had previously done'. And soon after this hymn appeared, in 1834.

Lyte rejoices in the majesty and wonder of the living God, who in turn loves us. He captures the measure of the Psalm in enduring lyrics, which combine time, eternity, God and man all swept up into one embrace. Its last verse summons all of the created order to join in a great act of joyous praise – surely a preview of eternity!

THE WAY I SEE IT : Stop the world, I want to get off

At my age you start marveling at the pace of change. It only seems yesterday that we started getting money from holes in the wall. Then it was dotcom, and emails, mobile phones and 'going online'. Now it's smart-phones, internet shopping and digital books. As one habitual feature of my adult life disappears after another, I start to wonder what will eventually be left.

So I try to imagine a world without things: without the daily newspaper or printed magazines; without clothes shops or banks; without cricket (baseball has taken over the 'franchise') or football (NFL has won the hearts of the young generation). Evensong is distant history, and so is radio. Even TV is only used by the very old, everyone else 'streams' their programmes online from all over the world. No one reads paper books, though they are stored somewhere in academic libraries. Oh, and what were coins, banknotes and cheques?.

If you think any of those things can't possibly happen, just reflect (if you're old enough) on the world of fifty years ago: black and white television, gramophones, tape recorders, Woolworths, bookshops on every high street, a nightly 'epilogue' on the BBC, and five million readers a day for the Sun. It wasn't better (actually, a lot was worse), but it was massively different.

Only God is changeless, the same 'yesterday, today and for ever'. Change is an inescapable element of human life. It's just that it's got so fast! Could someone please slow it down a bit?

“Dear Friends...”

From the Vicars Desk

I was appalled to hear on the radio on Good Friday that the Archbishop of Canterbury had once again been talking about a fixed date for Easter, claiming that all the churches were likely to agree within the next five years.

I had already come across the article on this page by Canon David Winter who was the head of religious broadcasting at the BBC, and writes the columns published in this magazine entitled “The Way I see it”. I was steaming mad on two accounts, firstly that he should choose that topic for Good Friday when surely as Archbishop he could have found something more profound and spiritual to say, and secondly it seems to me that the only real pressure for change comes from big business. Of course it would make life easier for holiday companies if we all knew that Easter fell on the second Sunday in April. It would certainly avoid the mistakes that from time to time crop up in diaries and would simplify school planning in terms of holidays. But is that a real justification for change. I believe not. He opined that the weather was better in April than in March! Well I can certainly remember snow and gales in April which can be just as changeable as March. Just because we had a patch of nasty weather this year does not mean that it will always be the same. I agree wholeheartedly with David Winter that we should not give in to secularist pressure to change something that has been agreed for 1700 years.

As you can read elsewhere in this issue the pressure is on to make other changes with the city badge of Rochester being refused by Network Rail on the grounds that it is likely to create imbalance! We may no longer be a country that is wholly Christian, but that is certainly our heritage and I feel very strongly that we must do all we can to preserve our customs and traditions.

And talking of customs and traditions April is the month of our churches Annual Meeting, which will take place this year on Sunday 17th April at 12.15pm. This is your chance to look at the financial affairs of the parish, elect your Churchwardens and members of the Parochial Church Council, and raise any issues about the life of the Parish that you feel are important. Please do try to be there and if you wish to raise any matter please inform Bill Saunders the PCC secretary before the meeting.

On a related issue I am pleased to report that the improvement works to Flat 1 at the Church Hall have been completed on time and within budget! A rare feat these days. I have to compliment the builders on a splendid job and on being so helpful and cooperative. The next step will be to market the flat so that we can begin to earn some rent to pay back what it has cost and build up our reserves so that we can tackle the major work on the brickwork at the east end of the church. It is now five years since the survey told us of the need

Leave Easter Alone!

by David Winter

Way back in 325 AD the Council of Nicaea decided that Easter would be held on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox. Simple (!?!)

Now some people want a ‘fixed’ Easter. It would be more convenient. Holidays could be planned, school terms would be more sensible, and we could get rid of its old-fashioned religious implications. I suspect, however, that it won’t happen.

There’s something deliciously ridiculous about a national holiday that can swing dizzily from March to April and which can only be calculated with the help of a complicated Table in the Book of Common Prayer. I remember as a choirboy ages ago whiling away a dull sermon by calculating when Easter would come in 1984.

As for the religious bit, I think the secularists would be surprised at how deeply attached many people are to the wonderful story of death and resurrection that the season constantly retells. Up and down the land choirs sing Handel’s ‘Messiah’. People in town centres stand and watch a Good Friday procession or even a simple re-enactment of the story. They may not go to church, but at passion-tide and Easter the church comes to them.

to undertake this work and we will shortly have a revised survey from our architect. We will await his report with great interest.

Your Parish Priest

From addiction on the streets to tears of joy - Rob's story for JustPray.uk

A former homeless addict has revealed how he would be dead, if it was not for his faith, in an interview to accompany the second teaser film recently released by the Church of England for the justpray.uk website.

The 46-year-old admits he had to harden his heart to survive living rough and addiction before feeling resurrected through his faith and the love he found at the Saturday Gathering Place in Halifax, West Yorkshire. "If a human being can get resurrected after dying, He's done it to me. I haven't died but I feel like I've been resurrected away from a life of crime and trouble to peace, love, understanding, calmness."

Rob's story, 'I am poured out like water', is the second in a series of films based on Psalm 22. All feature

men and women who have come to faith through a Homeless and Food Drop In Centre in Halifax. Most have experienced crime, alcohol, drug addiction, homelessness or violence in their lives.

Rob's life spiralled out of control following his brother's death: "When he died I got naughty, I got into drugs, I got into fighting, violence, prison. And when I was in prison I wanted to like, just die."

Following release from prison Rob lived on the streets. "If you don't pretend you're hard, you're going to get like, trod on, spat at, all sorts of things. Nasty things happen to you."

Then five years ago Rob's life changed. It was a Saturday night in Halifax. "I was on the streets at the time, and I was really bad, I was dy-

ing. And I met Linda, Dave, a few other people, and they just took me in to their church-run centre. I was just overwhelmed with how people can be like that. I thought: they don't want me for anything, they just want me to better myself, make a much better life for myself."

As part of a church community, Rob soon discovered faith and a new life. He struggled to understand love. "I had a difficult life with my family so love wasn't on the agenda. It was like violence mostly, violence and abuse."

The Revd. Arun Arora, Communications Director for the Church of England said: "Rob's story of a life turned around by faith is testimony to the warmth and welcome of these churches who live out the truth that God's redeeming love is for all, that no one is too far gone, distant or hardened by life's experiences."

Rob's story is part of the justpray.uk website.

The top 10 Bible stories: no. 8: David and Goliath - Five Smooth Stones !

This month's Must Know Story, about Goliath's defeat by David (1 Samuel 17), is one of the best known in the Bible. Goliath was nine feet tall, dressed in bronze armour and carrying a sword and spear. However, David was a young shepherd, whose only weapon was a sling and five smooth stones. We won't face somebody like Goliath, but will face other giants in our lives (fear, insecurity, loneliness, failure etc). What five stones can help overcome the giants that we face?

- **Courage:** David was unafraid of Goliath, 'Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.' (32).

We need courage to face the giants in our lives.

- **Confidence:** David's experience as a shepherd gave him confidence in facing Goliath. 'The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.' (37). We also can be confident in God's help to overcome our problems.

- **Preparation:** 'Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.' (40). Like David, are we using the gifts and

experience that God has given us in the fight?

- **Trust:** David didn't trust in his own abilities, 'You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty' (45) Will we put our trust in God alone?

- **Victory:** 'for the battle is the Lord's' (47). When we turn our battles over to God, He will give us victory!

'That little stone took Goliath by surprise; such a thing had never entered his head before!!'

'He gave us eyes to see them' ± the screen at the east end

'I am the light of the world,' our Lord says in St John's Gospel. He is the one who can bring sight and insight to those born blind, and vision to those who feel they live in a world of darkness. In him is the glory of God and life for all people. That radiant glory greets those who visit Wymondham Abbey in Norfolk and look down the main aisle to see the wondrous screen at the east end depicting Christ in majesty surrounded by our Lady and the saints.

Ironically, the history of the Abbey in the Middle Ages was one of darkness and conflict, where disagreement severed the harmony of monks and townspeople. The Abbey was dissolved in the 16th century, but restored to its former glory in the early 20th century. Ninian Comper began working on the screen in 1922, and it was completed in 1934.

In front of the screen is a large altar with a crucifix and six tall, stately candlesticks. Their lights are signs of Jesus the Light proclaimed by the dazzling central figure on the

Coffee and tea good for you

Want to live a bit longer? Drink three to five cups of coffee a day. Or – drink three to five cups of tea a day, instead.

Recent research has found that coffee may reduce your risk of heart disease, Parkinson's, and Type 2 diabetes. Whether the coffee has caffeine or not is immaterial - the benefits are thought to be linked to other plant compounds found in coffee.



screen behind. Originally candlesticks would have stood on the ground before the altar, or lamps were hung above. In the 14th century candles were placed on the altar.

Aesthetic judgement will vary from person to person, and some may find tall candlesticks like these obtrusive, detracting from the sacrament of the altar. Whatever their size, when lit they announce

As for tea? Well, now even the government in the Netherlands is encouraging people to drink it. The Health Council there says that there are 'clear signs' that tea reduces blood pressure, diabetes and stroke risks. (The guidelines add that the tea must be green or black - rooibos and other herbal teas do not count.)

Public support for Government to help fund church heritage

that Jesus is the true light, who welcomes everyone to find nourishment and guidance for life's pilgrimage in communion at that

table. Here at Wymondham Abbey I think the pilgrim visitor will find that the beauty and grace of these altar furnishings complement the great mystery of divine light celebrated in Ninian Comper's masterpiece.

Ninian Comper's work can also be seen in St Mary's as he was responsible for the Rood Screen, the Sacrament Chapel Altar piece and the statue of St George.

60% of us back the idea of the Government providing financial support for churches, chapels and meeting houses, in order to protect their heritage and history for future generations.

This was the finding of a new opinion poll, commissioned by the church building repair and support charity, the National Churches Trust. The poll also found that 57% of British adults said that they had visited a church in the past year for religious services, non-religious activities or as a visitor or tourist.

Since 2014, the Government has given £130m for repairs to historic churches.

Don't be afraid of the clouds

Have you ever sat and watched the clouds drift by? Some of them are vast, towering up and up into the sky. There can be clouds of discouragement and suffering in our lives as well, circumstances that temporarily blot out the sunlight of God's love for us. You may have such a cloud hanging over your life right now. You may be in a hospital bed, or suffering discouragement, fear, despair or bereavement.

Clouds cut off our light and warmth, and leave us feeling penned in. But they can also bring unexpected good in our lives; in nature clouds bring life-giving water. The long-term result of their visit can be growth.

Have you ever noticed that some-

times, when you board a plane, the sky is like a thick grey ceiling? It looks impenetrable. But the plane does not hesitate - it climbs steadily onward and upward straight into the cloud. And what happens? Nothing! The cloud cannot block your progress, it must give way before you.

The simple truth is, you may not be able to see through clouds, but you can go through them. The plane uses navigational aids for guidance, and we have the Holy Spirit to guide us through the darkest times. And finally, we emerge through the cloudbank, and there before us is a sun-drenched sky of blue and golden glory, far above the dismal and disappointing things far below.

Whatever cloud is hanging over

you at present, whether suffering, discouragement, fear, there IS something you can do about it NOW. Pray - pour out your heart to the Lord about it. He has promised that His grace will be sufficient for anything that we encounter in this life.

And - look up. Look towards heaven, think beyond those clouds, and remember His promise that the sufferings we may be undergoing here are nothing compared to the glory that God has prepared for us there.

The Bible assures us: 'The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O Lord Almighty, blessed is the man that trusts in you.' Psalm 84: 11-12

LEVERTON & SONS Ltd.

Independent Funeral Directors since 1789

Family owned & managed for eight generations

KENTISH TOWN - 149 Kentish Town Road, NW1 8PD - 020 7485 1266

HAMPSTEAD - 181 Haverstock Hill NW3 4QS - 020 7586 4221

CAMDEN TOWN - 212 Eversholt Street NW1 1BD - 020 7387 6075

Also at

GOSPEL OAK, MUSWELL HILL,
& GOLDERS GREEN



GOLDEN CHARTER, the British Pre-Paid funeral plans are available as part of our services



St George of the Golden Legend

The Saint of an English Army before he was Patron Saint of England, St George may have been a soldier, but he was no Englishman. He was an officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror, and was martyred at Lydda in Palestine about the year 300 AD - supposedly 23 April. Over the years St George became the example of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful helper against evil powers affecting individual lives. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages, of whom remarkable deeds were reported.

In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine gave St George a handsome write-up. The story runs thus:

One day, St George rode up to the heathen city of Sylene in Lybia, where he found the citizens in great

distress. A neighbouring dragon had forced them to surrender two sheep each day for its dinner, and when the sheep gave out, two of their children; and now they were about to sacrifice the King's daughter, dressed as if for her wedding. St George encountered the little party by a stagnant lake, where the dragon lived, and persuaded the sobbing Princess to tell him why she was so miserable. At that moment the dragon appeared, looking inexpressibly revolting. The Saint charged, and drove his spear into the gaping mouth. To everyone's amazement, he tumbled the monster over and over.

Then St George borrowed the Princess's girdle, tied it round the dragon's neck, and persuaded her to lead it back to Sylene herself. The sight of her approaching with the befuddled dragon on its makeshift lead emptied the town. When the

inhabitants timidly crept back, St George promised to behead the dragon if they would all believe in Jesus Christ and be baptised.

It was a most effective form of evangelism, for everybody said 'yes' at once. So 15,000 people were baptised, and four carts were commissioned to remove the dragon's body.

St George thus became a symbol of the war against evil, and is usually portrayed trampling the dragon of sin under his horse's hoofs. The Crusaders had a vision of him helping them against the Saracens at Antioch, during the first Crusade, and so brought the story of St George back with them from Palestine. Presently England put herself under the protection of the Saint. His day was declared a holiday in 1222. A red cross on a white field is the flag of St George.

Who helps our young 'carers'?

Schools and local authorities are failing to provide potentially thousands of young carers with the early support they need, and instead wait to act when their problems reach crisis point.

So says The Children's Society, in its recent report: 'There's nobody is there - no one who can actually help?' The research looked at the experiences of 45 young carers aged nine to 24 from the North West, West Midlands, South West and South East of England. In some cases, it was only when they suffered problems with their own physical or mental health that they were offered any support, and even then it was often inconsistent and

inadequate.

The latest Census put the number of young carers in the UK at 166,000, but this is believed to be just the tip of the iceberg. Young carers can be at high risk for developing mental health issues, educational underachievement, bullying and social isolation. Yet there is no such thing as a typical young carer - and those interviewed for the research rejected the 'hero' label often given to them by society.

Details at: <http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/news-and-blogs/press-releases/lack-of...>

Saint banned from Rochester train station

Britain's rail bosses have censored an image of a saint from a display of art inside a railway station, saying it was 'overtly Christian and would offend multi-cultural values'. Network Rail, which is partly funded by the taxpayer, banned an image of St John the Evangelist from Rochester station in Kent.

The image was inspired by Rochester's ancient cathedral and recognised the city's heritage as one of the oldest Christian ecclesiastical cities in Britain. Its cathedral was founded in 604 AD. A Network Rail spokesman said the company told the artist to remove some of the planned images to 'create a balance.'

Holy Wells ± St Non's Well of Pembrokeshire

From the sprinkling of Holy Water through to adult baptism by full immersion, in every Christian tradition, water plays an important symbolic role. Science teaches that water is at the very centre of life, and even pre-Christian traditions in Britain recognised its vital importance. Many places where springs emerged from the ground were considered sacred sites, and after the arrival of the Gospel these sites remained holy, only they were renamed after local saints and new stories came to be told about them.

Just outside St David's in Pembrokeshire, Wales, there is one such well called after St Non, the mother of David the patron saint of Wales. David was born, it is said, during a violent thunderstorm. As David arrived, on a site overlooking the

sea where the now ruined chapel is found, the legend goes that a spring came bubbling out of the ground nearby.

It is likely there was a spring there long before the legendary events of 500AD, but the story of the birth of David became a popular one and over many centuries the site has attracted thousands of visitors. At one time, the waters were said to have healing properties, especially for eyes and rheumatism, and babies were also dipped in the cold spring reservoir.

The well is found just outside the city via a small lane heading due south. At the end of the lane, near the modern retreat house, a short path leads down to the well and the ruins of the ancient chapel of St Non. The well is today covered

with a stone arch and opposite, in a niche, is a statue of St Non. Visitors throw coins into the well and leave requests for prayers at the feet of the statue of David's mother. Even in modern Britain, the Pagan and the Christian still converge in that St Non's Well is both a wishing well and a holy place.

In keeping with its sacred reputation every year, around St David's day, when the city and the cathedral hold special events to celebrate the national saint, there is a procession from the chapel to the city. The monk-bishop of history lived an austere and disciplined life of work, prayer and abstinence. The magnificent cathedral called after him is a monument to his life, but so is the simple stream of clear water that flows from a cliff-top spring barely a mile away

The Bible in 50 words

God made
Adam bit
Noah arked
Abraham split
Joseph ruled
Jacob fooled
Bush talked
Moses balked
Pharaoh plagued
People walked
Sea divided
Tablets guided
Promise landed
Saul freaked
David peaked
Prophets warned
Jesus born
God walked
Love talked
Anger crucified
Hope died
Love rose
Spirit flamed
Word spread
God remained. - anon

Christians in India face more pressure

Two members of the ruling BJP in India plan to introduce a Private Member's Bill proposing a national ban on conversions from Hinduism, in response to a census showing the percentage of Hindus in India has dropped below 80 per cent.

Tarun Vijay, an MP from Uttarakhand state, has reportedly said that his Bill in the Upper House would advocate a ten-year jail sentence for any 'person found engaged in the act of conversion'. The MP in the Lower House, Yogi Adityanath, is head priest at a prominent Hindu temple.

Christians in India, and especially pastors in some rural areas, remain under pressure. Pastor Ajmer Singh Damor of Shalom Church

in Fattiguda, Madhya Pradesh, was beaten unconscious and left badly injured when Hindu extremists raided a prayer meeting last month. His wife, Runita, and another church member were also beaten. At least 19 Christians in the state were arrested last month in three separate incidents where extremists attacked or threatened Christians.

Contact: info@releaseinternational.org

Heaven

Seen in a parish magazine: "We shall be meeting on Wednesday when the subject will be 'Heaven - how do we get there?' Transport by bus is available at 6.45pm opposite the King's Arms.

Hymns and Readings

April 3rd Easter 2

Readings Acts 5: 27-32

Psalm 150
Revelation 1: 4-8
John 20: 19-end

Hymns 104 At the lambs high feast we sing
102 A brighter dawn is breaking
173 Blessed Thomas doubt no longer
107 Good Christian men Sidesperson:

Monica Sarpong

Readers: Nick Bethune, Rob Nesbitt

Intercessions: Lucy Boyd

April 10th Easter 3

Readings Acts 9: 1-6

Psalm 30
Revelation 5: 30-end
John 21: 1-19

Hymns 113 Loves redeeming work is done
118 The Lord is risen indeed
103 Alleluia alleluia hearts to heaven
and voices raise
393 Lead us heavenly Father

Sidesperson: Nick Bethune

Readers: Mark Williams, Ruth Godwin

Intercessions: Nicky Pittam

April 17th Easter 4

Readings Acts 9: 36-end

Psalm 23
Revelation 7: 9-end
John 10: 22-30

Hymns 374 How sweet the name of Jesus
Loving shepherd of thy sheep
271 Alleluia sing to Jesus
476 Ye servants of God

Sidesperson: Bill Saunders

Readers: Rosie Price Timmins, Stephen Nicoll

Intercessions: Carol Kenning

April 24th Easter 5

Readings: Acts 11: 1-18

Psalm: 148
Revelation 21: 1-6
John 13: 31-35

Hymns 114 Now is eternal life
388 Jesus shall reign
381 Jerusalem the golden
103 Alleluia Alleluia hearts to heaven
and voices raise

Sidesperson: Rob Nesbitt

Readers: Ray Evans, Nicky Pittam

Intercessions: Ian MacGregor

The Way I see It ± those amazing coincidences

The next time you have friends round, why not try this experiment. Invite each of them to recall the most amazing coincidence they have experienced in the last ten years.

Given a few minutes to recall, it's certain the stories will roll out. The day when they went up to London and in Piccadilly Circus met a very old friend they hadn't seen for years on a one-off visit from Glasgow. Or how they were on a tour of historic sites in Turkey and during a comfort break met a couple from their own road in Chesterfield. Or how on the birthday of a late and much-loved wife her favourite hymn was sung on 'Songs of Praise'. When everyone is finished, tot up the odds against all of these things happening. If there's a mathematician or statistician present they

may do it for you.

I heard recently of a bereaved father who had an experience of this kind, involving 'University Challenge' and events connected with his student son. In this case he did some research – including the production team of the programme – and worked out that the odds against this particular occurrence were more than five million to one.

No one seems to have any explanation for this, beyond that, well, strange things happen. But 'coincidence', as we call it, can't surely be so lightly dismissed. The old preachers called it 'providence', and said that 'God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform'. I think I'm with them.

Parish Priest

Vicar

Prebendary Guy Pope

The Vicarage

85 Dartmouth Park Road

LONDON NW5 1SL

020 7267 5941 Mobile 07770 693435

e-mail guy pope@blueyonder.co.uk

Church Officers at St. Mary, Brookfield, Dartmouth Park Road NW5

Churchwardens

Ms. Jenny Kauntze

13 Mary Webster House
55 Dartmouth Pk Hill NW5 1JD
020 7267 0355

Mr. Peter Dann

101 Chetwynd Road
NW5 1DA
020 7267 2504

PCC Secretary

Mr. Bill Saunders
23 Monnery Road
N19 5SA
020 7503 1422

**Stewardship
Recorder**

Ms. Jenny Kauntze
13 Mary Webster House
55 Dartmouth Pk Hill
NW5 1JD

**Parish Treasurer &
Reader**

Miss N. Pittam
62 Croftdown Road
NW5 1EN

**Brookfield News
Editor**

The Vicar

Staff

Director of Music St. Mary's

Mr. James Hearn MMus, FRCO, ARCM.
59a Barrington Road
SW9 7JH

Church Hall

Mt David Barnard
The Lodge
Parliament Hill Fields
NW5 1QR
07704978671

Reader & Children's Advocate

Dr. Caroline Deys
20a Brookfield Park
NW5 1ER
020 7485 3110

For your prayers

PRAYER CALENDAR FOR MONTH OF APRIL 2016

3rd Grove Terrace
10th Highgate Road
17th Kingswear Road
24th Laurier Road

SAINTS & HOLY DAYS

3rd **Easter 2**
4th **The Annunciation of Our Lord**
10th **Easter 3**
17th **Easter 4**
19th St Alphege

21st St Anselm
23rd St George
24th Easter 5
25th St Mark
29th St Catherine of Siena

Who is he?

A musical concert was about to be performed in a prison. The Governor was talking to a titled lady guest, explaining that the orchestra was made up of murderers, embezzlers and other hardened criminals. The lady then pointed to a man in the corner, holding a trombone. 'He looks a tough customer,' she whispered. "Whatever has HE done?" The Governor paused and smiled. 'Ah, actually, he is the chaplain.'