
THE MINISTER WRITES ...



Philippians 2:5-11

⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,

⁷ but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

⁸ he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—

even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name

that is above every name,

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

Dear All,

This passage from Philippians, often read on Palm Sunday, traces a wonderful arc, beginning with the incarnation and moving through to the exultation of Jesus at the end of all things. It takes us back to the readings for the first Sunday of Lent, where Jesus resisted temptation and so 'did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited' (v.6). It also takes us through the events of the Passion, pointing out that his death resulted from humble obedience. It highlights that his exultation and his 'name that is above every name' (v.9) is not a reversal of his humility and sufferings, but part of the same journey. This pattern of death and resurrection becomes foundational for Paul's understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus (Philippians 3.10-11). As one writer puts it, 'death and resurrection becomes a repeated pulse through Christian discipleship.' These words remind us of the ongoing journey of transformation.

Palm Sunday marked Jesus' entry into Jerusalem - a moment of hope that quickly gave way to betrayal and death. But this isn't just history, it's a spiritual pattern. Our discipleship involves continually letting go of old assumptions, overinflated egos, and unjust systems —dying to what no longer gives life. On Easter Sunday, and all through this Easter Season, we are reminded that resurrection follows, and this is not just about a one-time event, but about something that happens again and again in acts of love, justice, renewed purpose. This rhythm invites reflection, especially during the seasons of Lent, Holy Week and Easter: what in our lives, our communities, and our society needs to 'die' so that something more life-giving can rise? It challenges us to walk with courage into uncomfortable truths, trusting that God's spirit will meet us on the other side with hope, healing, and new beginnings. Invigorated by God's life-giving Spirit, let us walk forward living faithfully and fully as Easter people.

Before I sign off with a prayer, may I just say, on behalf of our family, thanks very much for all the cards, good wishes and support as we have moved into our own home, all very much appreciated by us.

With much love, *Neil*

An Easter Prayer

Loving God,
in this season of Easter, we celebrate the miracle of life, renewal, and hope.
May the story of Christ's resurrection remind us that love is stronger than fear,
that justice will rise even in the face of oppression,
and that new beginnings are always possible.

Fill our hearts with compassion for all people,
guide us in the ways of peace and kindness,
and help us to be bearers of your light in the world.
In the spirit of the risen Christ, who welcomes all, Amen.

CHURCH LIFE COMMITTEE

Christian Aid Week

We have two events planned for Christian Aid Week this year.

The first is on Saturday 10th May, 10.30am-12.30pm, when we will hold a plant sale on the front lawn. This is always popular with church members and passers-by. If you have any plants to sell, could you please bring them to the church by 10.30am on the Saturday morning. If you would rather bring them on Friday, the porch gates will be left unlocked during the day for you to leave them in the porch. Any not sold on the day will be on sale in the church hall during coffee on Sunday.

Our main Christian Aid event is the concert by Octave on Sunday 18th May at 3pm in the church, followed by afternoon tea in Christ Church Hall. Tickets for both the concert and tea cost £10 (£5 for children), and are available now from Church Life committee members or can be bought at the door.

A concert in aid of
Christian Aid
by



Octave 

Followed by

Afternoon Tea

3.00pm Sunday 18 May
at Christ Church
Tacket Street, Ipswich IP4 1AU

Tickets £10, children £5

Available from Church Life Committee members,
The Fair Trade Shop, 20a Upper Brook Street, IP4 1EB
durnfordanne@gmail.com or on the door

Octave is a vocal octet performing unaccompanied vocal music in a range of styles from different eras - an eclectic mix taking us from 16th Century polyphony via JS Bach, Spirituals and well known folk songs to George Harrison and Kings Singers favourites

Holiday at Home

Plans are coming along for Holiday at Home. This will be held on Thursday and Friday 24th-25th July, 10.30am-4pm and Sunday 27th August with tea at 5pm followed by Songs of Praise, including requests, at 6pm. This year we are off to Sunny Spain, with a variety of activities and entertainment, including games and quizzes, crafts, learn about Spanish life and learn some Spanish. Friday afternoon will finish with a concert by Phoenix Jazz. You are welcome to any or all of the sessions. It is particularly nice to have some church members there to befriend our guests. This event needs a lot of help. If you are able to help in any way, catering, craft, transport etc. please get in touch with a church life committee member.

We have again applied for a grant from Ipswich Council "Make a Difference" fund

Flyers and registration forms will soon be available at the back of the church and in the school hall.

Open Gardens

These are always very popular and well supported and raise a lot of money for our charity for the second half of the year which will be chosen at the next Church Meeting. We would like to hold them again this year. If you feel able to open your garden during the summer months, it would be good to have 3-4 during June -September, there will be a sign-up list at the back of the church. As usual, we emphasise that we are not expecting show gardens, the odd weed makes us all feel at home, just a warm welcome, a cup of tea and maybe a piece of cake. We look forward to seeing you at any or all of the above events.

PRAYER CALENDAR FOR MAY

May 4th

On Tuesday 8th May we will remember VE Day on the 80th anniversary of the end of WW2 in Europe. Let us give thanks for the freedom we now enjoy, because of those who fought and died in the conflict.

May 11th

Let us pray for all those affected by conflict in 2025. Especially pray for peace in Ukraine, Gaza and South Sudan, and for world leaders, that they may work towards peace.

May 18th

Let us thank God for all those who work in the NHS, the police and fire and rescue services. For anyone known to you in these services, bring their names before God.

May 24th

Thursday, 29th May is Ascension Day, when we celebrate the return of our Lord Jesus Christ to heaven, to sit at the right hand of His Father as ruler of all. Let us thank Him for the promise of the Holy Spirit to be with us always.

ECO CHURCH – CREATION CARE

It is the time of year when the weeds are growing fast and – depending on our individual level of tolerance to a “weedy” garden – we are wondering how to deal with them. The easy answer may seem to be a chemical weedkiller but these do have a serious environmental impact. Weedkillers have a large carbon footprint from their manufacture, packaging and transportation. Weedkiller runoff can pollute groundwater. Weedkillers can harm or kill garden wildlife, including invertebrates present on plants when they are treated, and those, like bees and other pollinators, that feed on treated plants. There are strong links to the decline in bee populations. The loss of vegetation, flower resources and habitat cover through the use of weedkiller can also impact negatively on wildlife. There are concerns that weedkillers pose a risk to human health and research is ongoing into the long-term effect of exposure to these chemicals.

So what are the alternatives? Beyond the obvious hoeing and pulling up by hand, smothering with mulch, or weakening deeper rooted weeds by repeatedly cutting back the growth above ground, there are other options to try. Recommendations include using boiling water or solutions based on vinegar or salt water. An electric hot air weedkiller is another possibility.

Here is just one recipe for a vinegar-based solution, particularly suitable for spraying onto the weeds that pop up in the gaps between paving stones.

You will need 1 litre of white vinegar, 3 large tablespoons of salt and 3 teaspoons of washing-up liquid. Add the salt to the vinegar and stir till dissolved, then add the washing up liquid. Use a spray bottle to spray onto the weeds. This method works best on a dry sunny day.

Please note though that, although these ingredients are non-toxic, salt and vinegar could be harmful to pets. The weeds will wither quickly so you might wish to then rinse the area with water before allowing pets to return.

Eco-Tip for May

After a record-breaking dry March, we think of using water carefully. Collect the water that runs off before the hot water arrives for the washing up – or the warmish water we let go before it is cold enough for a glass of water – and use for watering the plants.



We come to the end of our usual programme in May, with a break until 25th September.

On 8th May, Mai Black, a local poet, is coming with a few surprises. Her poetry and acting will bring to life some historical characters such as Anne Boleyn, Queen Victoria and Neanderthal Woman. We also have a short history-related quiz to look forward to.

On 15th May, unless Westminster politics intervenes, we should have the pleasure of hearing Jack Abbott, MP for Ipswich, telling us about his first ever year as an MP.

We round the year off with 'Music with David and Diz' (David Stainer and Diz Deacon – voices and guitars among other instruments)

In response to requests from guests, there will be one or two events organised for regulars of Forum, just so we don't lose touch over the summer months. This will include a meal out at the Key, St Margaret's Green, as we've enjoyed it so much in previous years.

We all are continually and sincerely grateful to the cooks, their helpers and the others who set up and prepare for the weekly meetings, including those from the Papworth Trust. Thursday Forum would not operate without you all. Enjoy your summer break.

We'll all restart on 25th September, and run weekly until 18th December, although 9th October will be cancelled.

BMS WORLD MISSION

A third of a million new believers helped by BMS World Mission

Christ Church supports BMS World Mission financially, but the annual BMS Sunday seems to clash with our Leprosy Mission service, so it slips under the radar a bit. But in 2024 BMS helped support around 340,000 new Christians around the world on their discipleship journeys.

With workers sent out to 14 countries in every continent except North America, Australasia and Antarctica, BMS is one of the bigger European missionary organisations. However, as we've noted before, world mission in 2025 is very different from the days of William Carey, starting the work in India 230 years ago. Then, they created a written language in a previously-oral language and printed Christian materials, especially the Bible. They worked to create a society that was less cruel and less male-dominated – such as eliminating the practice of “suttee”, in which a widow was bound and placed, alive and conscious, to be burned on the funeral pyre of their husband. It meant that men and women followed a divine call to serve in non-Christian cultures, first as preachers of the Gospel, later in a variety of professions serving the people of these lands. There was a significant number of BMS World Mission missionaries in many countries around the world, all sent out from British Baptist churches, many in medical roles, but also including theologians, teachers, agricultural experts, even lawyers. These dedicated Christians made huge improvements in the lives of ordinary people, establishing major hospitals, colleges and so on.

That was then, this is now, and the world is different; since 2021 BMS has supported local projects and their leaders, sending fewer westerners, although people with specific expertise in, for example, medicine are still called to serve in BMS projects overseas.

BMS World Mission impact, 2024

The following extract from the annual report shows how partnerships with local Christians are making significant progress in many ways:

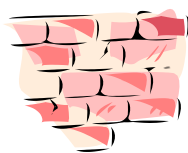
- 200,137 people were impacted by BMS projects in 2024.
- BMS supported 173 new mission workers from the “Majority World” (the now-accepted term to replace the patronising term “developing world”), sharing the good news of Jesus in places where the gospel is hardly heard. The total number of these workers supported by BMS is now 777.
- New church fellowships have been planted – 22,652 in Asia, 50 in Muslim nations of North Africa, from Morocco to Egypt, with about 15 new believers in each one.
- 77,854 people received life-saving help in the poorest countries.
- 13,739 refugees received support as they moved to safer places.
- 12,070 refugees were supported at their journey's end, up from just 692 in 2023.
- 211 partner workers were supported by BMS through networks focussed on refugees.
- BMS helped 49,485 people after disaster struck, up from 18,077 in 2023. Countries where help was given were Nepal, Bangladesh, D R Congo, Lebanon, Ukraine, Afghanistan (where a small team of Britons works to teach under-12 girls), and Chad.

A copy of the *Engage* information is on the notice board in the church.

Please pray for BMS World Mission as it seeks to work with the least evangelised, the most marginalised and those displaced from their homes. The headings under which the work is done are ‘Heart for the gospel’, ‘Hope for the world’ and ‘Help for the journey’, with consideration of creation stewardship and gender justice in all that is done.

OVER THE GARDEN WALL

... from our neighbours at St Pancras



A very Happy Easter to you all. I am writing this on Holy Saturday. I was so sad to miss the Good Friday walk: my hip was playing up! Over the Triduum from Maundy Thursday to Holy Saturday we have lots of services. There is one on Thursday evening then on Good Friday, when we listen to the Passion from John's gospel. It's probably our longest service of the year, and one of the best attended. There was standing room only at St Pancras this year. I was invited to the Felixstowe Convent, where some of the Sisters who once lived on the Woodbridge Road now live. I knew the oldest, Sr James, long ago. She's 101 now! Today their Sisters, recruited from around the world, now work in 29 countries, assisting in education and care for the poor and needy. Our Good Friday service includes many set prayers, not just for the church and the Pope, but for Christian Unity, and for those who do not believe in Christ or God, concluding with those in public office and those suffering all manner of tribulations. They are certainly pretty comprehensive, and much needed at this time. The service concludes with a collection for the Holy Places. As well as those familiar places in the Holy Land, and the people living there, our prayers and support for all those living in the lands of the Bible are certainly needed.

Holy Saturday is a quiet day, concluding with an evening service at St Pancras. We begin outside with lighting of the Easter candle then process into a darkened church, proclaiming 'The light of Christ'. We listen to the story of our salvation history, starting with Genesis and Creation, moving from the crossing of the Red Sea to the prophets, interspersed with psalms, and finally the Gospel, telling how the women went to the tomb and found the stone rolled away. It's a wonderful dramatic reflection of our Faith, and can include baptisms and even confirmations. We rejoice that Christ has risen. Alleluia!

You may have read that many young people, especially in their 20s and 30s, interestingly more men than women, are becoming Christian. This is wonderful news. Meanwhile we thank God for our Saviour, praying earnestly for those in troubled parts of the world, also not being afraid to tell people of our Faith.

Happy Easter from your Catholic friends,

Jean

DIARY DATES FOR MAY

Sunday 4 th	Church meeting
Thursday 8 th	Deacons' meeting (7.30pm)
Saturday 10 th	Christian Aid Plant Sale
Tuesday 27 th	Prayer lunch (midday)
Thursday 29 th	Church Life meeting

Emmaus Groups

Mondays at 10.30am in the Lounge

2nd & 4th Wednesdays at 7.30pm

1st & 3rd Thursdays at 10.30am in the Lounge

Dates for June's Comment

Copy Due Date Friday 23rd May

Publication Date Sunday 1st June

SERVICES FOR MAY

All Services will be led by our Minister, Revd Neil Coulson unless otherwise stated.

Sunday 4th May

10.45am Family Worship with Holy Communion followed by the Church Meeting

Please bring a packed lunch to eat before the meeting, which will start no later than 12.30pm.

Sunday 11th May

10.45 am Family Worship

Sunday 18th May

10.45am All-age Parade Service

Sunday 25th May

10.45 am Family Worship

Sunday 1st June

10.45 am Family Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd David Thompson.

David is a retired Baptist Minister

Sunday 8th June

10.45 am Pentecost Sunday Family Worship led by Revd David Mayne

David is the EBA Regional Minister Team Leader