

# Crosstalk

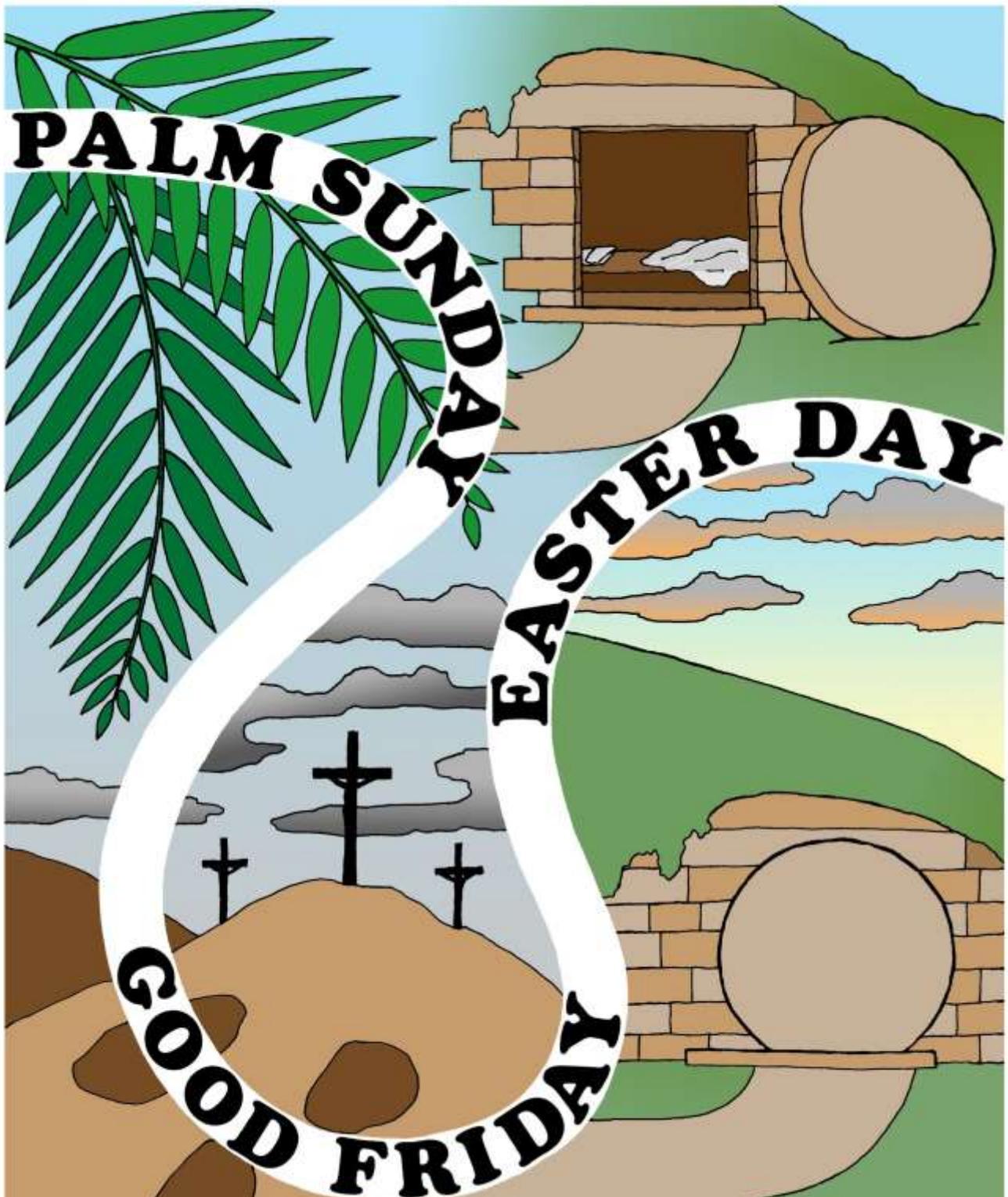
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The Parish Magazine of St Bartholomew with St Chad  
[www.thurstaston.org.uk](http://www.thurstaston.org.uk)



March 2024



## "Cross Talk Subscription for 2024 is £6"

These are now due for 2024. If you see your deliverer please pay them.

Alternatively either post a cheque for £6.00 payable to Thurstaston PCC,  
to St Chad's Church Office, Roslin Road, Irby, CH61 3UH

or pay on-line at 40.52.40 00018674,  
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**Safeguarding is  
Everyone's  
Responsibility**

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* "Your magazine needs you" \*  
\* Please send your contributions \*  
\* (eg. Poems. Prayers, interesting \*  
\* articles etc.,) \*  
\* to office@thurstaston.org.uk \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

The views and opinions expressed in the articles in this magazine are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the editor, the Rector or the PCC.

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**Baptisms**

**Weddings**

**Funerals**

9th February - Barbara Davies



**The Children's Society**

making childhood better

Saturday 16th March 2023

10am -12.30pm

at Jean Heath's, Home  
'Barnstables', 233 Irby Road

All Welcome to a  
**COFFEE MORNING**  
**FOR THE**  
**CHILDREN'S SOCIETY**



with Cake Stall, Bring & Buy,  
Craft Stall & ShoeBeDoo

Any contributions  
(cakes etc)  
will be very  
welcome.

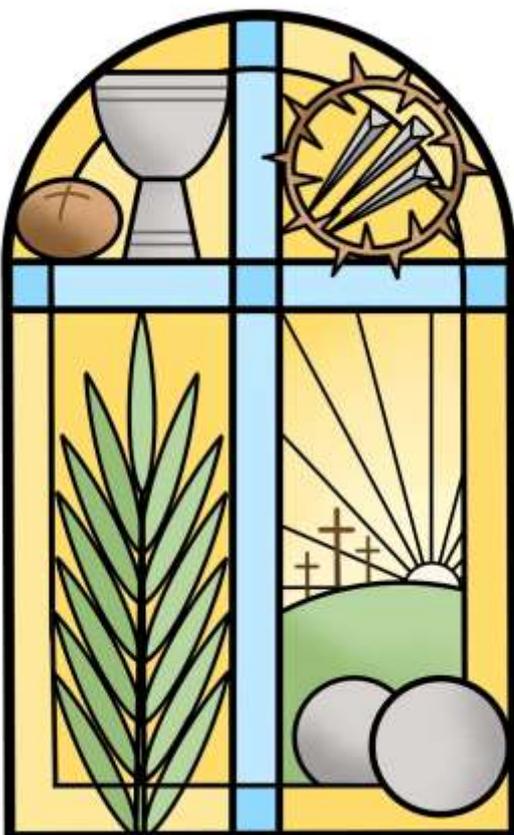


## **Looking for the Resurrection**

An old couple are driving down the motorway when the wife gets a call from their daughter. *'Mum, there's a car driving the wrong way down the motorway!'* The wife warns her husband that there is a lunatic on the motorway. Her husband, clutching the wheel in terror, replies: *'One lunatic? There are dozens of them, all headed straight for us!'* What we see is determined by our perspective on life.

In the Nicene Creed we say: *'We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.'* In the gospel accounts of the Resurrection, there is a lot of looking and seeing. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome went early to the tomb. They saw the stone rolled aside and inside the tomb a young man dressed in white said to them: *'Don't be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him...He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him'* (Mark 16: 6,7).

Like the women we would probably have been left *'trembling and bewildered'* by what we saw that morning. Had the body been taken? Was the young man an angel or deceiver? Was Jesus raised to life again, or was this an elaborate hoax?



Easter gives us a choice. We can approach life looking for disappointment, fear and despair. Or we can look for resurrection and find not just an empty tomb, but encounter the living Christ. He continues to meet us in our daily lives bringing new hope, forgiveness of sin, healing and wholeness and the assurance of His presence through the darkest of times. God invites us to see our lives differently and look for Christ's resurrection life at work in our lives and the people around us.

Revd Jane



## A message from Ailsa



As I write in mid-February, I have just come in from walking my wee Scottie dog Hamish and it is a little beyond 5.30 pm and still light – my eyes were drawn as the light faded to the clumps of snowdrops in my garden and I had to take a pic.

To me, they represent the first sign of spring – the delicate white flowers which often poke their heads through snow, give the first signs of new life as the days lengthen and the nights shorten.

As I walked, I was also conscious of the clattering sound of birdsong – more squawky and loud than the delicate songs of the morning, but still noticeable as all around the world seems to be waking up after the long days of January and the faster paced February.

And before we know it bam – here we are in March and working our way through Lent to first the pain, as we remember Jesus' death on the cross, through to the ecstasy, the joy of the Resurrection and the promise of life everlasting. And of course, chocolate eggs!

And in the middle of all of that, we celebrate Motherhood in all its many ways on Mothering Sunday which marks the halfway point in Lent and traditionally the day when you can stop any fasting you might be undertaking – just for the day!

Whilst all this is going on, we still have a Squadron of over 100 soldiers out in Poland where sub-zero temperatures reached -24 over Christmas and January. Simultaneously, we have the next squadron ready to deploy just after Easter so the regiment is extremely busy.

I am home for Mothering Sunday so look forward so seeing some of you in church soon.

With every blessing,

Ailsa



## Community and social events dates for Diary All at St Chad's unless otherwise indicated

April Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> 8pm

Hear all about this worthy charity and purchase cakes in aid of the charity funds



May Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>

**Ness Gardens** – meet 10am St Chads Carpark and share cars  
For a day out at the Gardens - weather permitting

June 1<sup>st</sup>

**Walk to Hilbre Island** – Details yet to be confirmed and weather permitting

July date to be confirmed

**Guide Dogs Demo** - in St Chad's garden - weather permitting



August/September Saturday mornings

**Summer Saturdays St Chad's Garden** – details to follow

August Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>

**Ready Teddy Go!** St *Bartholomew's* Day Teddy parachute from St *Bartholomew's* church spire.

### **St. Chad's Tots and Tinies** St Chad's Church (Roslin Road, Irby)

Every Thursday 9.30-11.30am  
(Term Time Only)



£1.50 for one Adult and one child - All Welcome

Additional children £1.00  
Additional Adults £0.50



Parents/Carers will be responsible for their child(ren) during the sessions

For further information please contact **Allison** via the Parish Office 648 8169

# Confirming Faith

## Sunday 21st July 2024

Some may want to think about being baptised.

Those who have been baptised may wish to be confirmed.

Those baptised and confirmed already can make “a renewal of baptismal vows”.

The service is about making promises to be a follower of Jesus. We particularly encourage anyone who has “come back to faith” over the past couple of years to take one of these options.

Please talk to Revd Jane to explore more.

Receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation is about deepening your relationship with God, directing your life more closely to Christ, and relying on the Holy Spirit to give you the gifts to lead the incredible life of faith and service to which God is calling you.

**As a way of preparing for Confirmation, we will ask you to attend a preparation course which will be starting after Easter.** Please let Revd Jane know if you would like to be a part of this group.



### Receiving Holy Communion

Sometimes, I am aware of some members of the congregation who are not sure what to do when they come to the communion rail during communion services.

Those who are confirmed\* are invited to receive bread and wine. It helps if you hold your hands out to receive bread as this takes away any confusion. If you are unsure about this please speak to Revd Jane.

If you have not been confirmed then you are invited to come to the communion rail, keeping your hands below the rail, and we will place a hand on your head and pray a simple prayer of blessing for you.

Please see above if you would like to consider Confirmation.

\* or have been received into membership of Christian churches of other denominations (e.g. Methodist, URC, Baptist, Roman Catholic)

# Flowers at both Churches

We are looking to put together a **team of people who would like to help with flowers for church festivals** at both St Chad's and St Bartholomew's (Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest and Christmas). Please let Revd Jane know if you would be interested in joining this team.

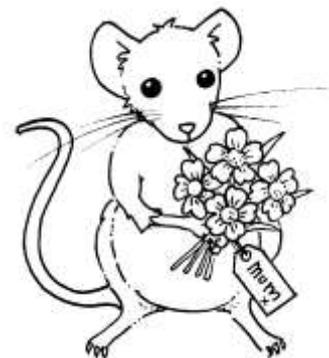
We are also looking for **volunteers to put flowers in church for Sunday services** (maybe you'd like to do this to celebrate a birthday or remember a loved one or ...). You do not need to be able to do a posh arrangement (although those are welcome from those who can). Flowers placed in a vase are most welcome. Due to Revd Jane's asthma we ask that you don't use strongly scented flowers (lilies, hyacinths, stocks etc). There will be a rota placed at the back of both churches. Please sign up for the date that you would like to do. You are welcome to claim back the cost of the flowers by submitting your receipt to the parish office.

If you appreciate having flowers in church Sunday by Sunday and for festivals and would like to make a **donation towards the cost of flowers**, please place your donation in an envelope marked "Flower fund" and place it in the offertory basket at any service, or hand it in to the parish office. If you wish to donate online via BACS you can go to our website for details (<https://www.thurstaston.org.uk/welcome.php>), it would be helpful if you then sent an email to the treasurer ([pcc-treasurer@thurstaston.org.uk](mailto:pcc-treasurer@thurstaston.org.uk)) to let them know the donation amount and that it is to be recorded in the flower fund.

## *Mothering Sunday Posies*

We will be putting together  
the Mothering Sunday daffodil posies  
**on Saturday 9th March**  
**at 10.00am at St Chad's**

Young and Old are invited to come and help.



If you have any greenery in your garden that could be used in the posies, please drop it off at St Chad's by 10.00am on the day, or contact Julie DeBoorder on 07599 186 893 who will arrange to collect it from you.

# A warm welcome at the **Warm Hub**

Every Tuesday 9.30am - 12.30pm

**Open to everyone, so please drop in!**

**St. Chad's Church, Roslin Road, Irby CH61 3UH  
0151 648 8169**

**Guest speaker  
on 4th Tuesday of the month  
Talks start at 10.30a.m.**

**Tuesday 26th March 2024**

**Yellowstone Park, USA  
- in winter**



**The Warm Hub  
belongs to a  
growing national  
network of  
Places of Welcome**



## **Jigsaw Library**

Over the time that Warm Hub has been operating, we have been gifted many jigsaws. While we always have a jigsaw in progress at Warm Hub, there are many waiting for us to use in the future. Rather than these jigsaws just piling up, with the winter nights ahead we would like to make these jigsaws available for individuals to borrow and then return to us. We can't vouch that all the jigsaws are complete as they are donated to us but if you would like to borrow one then we can make them available on a Tuesday morning when the Warm Hub is open - 9.30 to 12.30 at St Chad's



Susan Smale and Cheryl Goddard



You can make donations to Foodbank by placing items (non perishable food and toiletries) in the box by the office door at St Chad's.

## Ruth's Reflections

Hello again! Another month has flown by. The weather hasn't improved much, but my garden is looking better thanks to new fences down each side of the back garden. The old fences had partially blown down in one of the storms and my lovely neighbours have replaced them. Unfortunately the fence at the bottom of the garden will need doing soon, but as I don't want to disturb any nesting birds it will have to wait until later in the year.

Towards the end of January I succumbed to this horrible cough and cold that has been going round, I was quite ill for a couple of days and unfortunately missed several outings that I had been looking forward to. Luckily it had just about cleared up in time to go to stay with my sister at the beginning of February. The weekend had been arranged since October last year and we were booked in to go to The Albert Hall to see The Cirque De Soleil. I had intended to go by train, but it was the weekend of the train strike! buses weren't feasible so I decided to drive. I was a bit anxious as I had done any long distance driving for a long time due to my shoulder problems. as you can guess, I had several conversations with God and I had no problems driving there and back, a total of just under 400 miles.



The trip to London by coach was good and the show was fantastic. The performers and acrobats were so brilliant it was quite awe-inspiring. It was certainly the best one I have seen and my hands were quite sore from all the clapping..

Since I have got back I have been catching up with all my friends and activities. It is so nice seeing everyone again and I do count my blessings in knowing so many lovely people..

When I have finished this I am off to Liverpool to meet up with my family for a lunch to celebrate both my and my son-in-law's birthdays. I will probably eat too much!!

I don't have anymore news so I will say goodbye.

Take care and stay safe everyone.

Ruth.

Practicing the Way – Be with Jesus. Become like him. Do as He did  
By John Mark Comer, SPCK, £16.99

**Do you feel like there's more to life than this? You're right. This** book will help you discover and cultivate the countercultural practices to connect you with a vibrant lifelong faith.

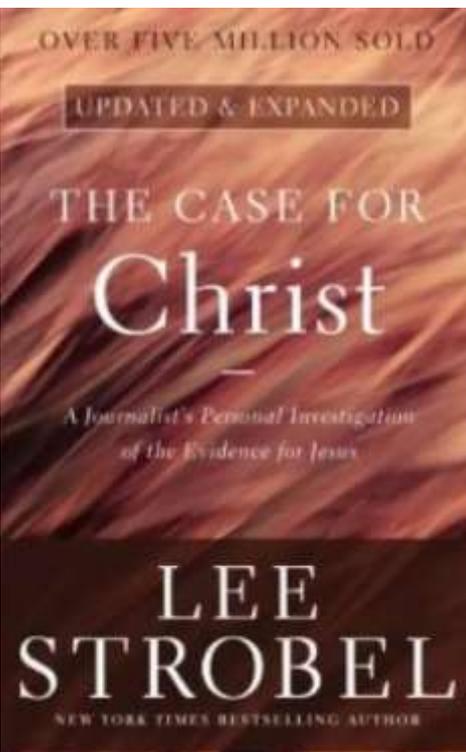
John Mark Comer, *the New York Times* bestselling author of *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* and *Live No Lies*, shows readers what is holding them back from authentically following Jesus – and reveals the countercultural practices to connect us with a vibrant lifelong faith.

We all have experienced unwanted parts of our spiritual journey: distance from God, gaps in our character, the fear that our lives **will be trivial and empty...** Jesus is calling us into more. Calling us to be shaped in His likeness. To experience His abundance of life.

But how, practically, can we do that? By becoming His apprentice. By practicing the Way.

Outlining the timeless process of being with Jesus, becoming like Him, and living as He did, **bestselling author and pastoral voice John Mark Comer delineates God's vision for the journey of our soul.**

The Case for Christ – **a Journalist's Personal Investigation Of The Evidence For Jesus**  
By Lee Strobel, Zondervan/10Publishing, £7.19



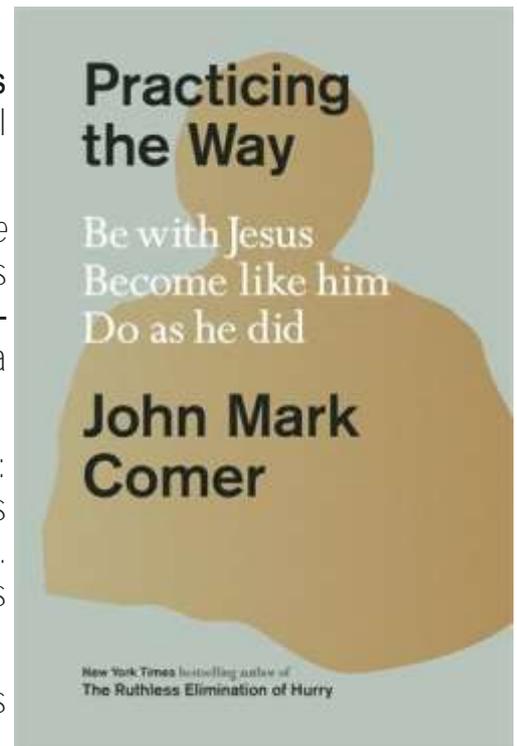
Is there credible evidence that Jesus of Nazareth really is the Son of God?

Retracing his own spiritual journey from atheism to faith, Lee Strobel, former legal editor of the Chicago Tribune, cross-examines a dozen experts with doctorates from schools like Cambridge, Princeton, and Brandeis who are recognised authorities in their own fields.

Strobel challenges them with questions like, How reliable is the New Testament? Does evidence for Jesus exist outside the Bible? Is there any reason to believe the resurrection was an actual event?

Winner of the Gold Medallion Book Award and twice nominated for **the Christian Book of the Year Award**, Strobel's tough, point-blank questions read like a captivating, fast-paced novel. **But it's not fiction. It's a riveting quest for the truth about history's most compelling figure.**

The new edition includes updated material on archaeological and manuscript discoveries, and an **interview with the author that tells dramatic stories about the book's impact, provides behind-the-scenes information, and responds to critiques of the book by sceptics.**



## MEETING OF PARISHIONERS AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING **SUNDAY 28 APRIL 2024 in St Chad's, starting at 6.30pm**

During the two meetings, we will hear reports on the activities and finances of the church during 2023. We will also appoint members of the congregations as Churchwardens, members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Deanery Synod representatives.



The first meeting is the Meeting of Parishioners and is very brief. The second meeting is the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

### The Meeting of Parishioners

The only business during the Meeting of Parishioners is to elect Churchwardens. Churchwardens are appointed for one year, working closely with the Rector and the PCC particularly in relation to the buildings and the church grounds. There is a time limit of six consecutive years on an appointment as churchwarden.

The appointment of churchwardens is especially important this year as there are not any in the parish. Churchwardens are essential members of the parish team and are one of the links between the congregations and the Rector. They are supported and assisted by the Rector, PCC members and others. Although one churchwarden can cope with all the requirements, it is much better if two churchwardens are appointed to share responsibilities.

If you are on the Electoral Roll and have an interest at all in becoming a churchwarden, please speak to the Rector as soon as possible.

The Rector must receive nominations for churchwardens on the proper forms before the meeting begins. The forms will be available in the churches and on the Church website (link given below) for downloading. Nominations for churchwardens may not be made after the meeting has begun. Anyone who lives in the parish (or who lives outside the parish boundary but is on the Electoral Role) can vote in the Meeting of Parishioners.

### The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

The PCC is responsible for the maintenance of the churchyard, the buildings and their contents. With the minister, it steers the life of the church in its mission, witness and service in the parish.

PCC members are elected for three years, with four members retiring each year. We are hoping for new members who can bring new ideas and fresh thoughts to our discussion and decisions. Four members have reached the ends of their term of office, and may be re-elected and there are three other vacancies.

We also need people to represent us at Deanery Synod meetings. Deanery Synod members are

elected for three years (currently 2023-2026) and are automatically members of the PCC. There are three vacancies for Deanery Synod representatives.

Anyone who has any interest in becoming more involved in helping with church activities should speak as soon as possible to the Rector, the Interim PCC Secretary or to any PCC member. Everyone can offer something – **do not be put off just because you think you don't know enough about it.**

During the meeting we shall also receive written reports on what the PCC discussed and decided in 2023, the organisations associated with the church and detail of the church accounts. These will be available on the Parish website for downloading before the meetings.

Notices with more details of the meetings will be displayed on the church website, in both churches and by email. In due course nominations forms for PCC members, Deanery Synod representatives and Churchwardens, will also be available in both churches.

Finally if there are any matters that you wish to bring forward for discussion, please inform the Rector or the Interim PCC Secretary before the meeting.

C F Goddard (Interim PCC Secretary)

The link for the nomination forms (copy and paste in browser) is:  
<https://thurstaston.org.uk/pcc-information/apcm-annual-parochial-church-meeting/nomination-forms-and-electoral-roll-application-form.php>

### Treasurer Needed

The PCC currently pays a bookkeeper to undertake day to day transactions, banking of money and paying of bills, etc. The PCC finance sub-committee makes decisions based on the information in the parish accounts, but would value and appreciate having someone to act as Treasurer (who does not need to be a member of the PCC) to assist with producing financial reports for the PCC and the annual meeting, as well as interpreting the more complicated aspects of banking decisions eg parish share.

Please speak to Revd Jane or the Interim PCC Secretary (Cheryl Goddard) or a member of the finance committee (Chris Smale, Malcolm Studholme, Pat Neil, Cheryl Goddard) if you think you could help.



**St Bartholomew's, Thurstaston and St Chad's, Irby**  
**Annual Meeting of Parishioners & Annual Parochial Church Meeting**  
**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at St Chad's**

Before the meeting began, the Rector asked if anyone present was willing to be elected as a churchwarden. There was no response.  
The Rector opened the meeting at 7.30 pm.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Mrs B Appleyard, Mrs L Barley, Mrs M and Mr D Reed, Dr P Robson and Mr C Smale.  
Nineteen people were present.

**The Annual Meeting of Parishioners**

**Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting (4<sup>th</sup> April 2022)**

The minutes of the previous meeting had been published in the church magazine in April 2023 and were available at the meeting. Mrs J De Boorder, seconded by Mr L Kingsbury, proposed that the minutes should be accepted as a full and accurate record of the meeting. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

**Election of Churchwardens**

No nominations had been received. Mrs E Whitehead had completed six consecutive years as the only churchwarden and was therefore, under the Churchwardens Measure 2001, §3, disqualified from re-election as a churchwarden. Her present term of office would end on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

**The Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

**Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting (4<sup>th</sup> April 2022)**

Mr M Jones, seconded by Mr J Oliver, proposed that the minutes should be accepted as a full and accurate record of the meeting. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

**Approval of Reports on Church Affairs published in the Annual Report**

The following reports were considered:

The Churchwarden's report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church

The report on the business of the Parochial Church Council in 2022

The report on the Junior Church

The report on the Electoral Roll

Mrs J Trigg, seconded by Mrs J Oliver, proposed that the meeting should accept the report. This was agreed unanimously.

**Approval of Reports concerning the Parish Organisations, published in the Annual Report**

Mrs Whitehead, seconded by Mr C Turnbull, proposed that the reports from the Children's Society representatives, the Bellringers, Community Action,

the Guides, the Brownies, the Rainbows and the Tots and Tinies group should be accepted was agreed unanimously.

### **Report on the Financial Affairs of the Parish during 2022 and the Independently Inspected Annual Accounts for 2022, published in the Annual Report**

Mr J Oliver, seconded by Mrs K Robson, proposed that the report and the accounts should be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.

### **Appointment of an independent Examiner of the Accounts for 2023**

The Rector proposed that Mr M A Walker should be re-appointed. This was agreed unanimously.

### **Report on Safeguarding Arrangements in the Parish during 2022**

No safeguarding issues had been reported. There were no questions and the report was accepted unanimously.

### **Report on matters discussed by the Deanery Synod during 2022**

The report was received unanimously.

### **Election of three members of the congregations to represent the parish at the Deanery Synod**

Ms M Rogers, seconded by Mr M Studholme, proposed the re-election of Mr C Smale. This was agreed unanimously. The two vacancies were not filled.

### **Election of up to seven members to serve on the PCC until 2024.**

The following church members had been proposed and seconded for re-election.

Mr G Barley. Proposed by Mrs P Neil. Seconded by Mrs J De Boorder.

Mrs J De Boorder. Proposed by Mrs P Neil. Seconded by Mr G Barley.

Mr M Studholme. Proposed by Mr S Hand. Seconded by Mr P Bradshaw.

Mrs J Trigg. Proposed by Ms M Rogers. Seconded by Mr L Kingsbury.

Mrs E Whitehead Proposed by Mrs K Robson. Seconded by Mr M Studholme

Mr Barley, Mrs De Boorder, Mr Studholme and Mrs Trigg were elected to serve for three years. Mrs Whitehead was elected to serve for two years.

### **Other Business**

Ms Cheryl Goddard had expressed interest in becoming a member of the PCC and will be co-opted as soon as she becomes eligible.

Mr M Jones asked about the Organists and Bellsingers meeting at St Bartholomew's a few weeks earlier. He said it might have been an interesting event for members of the parish. The Rector replied that it had been a private meeting but the suggestion would be pursued.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 7.55 pm.

# Your PCC needs you.

As we approach our Annual Parish Meeting, Would you consider putting your name forward for election to the Parochial Church Council?

Here's an invitation from some current PCC members:-



When it was suggested that I might consider being part of the PCC I almost laughed. Me! I wasn't even sure what the PCC did. But, in for a penny, in for a pound I decided to give it a go. So glad I did. I have learned so much about how a church is run. I realised that everyone has something to give to help the smooth running of our church, however little they may think it is. It would be wonderful to see some young faces at these meetings to give new ideas and thoughts for the future. So why not come and join us, we would love to see you.

Pat Neil

I have been a member of the PCC for over 15 years, and I thoroughly enjoy the experience. Of course, it was with some trepidation when first joining; I thought it would be extremely serious and quite "highbrow" and thus I questioned my abilities, and what I would be able to offer. However, of course the meetings do have a serious element to them, after all it is the operation of the church that we review and decide upon, but there is an excellent camaraderie between the members and everyone's opinion matters and is listened to. There are the sub-committees that people are invited to attend that have themes, such as finance, and peoples' skills set are matched towards these. The sub committees report into the main PCC and can influence the decisions made there.

Do I make this sound very time consuming and particularly demanding? It isn't, but I find being a PCC member both very informative and enjoyable. Please do join us if you are able.

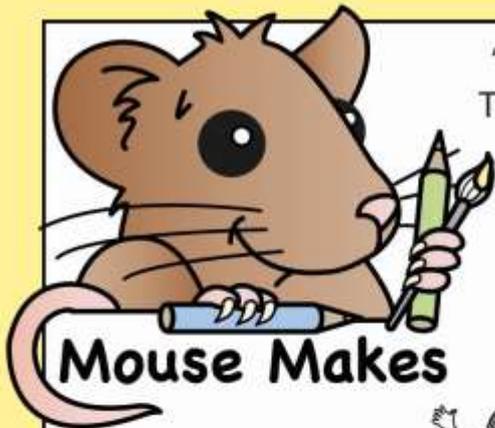
Janet Trigg

A PCC member is similar to being a shareholder of a company, (without the remuneration). PCC members make decisions on how the church is run and it gives a person an insight into a wide range of topics on which decisions have to be made. They include financial affairs, when the lightning conductors have to be checked, maintenance of church buildings, church service patterns and many more.

It is not time consuming as we only meet about 5 or 6 times each year, sometimes there are similarities to "the Vicar of Dibley" at times, we don't always agree but generally we conduct business in a civilised and courteous manner, respectful of each other's opinions and views. There is an urgent need for fresh members, maybe younger members who wish to guide the parish (Thurstaston and Irby) to grow God's church and swell our churches again.

You may not have done this before, but it is very rewarding and you will be guided by those around you. If you feel you have the skills or want to learn more, please contact any PCC member to discuss what is involved.

Malcolm Studholme



# Mouse Makes

"I am the **resurrection** and the life.  
The one who believes in me will live  
even though they die."

John 1:25



READ the Bible  
passages to find  
the answers to the  
crossword clues

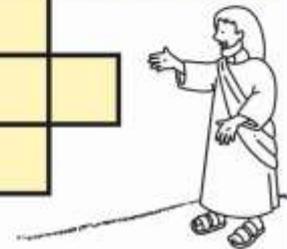
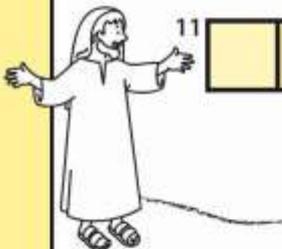
Matthew 21:1-11

1. Which city did Jesus ride into?
2. What did he ride on?
3. What did the crowd shout?
4. What did clothes did they put down?
7. What did they cut down to spread on the road?



Matthew 26:17-29

15. What feast did Jesus celebrate?
12. Who did he celebrate it with?
11. What did Jesus break to eat?



Matthew 27:27-61

17. What was Jesus' crown made of?
9. What was Jesus crucified on?
14. Who's tomb was Jesus buried in?
13. What did they wrap Jesus' body in?
16. What did they roll in front of the tomb?

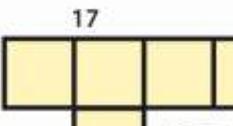
Matthew 26:36-75

6. What did Jesus go to do at Gethsemane?
18. Who denied Jesus?



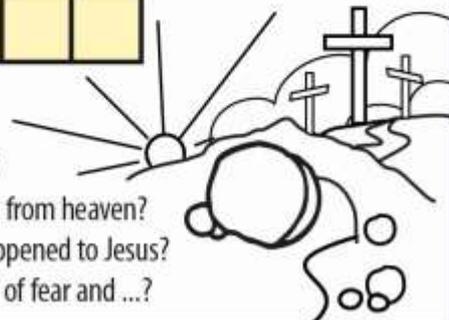
Matthew 26:14-16

- 8d. Who betrayed Jesus?
10. How many silver pieces was he paid?



Matthew 28:1-10

5. Who descended from heaven?
19. What had happened to Jesus?
- 8a. Mary was full of fear and ...?



## Reflected Faith – Lychgates

On the moors near to where I used to live in West Yorkshire, there were a couple of large stones with crosses marked on them. Many people thought that they were boundary or marker stones, and in so far as they marked the way towards the oldest church in that area they were. To be more exact, they were on the route towards the oldest churchyard.

In ages past bodies were carried by hand, sometimes over long distances, and there were restrictions placed on where they could be laid to allow the bearers to rest. These two stones were 'resting' stones.

When a body arrived at the church for burial, it would again be put down while the administrative formalities were carried out, and again the bearers could rest. So, a resting stone was placed at the edge or start of the consecrated land around the church.

The priest conducting the funeral would meet the cortege here, not originally out of respect, but rather to receive the required legal certificate for burial before he allowed them to enter the church grounds.

Because of typical English weather - rain and wind - it was usually sheltered, and benches were built for the bearers. There would also be a cross within the construction to signify the start of holy land. This is what today we call the 'lych-gate'; lych coming from the anglo-saxon word *lich* or *lic*, related to the modern German word *leiche*, all meaning corpse.

Few old lychgates remain today, as many were destroyed or damaged after the Reformation, and most of those that survived were constructed of timber and have since decayed. In the eighteenth century, when the use for the resting stones and thus lychgates declined, many were removed and replaced with gates, often retaining the shelter as it continues to be a meeting place for the priest to receive funeral parties.

### *This month*

Try and visit a lychgate this month and actually spend a few moments under its shelter. Have a think about what burdens you want to lay down. What do you need to be sheltered from?



# What's the Big Idea?

## An Introduction to the Books of the Bible: Leviticus

Leviticus focuses on the regulations about worship, ceremonial cleanness, moral laws and holy days. The key theme is that of *holiness*, as every detail of our lives is affected by the presence of a holy God. The aim of the sacrifices, feast and Sabbaths was to enable the people to enter God's presence. We should see the instructions and practices in Leviticus as pointing to Jesus. He totally fulfilled the law through the sacrifice of His life, as Easter reminds us. He demonstrated the love and holiness of God, so that we can share His life: '*Be holy, because I am holy*' (1 Peter 1:16, cf Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7).



### Leviticus Offerings & Feasts

Today's picture shows an unusual priest precariously balancing the '**Offerings and Feasts**' – Keywords for this book. Meanwhile another man gives his 'left foot a kiss', which sounds like the book's name 'Leviticus'.

The whole book of Leviticus consists of five offerings and seven feasts of Judaism. As a memory jogger for you our picture shows symbols of the two main feasts of Christianity, Easter and Christmas.

If you look closely you will see that the priest has a 'leaf-eye' reminding us of the tribe he comes from – Levi. He is also wearing 'jeans' and they are Levi's! He can't be a true Levitical priest unless he has the right genes!

This is a foundational book to teach God's people about being a Holy nation. They have various offerings that symbolise forgiveness and show repentance. They also have feasts like Passover and Day of Atonement.

# What's the Big Idea?

## An Introduction to the Books of the Bible: Numbers

The book of Numbers tells the story of Israel's journey through the wilderness. The people were coming to terms with their *identity* as God's people and the *call* to serve Him. They didn't always respond with faith, gratitude and obedience, but with unbelief, ingratitude and rebellion. As a result of their refusal to enter Canaan (ch 14), they were condemned to spend the rest of their lives in the desert. However, God in His grace allowed their children to enter the Promised Land. The book reminds us that the Church is called to be a community that honours God, learns how to deal with sin in ourselves and others, and lives out love and justice in daily life.

*'The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.'* (Numbers 6:24-26).



### Numbers Wanders

As we see these numbers wander in the wilderness we have a visual reminder of how the nation of Israel '**Wanders**'. This is the keyword.

It begins and ends with a census and a period of 40 years in between. During this time Israel **wanders** in the wilderness as their God faithfully looks after them with fresh quail and unique manna. Manna is so new it doesn't even have a name. In Hebrew manna means, "What's this?"

The censuses that dominate the book of Numbers are a way of counting the army. Even in New Testament times people still count like this when Jesus feeds 5,000 men – plus women and children.

After successfully being freed from Egypt the whole nation **wanders** as a result of believing their spies (2 believed but 10 doubted) rather than their God. Their disbelief results in a wasted 40 years of wilderness wandering.

# Quiz on the Book of Numbers

How well do you know what happened in Numbers? Try this quiz (Answers on page 22)

1. How many chapters are there in the Book of Numbers?

- a.34
- b.35
- c.36

2. "*Bemidbar*," the Hebrew title of the book "Numbers" means what?

- a.In the beginning
- b.In the wilderness
- c.Accounting

3. What does the book of Numbers describe?

- a.the priestly rituals and rules for conduct
- b.the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt
- c.the numbering of God's people

4. How many years will the Israelites wander in the wilderness?

- a.30
- b.40
- c.50

5. What tribe was given the responsibility of doing the work of the tabernacle?

- a. Asher
- b. Judah
- c. Levi

6. In Numbers 16, a man named Korah led a rebellion against Moses. How did God end this rebellion?

- a.They were all stricken with leprosy.
- b.They were eaten by worms.
- c.The ground opened up and swallowed them.

7. Why does God prohibit Moses from entering Canaan in Numbers 20?

- a.because he spoke to the rock
- b.because he threw the rock
- c.because he strikes the rock

8. What did Moses hold up in Numbers 21, to heal the people who had been bitten by poisonous snakes when they looked at it?

- a.The Ten Commandments
- b.A Brass Serpent
- c.Aaron's Rod

9. When the twelve spies were sent to Canaan, how many returned with a good report?

- a.Two
- b.Twelve
- c.One

10. **'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.'** What are these verse from Numbers 6 called?

- a.The Shema
- b.The Mezzuzah
- c.The Aaronic Blessing

## Violets?

When my husband was six years old, he thought the creed included the line: "He suffered under a bunch of violets." It took him years before he realised that he should have been saying: "under Pontius Pilate."



On Maundy Thursday we recall the final command that Jesus gave to His disciples before His death. After the Last Supper, He rose and washed His disciples' feet. This was astonishing for a 'teacher' to do, but He had a firm purpose in mind: "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 'washing of the feet' ceremony was an important part of the medieval church's liturgy, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

Maundy  
Thursday  
Final  
Command  
Jesus  
Disciples  
Death  
Last  
Supper  
Washed  
Feet  
Astonishing  
Purpose  
Teacher  
As  
Loved  
you  
Must  
One  
Another  
Service  
Domination  
Latin  
Ceremony  
Medieval  
Humility  
Obedience



Answers to Numbers Quiz - page 21

Question 1: c (36), Question 2: b (in the wilderness), Question 3: c (The numbering of Gods People), Question 4: b (40), Question 5: c (Levi), Question 6: c (The ground opened up and swallowed them), Question 7: c (Because he struck the rock instead of speaking to it), Question 8: b (A brass serpent) Question 9: a (Two), Question 10: c (The Aaronic Blessing)

## **God in the Sciences:**

### **What will March bring? Mental health ideas for uncertain times**

We may all have rather mixed feelings on reaching March this year. On the one hand, it is lovely to see the onset of Spring, but the wars in Ukraine and Israel-Gaza grind on, as does the cost-of-living crisis. We may need to find new ways to keep going, so here are some suggestions that draw on both science and Christian theology.

#### Getting outside

Time outdoors in a natural environment is very good for you – and you can't argue with the happy hormones produced by exercise. Attending to the details of nature can also inspire awe, which has been linked to positive mood, and increased life satisfaction. Enjoying Creation can also help us connect with God.

#### Looking outside

If you are truly stuck indoors, try putting bird feeders outside your window so creation comes to you. This is also an act of kindness (see below)!

#### Lament and praise

The Psalms are a rich resource to help us express both our grief and our thanks to God. Try reading one or two each day.

#### Journaling

Keep a journal of thoughts, experiences or practices you have engaged with during the day. Constructing a personal narrative or story is now recognised as a very powerful psychological and spiritual tool for building resilience. It is also a vital learning tool that we can go back to when tough times return in the future.

#### Acts of kindness

Helping or encouraging someone else is obviously a good thing to do in itself, but it also has a very positive effect on the giver - spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and even physically. Whichever way you look at it, finding new ways to show kindness to others can be a very effective way to help ourselves feel better too.

#### Gratitude

Gratitude is another natural drug – in a sense – that can help us feel better. Try keeping a grateful diary, adding a few things each day.

#### Laugh, sing, make music, dance

All of these activities are deeply rooted in our physical and mental makeup. You may have forgotten how great they feel, especially in times of sadness, but we can learn from children who do them very naturally. I hope these ideas may help bring us closer to God, each other, and His creation.

## God in Music : 'Glorious the song when God's the theme': Hildegard of Bingen

In this series we have looked at the psalms of the Old Testament and the songs of the New Testament, and now we enter the Middle Ages. But it is the Middle Ages through the eyes of a record producer in the last century.

In 1980 Ted Perry decided to found a new independent record company, Hyperion. If that was not financial risk enough, in the following year Hyperion issued a CD of a composer virtually unknown in the 1980s – Hildegard of Bingen. The risk paid off, and Gothic Voices' recording of the music of this remarkable medieval nun became a best seller. The CD sold in its thousands and received awards from the gramophone industry.



'A feather on the breath of God', the title of the CD, is how Hildegard described herself. 'Listen, there was a king sitting on his throne. Around him stood great and wonderfully beautiful columns ornamented with ivory, bearing the banners of the king with great honour. Then it pleased the king to raise a small feather from the ground and he commanded it to fly. The feather flew, not because of anything in itself, but because the air bore it along. Thus am I a feather on the breath of God.'

Hildegard was born in 1098, the tenth child of noble parents who lived in western Germany. Aged only eight, she was given into the care of Jutta, abbess of a monastery in the Rhineland, near Bingen. There she lived the life of an enclosed nun, her only contact with the world outside via a grille through which food was passed.

After 30 years, Hildegard left that cell and was assigned a scribe, who wrote down her visions and meditations in two volumes. She founded two monasteries, wrote books on medicine and natural healing and the first morality play, and composed a great range of songs. She corresponded with the great and the good, and as the 'Sybil of the Rhine,' her advice was sought by popes and emperors, by kings and bishops. A truly creative life of prayer and service until her death in 1179.

The starting point for her own compositions was the plainsong of that time. Modern techniques of singing and performing often make plainsong slow and heavy. The secret to bringing plainchant alive is to sing it with relaxed attention. In many ways that is the secret of the life of prayer: that paradox of resting in the Lord while being alert to the promptings of his spirit. Hildegard realised that secret as she brought to her music, as she did to everything, an intensity of emotion and faith, developing the medieval plainchant into melodies that flowed off the page and soared into the skies.

It is all there in the chant 'O ignis spiritus' on the CD – an ecstatic song, praising the life of God's Spirit as breath and spark of flame, as a power within and armour without. As Hildegard contemplates this gift, her music moves and grows, reaching upwards to God's throne of glory in praise and adoration and outwards to those who listen.

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*.....back in the year 1976, a committee based at St Chad's Church was trying to raise funds for the RNLI.*

*They decided to hold an exhibition of paintings by local Irby residents. The exhibition was so successful that the artists decided to join together to form an "Irby Artists Association".*

*....and the rest, as they say, is history!*

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Revd Ailsa Whorton CF

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[revdailsa@thurstaston.org.uk](mailto:revdailsa@thurstaston.org.uk)

Ailsa works full time and will reply to emails when she is able around her work commitments

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The Rectory, 77 Thingwall Road, Irby, Wirral, CH61 3UB

Telephone: 0151 648 1816 (*Day off Tuesday*) E-mail: [rector@thurstaston.org.uk](mailto:rector@thurstaston.org.uk)

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# MARCH 2024 SERVICES

Morning Prayer St Chad's Prayer Room 9.00am MOST Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays  
(check with Revd Jane for cancellations due to other meetings or commitments)

EVERY Wednesday 10.30am HC at St Chads

Sun 3rd March 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's  
10.30am Holy Communion at St Bartholomew's

Sun 10th March 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's  
**Mothers' Sunday** 10.30am All Age service at St Chad's



Sun 17th March 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's  
10.30am Morning Worship at St Bartholomew's

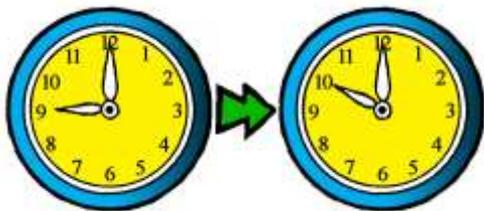
Sun 24th March **PALM SUNDAY**  
9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's  
10.30am Communion with Junior church at St Chad's



Thursday 28th March **MAUNDY THURSDAY**  
7.00pm Communion at St Chad's



Friday 29th March **GOOD FRIDAY**  
2.00pm "Hour at the Cross" at St Bartholomew's



Don't forget clocks go forward at 1.00am  
on Easter Day (March 31st)

Sun 31st March **EASTER DAY**  
9.00am BCP Communion  
at St Bartholomew's  
10.30am All Age Communion service  
at St Chad's

Sun 7th April 9.00am BCP Communion  
at St Bartholomew's  
10.30am Holy Communion at St Bartholomew's

