

'KEEP IN TOUCH'

Summer 2019

Copy by May 1st, please

All contributions welcome. Maximum preferred length: 500 words.

(If longer, the editor reserves the right to edit!!)

The editor wishes to say a big thank you to all who kindly contribute.

'Keep In Touch'



St James' Church Easter Banners

KEEPING YOU 'IN TOUCH' IS

Name

Address

Tel. No.

YOU ARE WELCOME TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THEM

SPRING 2019

***CHURCH & VILLAGE
BIRSTALL & WANLIP***

THE PARISH OF BIRSTALL AND WANLIP

Rector	Revd Vince Jupp, 251 Birstall Road LE4 4DJ <i>email: vincejupp@btinternet.com</i>	2674517 07840 855030
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Churchwardens	Mr Tony Bloxam, 17 Sandgate Avenue Mr John Ward, 28 Walker Road Mrs Debbie Shephard, 41 Roman Road	2675381 2677600 2672630
Licensed Readers	Mr Peter Chester, 12 Oakfield Avenue Mrs Lesley Walton, 16 The Crossways Mrs Tricia Emmett, 1 Chamberlains Field	2120236 2674995 3194736
Pastoral Assistants	Mrs Doreen Wilson, 13 Poplar Avenue Miss Sandra Robinson, 7 Lambourne Road Mrs Gill Pope, 26 Blenheim Road	2674680 2677238 2675086
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Church Office	Mrs Sheryl Jupp, Church Office, Church Hill <i>email: stjames.birstall@btconnect.com</i>	2671797
Treasurer	Mrs Nicki Wills, Church Office, Church Hill <i>email: stjames.birstall@btconnect.com</i>	2671797
Tower Captain	Mr Clive Mobbs, 30 Wanlip Avenue <i>Practice night—Thursday at 7.30pm</i>	2677156
Wanlip Church Hall Bookings Nearer Group	Mr John Ward, 28 Walker Road Peter and Gill Chester <i>pete.chester@ntlworld.com</i>	2677600 2120236
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Editorial Team	Revd Vince Jupp, Mrs Lesley Walton <i>lp.walton@ntlworld.com</i>	

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Afternoon Teas

at Birstall Methodist Coffee Shop, bi-monthly 2.30-4pm

6th April, 1st June, 3rd August, 5th October, 7th December 2019.

If you, or someone close to you is experiencing some loss of memory, or are feeling isolated or lonely, then come and join us. 'Down Memory Lane' is very informal. It begins at 2.30 - no worries if you are a bit early or late. You will be welcomed by one of our helpers who will invite you to sit down at one of the tables and when we think everyone has arrived, we have entertainment which always involves music and singing together. After about 15 minutes tea and home-made cakes are served. After tea, the entertainment resumes for another 15 minutes or so, and after more time to chat, it's time to go home at 4 pm. So, if you think you would like to join us, we would love to see you!

To find out more, please contact **Janet 0116 267 1471.**

FROM THE REGISTERS

December 2018 - February 2019

Baptisms

10/2 Eloise Elizabeth Phillips St James

Marriages

31/12 Mark Jones and Amy Thomas St James

Funerals

21/12 John Harvey St James

15/1 Jim Clarke St James

11/2 Bert Tegg St James

12/2 Eric Broadhurst St James

REGULAR EVENTS AND GROUPS

Weekly

- Thursday 7.30-9.00pm **Bell ringing practice (St James)**
Contact Clive Mobbs 0116 2677156
- Saturday 10-12 noon **St James Church open** + Tea and coffee

Monthly

- 2nd Monday 7.30pm **Monday Group (Village Hall)**
Contact Jane Scott 0116 2673761
- 4th Monday 10.15am **Mothers' Union (St James)**
Contact Helen Tarry 0116 2677493
- 3rd Tuesday 10am -12.30 **Old Nick's Coffee Shop**
Wanlip Church and Community Centre

Bi-monthly

- 1st Sunday 7.45pm **Men's Group (Royal British Legion)**
Contact: The Rector, vincejupp@btinternet.com
- Group agrees dates!* **St James' Striders** approx. 8 miles
Contact Gill Pope 0116 2675086

St James' Wanderers temporarily not wandering

Contact Lesley Walton for further information

REGULAR SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

St James, Birstall Sundays

- 8 am Holy Communion (*said*)
 10 am All Together (*1st Sunday*)
 10 am Parish Communion (*other Suns*)
 10 am Sunday School

Weekdays

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,**
Friday 9 am Morning Prayer
Thurs. 9.30 am Holy Communion

Our Lady & St Nicholas, Wanlip Sundays, 6 pm

- 1st Sunday**
 Holy Communion
- 2nd, 3rd, 4th Sundays**
 Prayer Book Evensong
- 5th Sunday**
 Alternative Service of the Word

STATIONS

PLACES FOR PILGRIMS TO PRAY

If getting to God is what life is all about, the way there is rarely easy, and so we need all the help we can get. Making special journeys or pilgrimages to churches or the shrines of saints is something which people have done through the centuries, and in every religion and culture. We can do it too, and not just by travelling to special shrines such as that at Walsingham in Norfolk. We can walk prayerfully around our local churches, or around the neighbourhood where we live, or even around our own homes, stopping in various places to reflect with God and to say a prayer.

Many churches have stations of the cross, fourteen places to stop, reflect and pray with Jesus on his last journey, his journey to the cross. **Through Eastertide this year, our church in Birstall will display a number of 'stations of the resurrection', or 'stations of joy'.** These pictures are currently being prepared by members of the church, including our children and young people. Stations of the resurrection help us to meet with Jesus in the places he met with his disciples after his resurrection, and those who are currently designing them hope you will come to church and walk prayerfully around them during Eastertide. And it would be lovely if, during Lent, you would pray for the people who are currently designing and preparing them. It's quite a challenge!



Anne, Kerry, Lesley

RECTOR'S RAMBLINGS

Welcome to the Lent, Easter and Ascensiontide edition of 'Keeping in Touch'.



I was born in December and yet strangely I've never liked the cold. I look forward to Spring as things warm up, in the knowledge that summer is around the corner. However, I don't wish to rush through Spring. Spring is lovely. Far from 'Springing' into being or being 'Sprung', Spring feels like a gradual awakening from the winter months, a gentle stretching into the light after hibernation or gestation. It's a beautiful revealing of nature's gifts as shoots break through the earth's surface, flowers unfurl, and trees bring forth their blossoms of pinks and whites. I love to just stare at these natural gifts of God's creation, noting mindfully the shapes, the colours and the complex details inside. It's a love that has lain dormant; a love that arrives silently in a noisy world; it's the love of God in kaleidoscopic colour.

Looking into a newly opened flower, the noise of passing traffic and people talking on their mobiles fades into the distance and I can feel the Creator's presence. It feels calmer and I more content. Silence in nature is wonderful and perhaps where we naturally feel most at home. Silence can be a friend. In 'The Silence Afterwards', the poet Rolf Jacobson wrote about:

The silence that lives in the grass
on the underside of each blade
and in the blue space between the stones

It's a silence that we can find within. It's not about turning our backs on our world, the noise of a crowded street or the factory din, but about finding it within wherever we are; a deeper form of experiencing life.

So there you are – that's all the qualifications

Why not consider it?

On the plus side -

- you will be involved with the decision making part of the church, and understand the decisions taken, and why!
- you're not on your own.
- you would be one of a team of four wardens (two at Birstall, and two at Wanlip).

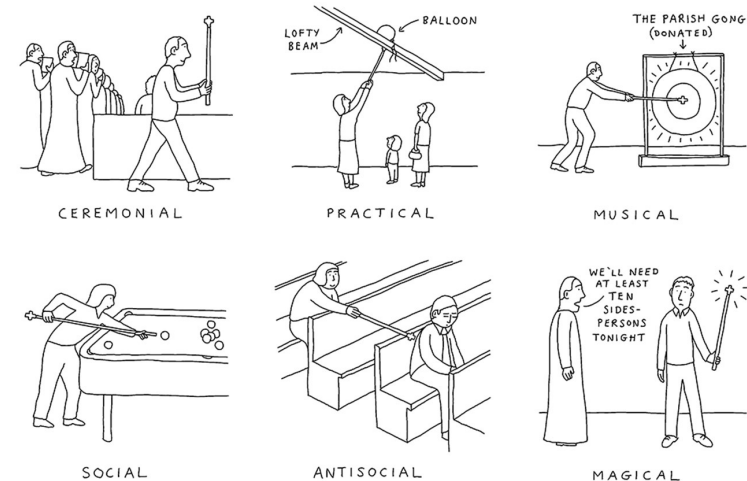
Please give this some thought – and don't dismiss it as 'Not for Me'

- If not this year, maybe next!
- Have a word with one of the wardens to find out more.
- **We must elect a new Churchwarden at Birstall, at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on April 9th 2019.**

Tony Bloxam
St James' Churchwarden

CHURCHWARDENS' WANDS

THEY HAVE SEVERAL FUNCTIONS



A © Dave Walker cartoon, used under license

AN INVITATION TO ONE OF THE BEST JOBS IN THE CHURCH!

Nobody ever puts themselves forward to be a churchwarden, it nearly always comes down to a bit of 'arm twisting', but why should folk think that the position is so difficult and time-consuming?

There are probably a number of false impressions about the duties of St James' Churchwardens:

- that they are busy every moment of every day, dealing with church matters – **NOT TRUE.**
- they have to be present at every service, first to arrive, and last to leave – **NOT TRUE.** Deputy Wardens share this responsibility.
- they have to know all of the church rules and regulations – **NOT TRUE.** When that sort of detail is required (which is not very often), there are always others to refer to, and you learn on the job.
- they have to attend loads of meetings – **NOT TRUE.** Each year there are 5 Finance & Standing, 5 PCC and the Annual Parochial Meeting which is open to all on the Electoral Roll. It is understood that it may not be possible to attend all of them.

What are the responsibilities?

- to co-operate with the incumbent
- to encourage parishioners in the practice of true religion
- to maintain order and decency in the church
- to be responsible for church ornaments and plate, and maintain an inventory of all church property
- to attend PCC meetings whenever possible.

What are the qualifications?

- be baptised
- on the Electoral Roll
- a communicant of the Church of England
- over 21

I find this silence in the space before and after Morning Prayer and in the gaps between the words in the psalms and readings. I find it in the gaps between the cars that pass by my study window; the silence appearing as one car fades into the distance and before another arrives. God is in the gap.

God, our life-giving, abundantly loving, creatively spectacular God, bringing new life to the earth, fresh air to our lungs and renewed energy to our limbs, appears majestically in Spring. Our hearts spring forward with the clocks as we wonder what this newness will bring.

For us in Church, we shall be rejoicing in a God who brings us new life not just at Springtime, but each day; a God who is ever-present, filling us anew with his Holy Spirit each moment of our lives. A God whose promise, once embraced like the beauty of the apple blossom, breathed in diaphragmatically and devoured by widened eyes, brings us eternal life now and always.

Easter, with its gold and white adornments, reminds us of the bliss we have in God; the second by second joy and gratitude we have of the gift of being alive in him. He's with us no matter what the season, but Spring is a fanfare of the fact: a silent, vibrant, explosion that is his bursting from the tomb.

I love Spring as I love God. Filling us with his Spirit, his energy and his love. May you find the space to drink it in, the time to listen for God in the gaps, and may you emerge like the shoots, unfolding, stretching and pushing towards heaven as you draw closer to God in your understanding of and love for him. Enjoy!

Oh, and don't be a stranger now. Let's 'Keep in Touch'.

**Blessings,
Vince**

The views and opinions of the authors who have submitted articles to 'Keep in Touch' belong to them alone and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the wider church.

THE DOORS WE GO THROUGH



All our life may be seen as a series of Doors to go through.

We have recently come through the Door of the New Year, making resolutions which, relying solely on will power, we may by now have failed to keep.

You may have recently passed through a Door by moving house; moving, losing or gaining a job; moving schools or colleges; moving up by passing an exam; or reaching a milestone, say 18th birthday or retirement.

You may have gone through a Door of Suffering: perhaps experiencing a sudden loss; a period of mourning; a break in a relationship; a quarrel; a poor diagnosis or prognosis; a period of uncertainty.

On the other hand, you may have gone through a Door of Success: a passed examination or interview; a new job; a new relationship firmly established; a promotion at work.

If so, move on through the Door of Thankfulness, where you may know your real self, your potential, your extraordinary luck or blessedness. Be grateful, rejoice, and thank the Lord.

Doors that seem closed always have a key, so push first, and then, if they are still closed, look for the key, find it and go through.

Never stop at the next Door.



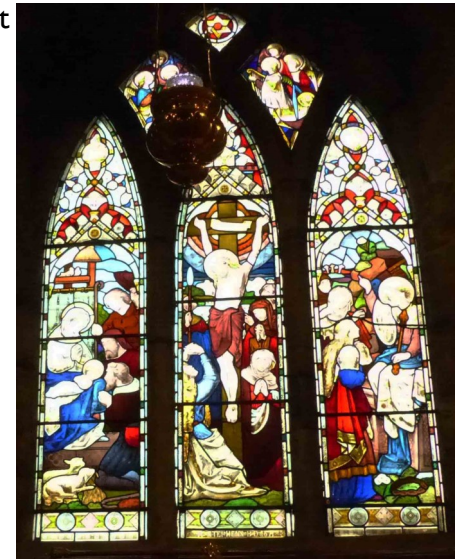
The Lord was not very happy that someone had shut the Church that was part of his story. Perhaps some of you at Wanlip remember me being given orders to get out of the Church by the Lord showing his anger about it. That happened on more than one occasion.

Not only had Kizzy flown to Belgrave Church Tower for the bells to ring out his message, only to find the Church shut. The Lord then sent a very powerful message of over 100 hymn books from Birstall and Wanlip. They were to go into a shut Belgrave Church and fill it with his message. The hymn books were denied access too! Well it's no wonder that people are still waiting for their Saviour to return!

A few days ago I was sitting in St James' Old Church having a nice chat with Canon Anne and telling her there was a lot happening. Anne said to me 'why don't you ask the characters in the stained glass window what they can tell you?' So I asked them.

Instantly they all stood still and looked at me in complete silence. I knew they were waiting for something and I knew exactly what they were waiting for. They were waiting for me to turn round and pass the story to you.

You won't be disappointed!



Julie

ANSWERS TO EASTER PUZZLE ON PAGE 16.

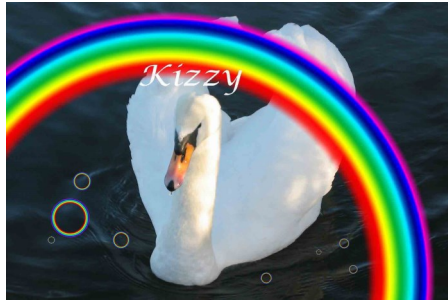
Palm Sunday, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Mothering Sunday, Easter Day, Easter Monday, Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day.

THE LORD'S SWANS STORY

I've just picked up a copy of the last Swan article I wrote in the Church Magazine. Was it really Autumn 2017!

The Swans are slowly bringing the Lord's story through. That shows the pace we are going at. The whole Swan Story started in 2005. The Lord is bringing it through very slowly, making sure everything is in place before he takes the next step.

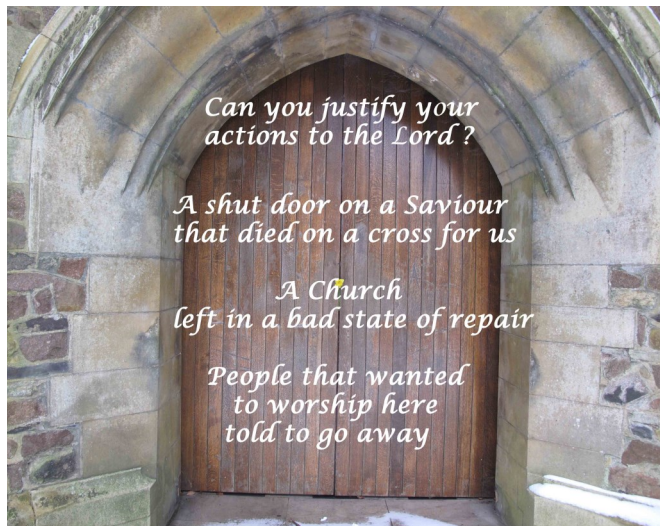
Since Autumn 2017, Birstall and Wanlip have bought new red hymn books. You may have seen that the Swans have flown into the Church to be with us. Their pictures are in some of the new hymn books. They are there to bring the Lord's story through.



You may have noticed Kizzy, the Lord's beautiful Angel Swan in some of them. At the request of the Lord, Kizzy flew to Belgrave Church Tower so the bells could ring out his message. Why Belgrave? Because Kizzy spent the last few months of her life living on the canal outside Belgrave Church.

It was her Church, but I don't think she ever walked in and sat in the pews.

When she flew there, the Church was shut. It had been closed and put up for sale.



We go through the Lent Door after Shrove Tuesday (when we use up all left-over festival food, e.g. butter and eggs in pancakes) and Ash Wednesday (when we are marked with an ash cross on our foreheads, to indicate our sorrow for past misdeeds: words, thoughts and actions).

Then, for forty days, we try to set things right, to change our bad habits and so become better people. The Lent Door leads us to grow in faith, truth and love, until we reach the Easter Door, which leads to resurrection and eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Our Door at St James' Church is often open. Why not come in and explore what and who is inside?

God's Door is always open. So why not give God a call?

Noreen Talbot

THE CLOSED DOOR

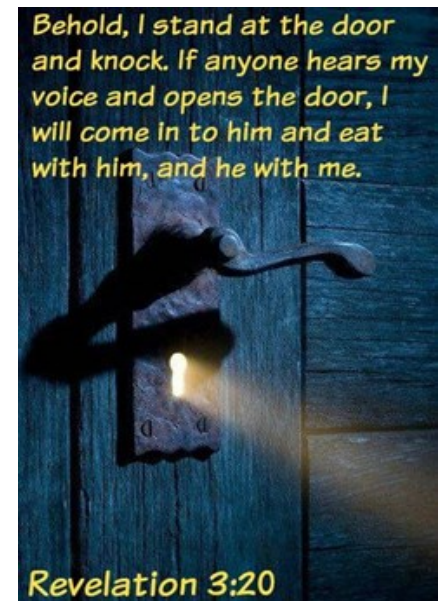
Which is the door through which I may go?
Which is the door that is meant for me?

Doors that are closed, uninviting wood, still locked and barred, blocking my passage.

Ask for the key, and it shall be yours, search for your door, and it will be found.

Knock for entrance, then it can open. There is a door meant only for you.

L.A.H.



Lent, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost 2019

**Sundays: St James, Birstall, 10 am
Our Lady & St Nicholas, Wanlip 6 pm**

Date	Festival	Church	Time
6 March	ASH WEDNESDAY	HC Wanlip	9 30 am, St J 7.30 pm
25 March	ANNUNCIATION	Wanlip HC	7.30 pm
31 March	MOTHERING SUNDAY	Birstall HC; Wanlip	5th Sun
14 April	PALM SUNDAY	Birstall HC, Wanlip	EP
18 April	MAUNDY THURSDAY	Birstall HC	7.30 pm
19 April	GOOD FRIDAY	Walk of Witness, Ecumenical,	10 am
	GOOD FRIDAY	Last Hour	St James 2 pm
21 April	EASTER DAY	HC Wanlip	6 am, 7 am
	HOLY COMMUNION	St James	10 am
	EVENSONG	Wanlip	6 pm
30 May	ASCENSION DAY	HC St James	9.30 am
	Deanery Service	t.b.a.	7.30 pm
9 June	PENTECOST	HC St James, EP Wanlip	10 am, 6 pm

Lady's Mantle, often found in our gardens, has a fascinating history. Its soft, pale green leaves look like a cloak and hold large drops of dew or rain in their centre. It was a plant much prized by the alchemists as a remedy for wounds, impotence and infertility, and also for turning base metals into gold! Its Latin name means 'little chemist'. The plant became Christianised in the late Middle Ages and named **Our Lady's Mantle** because of its appearance.



During the Middle Ages, the faithful saw reminders of Mary in many flowers and herbs growing around them. **Mary Gardens** were created in many places. There was one at Norwich Priory in the 15th C. The custom continues today. Mary was associated with the **Rose of Sharon** in the Song of Solomon and therefore with the **Rose**, the queen of flowers.

Marigolds were Mary's Gold. A species of clematis was named **Lady's Bower**, because it provided shade and shelter for her. **Violets** reminded people of Mary's humility. **Lilies**, especially the **Madonna lily**, of her purity - Gabriel carries one in many paintings of the Annunciation. **Lavender** was known as Our Lady's Drying Plant, as Mary was supposed to have spread the baby



Jesus' clothes to dry on it during the exile in Egypt. The **Iris** with its sword-shaped leaves spoke of her pain at Jesus' suffering, as prophesied by Simeon. **Lily of the Valley** was known as **Our Lady's Tears** because of its small, drooping flowers. The legend was that Mary wept at the foot of the Cross, and her tears turned to **Lilies of the Valley**.



So much of our country's religious history is embedded in these familiar plants and their names. Maybe you can discover more for yourself.

Lesley Walton

WHAT'S IN A (FLOWER'S) NAME?

For centuries plant and flower names have come to be associated with such things as their medicinal properties or practical uses, e.g. woundwort. Some plant names go back to the 1st century, such as those plants with healing properties that were associated with pagan deities. With the coming of Christianity to this country, many plants became associated with Christian saints and their names changed accordingly. The veneration of saints, however, was discouraged or prohibited during the Reformation, and plants that were associated with them such as **Our Lady's Smock** became merely **Lady's Smock**, the lovely mauve flower that grows in damp meadows in spring.



In the Middle Ages many plants were particularly associated with Mary, some because of legends that had grown up around her and some because they bloomed at the time of the major Marian feasts. The latter include the **snowdrop**, a symbol of purity and strength. It blooms around the Festival of Candlemas, which commemorates Mary's ritual purification after giving birth and the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. The scented **white hawthorn** or **may blossom** was taken into houses or made into wreaths in honour of Mary. May was a month particularly associated with Mary.

The creeping, hay-scented **Lady's Bedstraw** was so named because of a legend that when Jesus was born there was no bedding for him and lady's bedstraw was gathered to make a soft and fragrant bed. It was originally **Our Lady's Bedstraw**. In the Middle Ages it was



used for the purpose of making beds smell sweeter.

The **Maidenhair Fern**, originally Maria's Fern, supposedly resembled Mary's fine hair.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS LENT?

GOING ON THE LENT COURSE?

Churches Together in Birstall

LIVING FAITH, our 2019 ecumenical Lent course, focusses on the cross of Jesus, showing how the words that Jesus spoke from the Cross are invitations for us today, invitations to a dynamic, living faith in Christ. There are five sessions.

Evening Sessions at St James' Old Church: 7.30 pm

March: Tues 12th, Weds 20th, 27th, **April** 3rd, 10th

There are also Wednesday daytime sessions at 2.30 pm

March 13th, 20th, 27th, **April** 3rd, 10th.

For venue details and to sign in, contact Parish Office: 0116 2671797

email: stjames.birstall@btconnect.com

Refreshments provided

AND WHY NOT READ A BOOK?

Knowing Anna, by Sarah Meyrick.

This is a book about a pilgrimage, and not just any pilgrimage, but one undertaken by a group of friends walking along the Pilgrim's Way from Guildford to Canterbury. It's not heavy reading, it's very accessible. It is about people who in different ways are dealing with grief. They are doing the pilgrimage because Anna, before she died, at the age of 42, had asked them to. The thing about a pilgrimage is that even when the journey's end is fixed, we never know where it is going to take us. *Knowing Anna* draws us into the worlds of those who were left to reconstruct their lives without her – her husband, children, parents and friends. And a stranger, whose life Anna had touched. It's about love and grief and moving forward. It's readable, loving and delightful. It's about unexpected discoveries and being freed to move on. I recommend it highly, and could lend my copy.

Canon Anne

WANLIP AND CHURCHES TOGETHER

At this time every year I try to get the reminder out to everyone about the beautiful snowdrop display at Wanlip, whilst they are in full bloom. This year nature has thwarted me! This photo was taken on January 15th and, as I write, the snowdrops are well on their way to full bloom. Never fear. They last for several weeks so may still be there at the beginning of March.



Spring is just around the corner and, as we look forward to the days drawing out, and more sunshine (hopefully), we begin to prepare ourselves for that most joyful time in the Christian calendar, Easter. As Easter is about as late as it can be this year (21st April) we have a few weeks of church 'ordinary' time to get ourselves together before our preparation for Easter begins.

At Wanlip that preparation begins at 9:30 a.m. on Ash Wednesday (6th March) with Holy Communion and the Imposition of Ashes. This is a very moving service and one of the few celebrated at Wanlip in the morning when, as we are challenged with the words *'remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return'*, we can also fully appreciate the stained glass altar window as the morning sun pours through.

In Wanlip and Birstall our ecumenical preparation for Easter includes a weekly Lent course and culminates with daily events through Holy Week up to Good Friday. There will be more information about this in both churches and online www.birstall.org/whats-happening/weekly-news-sheet/ so please look out for them.

NEWS FROM OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Colin and Audrey Gibson

Many will remember meeting our mission partners Colin and Audrey Gibson when they were over in the UK in 2018 and visited St. James'. After a few months of furlough, visiting family, friends and supporting churches, they returned to the Lebanon in August.

At the time they reported that some Syrian refugees were returning to their homes in Syria but facing new difficulties and fears: of being arrested for supporting the rebels, of being conscripted and, for many, proving ownership of their family home. These problems continue.

Colin and Audrey, however, have returned to their roles in Beirut. Audrey has been invited to introduce Forest Schools in the Lebanon, which is a first for the country. She has been training people to lead Forest Schools and they have now begun to put their learning into practice. There have, however, been some difficulties. Audrey was caught in the middle of conflict between staff and management, and, despite many years of involvement from SKILD (Special Kids with Individual Learning Differences) some teachers are still finding it difficult to accommodate such children in their classes. At the same time, Colin has faced some difficulties in his fundraising work with the publishing ministry, mainly from different attitudes to 'planning'.

They conclude their most recent link letter asking for the following items for praise and prayer. Give thanks for the way the Syrian church has responded to the terrible events there and for the commitment of ordinary Christians to meet in worship. Thank God too for the inter-faith initiatives and pray that these will help build trust and increased understanding. Pray for them, for the gifts of perseverance, wisdom and patience, and that Audrey will be given wisdom about introducing more initiatives. Also please pray for the country of Lebanon as, some months after the elections, it seeks to form a new government.

Peter Chester

THE ASCENSION

A 'God, Me and Art' Dialogue

A: What's all this about the Ascension? What happened to Jesus that day?

B: Jesus left earth and went back to heaven.

A: What do you mean he left earth? Could he fly? Do you believe all that nonsense?

B: It's not nonsense. St Luke tells us that Jesus took his disciples to the outskirts of Bethany. He lifted up his hands and blessed them. While blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

A: How could he be taken up into heaven? And where is heaven anyway? Men went to the moon, but they didn't see heaven on the way!

B: We don't know where heaven is, but we know that it's where God is. And that's all that matters. If you're leaving earth, you have to go up, whether it's by plane or helicopter or spacecraft.

A: But Jesus had none of those. They hadn't been invented. Did he fly? I think that's a stupid idea.

B: I don't. If Jesus could calm a storm, walk on water, and rise from the dead, surely he could go back to heaven to be with his Father. And he promised that if he went, he would send the Holy Spirit to help us. And he did at Pentecost which we shall celebrate ten days after Ascension Day.

A: It doesn't make sense, does it?

B: It does, if you believe that God the Father and Jesus his Son can do anything. Nothing is impossible for them. We need to believe and trust. And we can ask Jesus to help us believe.

Kerry

For me, Good Friday (19th April), is the highlight of our expressions of our shared Christian faith in our villages. Members of the Roman Catholic, Methodist and Anglican congregations come together in our increasingly well-supported Walk of Witness.



As in previous years, our Walk begins at 10 a.m. at the traffic lights outside Tesco on Sibson Road. We then process together, stopping at various 'stations' along the way for prayer, readings and song. Our Walk of Witness culminates at St. Theresa's Church, where we are served with Hot Cross Buns. Not to be missed!

The Anglican Good Friday services continue at St. James at 2 p.m. with the 'Final Hour'. A moving and reflective service meditating on Our Lord's death on the cross and those three days before his glorious Resurrection.

Easter morning at Wanlip is a very special time. The 6 a.m. Easter Vigil leads into the first Eucharist of Easter at 7 a.m.



With such an early start everyone is ready for their Easter Breakfast which is served immediately after the services - bacon butties abound! - look out for the sign-up sheets.

Easter, of course, doesn't end there. Ascension Day this year falls on May 30th and, between then and Pentecost on the 9th June, we mark the Novena of 'Thy Kingdom Come'. This global movement calls for world-wide prayer for the growth of our Lord's church.

www.thykingdomcome.global Look out for local event details.

For three years now we have marked this week in various ways, finding it a wonderful opportunity for *Churches Together* to show what can be done as one Christian body.

Debbie Shephard

UBUNTU : 'I Am' because 'We Are'

At our frugal lunches during the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* at Birstall Methodist Church and St Teresa's RC Church centre, Peter Molesdale and Gill and Peter Chester shared with us information about the churches in Indonesia who had prepared the resource material. The churches' theme was **'Justice and only justice you shall pursue'**. A striking parable introduced their stories.

An anthropologist proposed a game to the children in an African tribe. He put a basket full of fruit near a tree and told the children that who ever got there first would win the sweet fruits. When he told them to run, they all took each others hands and ran together, then sat together enjoying their treats.

When he asked them why they had run like that, as one could have had all the fruits for himself, they said: '*Ubuntu*, how can one of us be happy if all the other ones are sad?'

'Ubuntu' in the Xhosa culture means: I am because we are.

Those of us at those two frugal lunches were challenged by that story as we made our donations to Christian Aid. The poem that follows, from the *Week of Prayer* material, is also challenging.

At the table we sit, empty plates, but for a few crumbs.

Everyone's had their fill again, satiated, at least for now.

Turning on the taps we fill our bowls, in the hope that the stains will disappear. The water cascades over cup and plate, cleansing it of any sign of human contact, as if there had never been a meal.

In our polite conversation and edgy discourse,
we fool ourselves into thinking we are making a difference.

We faithfully gather, but are we just acting,
waiting, for the others to speak up as we wash our hands?

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019

AGED TWITTERINGS

To quote Lewis Carroll: 'You are old, Father William', the young man said, 'And your hair has become very white' ... Well - my name is not William and my hair is not white, so that just leaves 'old' - one out of three's not bad.

I know that I am now officially old, because I get called 'Dear' in shops, sometimes even 'Darling'. Has a button been pressed to hoist a flag that says 'old'? Here is a little example. I buy a newspaper every morning, and also one for my neighbour. A couple of days ago I was in the queue to pay when someone said 'Do you know you have two papers, DEAR?' Honestly, do I look daft? (There's no answer to that!)

Resisting the urge to bash her over the head with said papers, I politely replied 'Yes - thank you'. We English are so polite, aren't we? That button had obviously been pressed again.

Older people are supposed to be wiser and more knowledgeable - who thought that one up? I don't know as much now as I did when I was 17. I knew absolutely everything at 17, the meaning of life and the universe - everything. And so did my friends, so there!

I really don't think I will be very good at being old, as I haven't yet worked out how to be 'grown-up' - it all seems very messy and complicated.

Life has whizzed by in a blur and flurry, between being given my beautiful ice-skates and now collecting my prescription medicines. What happened?

Anyway, on the plus side, I get my TV licence free now, though it doesn't make the programmes any better; but my car insurance has gone up rather a lot. There is never a win-win situation, is there? Oh well

'Life ain't all beer and skittles, and more's the pity; but what's the odds, so long as you're happy?' (George du Maurier)

Leigh Reid

From the Young People Ministry Team (continued)

We, the adults, are always learning alongside our young people, seeing new things in the bible passages through their young eyes and sharing in prayer and worship together. We encourage our young people to participate at St James' Altogether Services on the first Sunday of each month. In November they led their own moving act of remembrance for the end of the First World War, laying their poppies on the memorial table. They are also active in other services: as acolytes assisting at the Sunday 10am morning service, and reading and taking part in drama.

At half term we are going to Leicester Cathedral to look at their new stained glass windows commemorating Richard III, and join in the midday service. Plans are also in hand for our contributions to the 'stations of the resurrection' project.

Thank you to all who help us each week, the PCC and the Mothers' Union who support our work, and the entire church congregation who pray for us each week. And, we mustn't forget, thanks for the fantastic Advent party at Wanlip in December!

Janet Waters and team

EASTER TEASER

Rearrange the letters in these words to make the names of special days connected with Easter. Answers on p. 23.

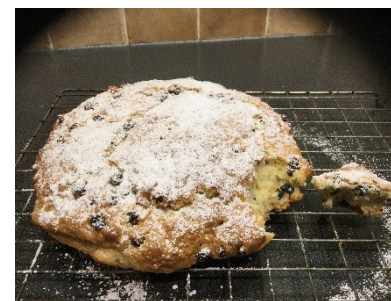
1. A SANDY PLUM
2. SEND A DYE WASH
3. DOG FOR I DAY
4. ON HIS GERMAN DUTY
5. DEAR YEATS
6. NEED A STORY, MA?
7. US VETS RODE HAY
8. A CANDY PEAK

May Day or Beltane

May Day traditionally marks the Equinox. The old Celtic festival of Beltane marked the end of winter and the start of summer. As James and Tom Morton write in their book 'Shetland Cooking on the Edge of the World': *'while the church did its best to eradicate May Day superstitions (replacing it with Easter) they are intertwined with what we are interested in: what is eaten. At Beltane, huge bonfires were lit, round which people danced in a most un-Presbyterian fashion. Beltane cake was served...'* But let's forget the dancing and enjoy the cake!

Recipe

220g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
Pinch mixed spice
75g butter
100g caster sugar
25g mixed peel
100g currants
1 medium egg
3-5 tbs milk, 2 tbs whisky (optional), and icing sugar for dusting.



Method

Pre heat oven 190°C, gas 5. Line baking sheet with baking parchment. Weigh your flour, baking powder and mixed spice into mixing bowl. Add butter and rub-in to make a breadcrumb mix. Add the other dry ingredients and stir to combine. Add the egg and 3 tablespoons of milk, mix to a stiff consistency, adding more milk if it isn't coming together. For a malty finish add a bit of whisky instead of more milk. Turn out the dough onto a floured surface and flatten out into a large disc, at least 2.5cm thick, then transfer to the lined baking tray. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until the edges have turned a little golden brown and is cracked as it has risen. Dust with plenty of icing sugar and tear pieces off to eat still warm with nothing added. A really good sharing food.

Julie Ward

LOOKING AT DISCIPLESHIP

News from the Young People in Church

What the Windows Say

When we went to Launde Abbey we enjoyed looking at their stained glass windows and were interested in how they had been used for teaching. We decided to look at the windows in our church of St James to see what we could learn from them.

Joseph, Mary and Jesus: Refugees

Christmas saw us studying the window showing the shepherds and the three kings visiting the baby Jesus. Our next session about the flight into Egypt coincided with the arrival of the refugees on our south coast and we thought about the plight of refugee children throughout the world.

All are welcome

We next looked at the window in the old church. Jesus is encouraging children to come to him. We understood that all are welcome in our church. We went to look at the east window in the kitchen area which shows the boy Jesus learning about his Father with the elders in the temple. He was so engrossed that he got left behind!

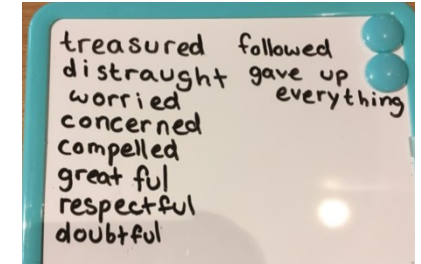
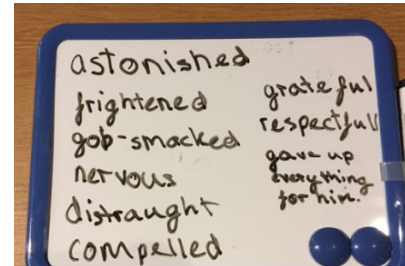
Baptism

We thought about the baptism of Jesus. We encouraged the young people to express what baptism meant to them as one of our children will be baptised in March.



Kieran and Naomi

Discipleship



Most recently we learned about Jesus calling his first disciples, how the disciples felt about being called by Jesus, what it means to be a disciple of Jesus today and that we are all disciples.



We are all disciples!

Our young people and ministry team