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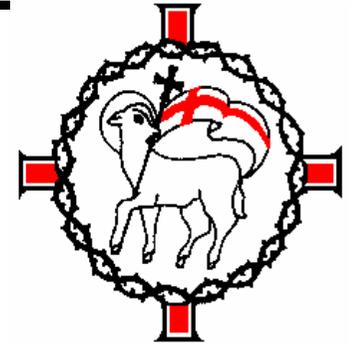
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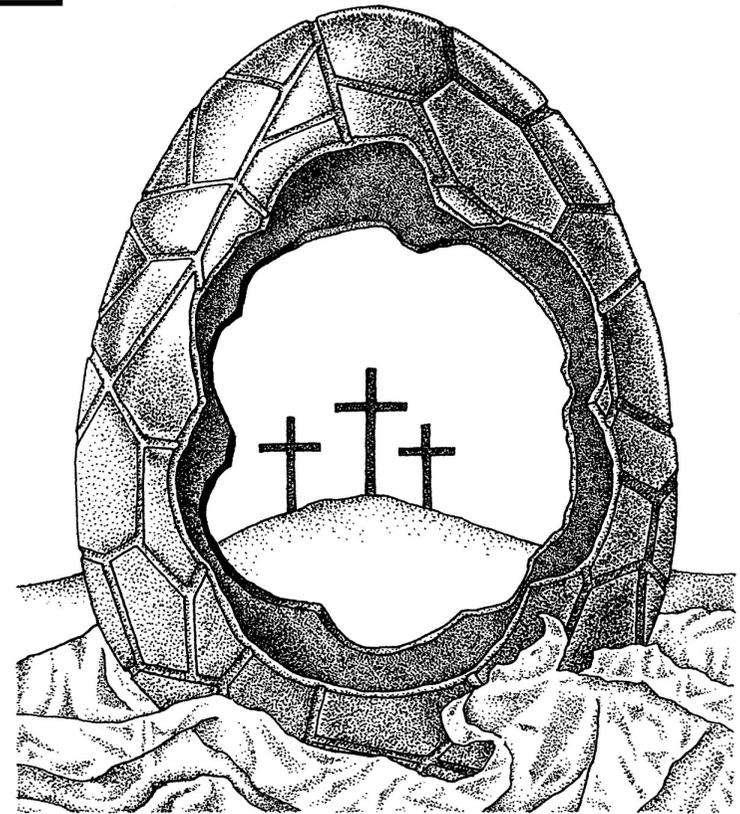
St George's Parish Church Stalybridge



Diocese of Manchester

35p

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



April 2018

St George's Church Stalybridge



LISTED PLACES OF WORSHIP

ROOF REPAIR FUND LOTTERY FUNDED

Clergy

Vicar	Revd Philip Brierley	0161 338 2368
Wardens	Mr Derek Redeyoff	0161 338 4779
	Mrs Janet Vidler	0161 303 7689
Deputy Wardens	Mrs Rose Hayward	0161 303 1731
	Mrs Gillian Cotton	0161 303 2787
P.C.C. Secretary	Mrs Lynn Moon	0161 338 5773
Treasurer	Mr Michael Davies	0161 338 5112
Magazine Editor	Mrs Linda Hurst	0161 330 0518
Room Hire	Mrs Janet Vidler	0161 303 7689

email: stgwarden@hotmail.co.uk

Worship

Sunday

8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (4 th Sunday only)
10.30 a.m.	Sung Communion and Junior Church (4 th Sunday – Family Service)
18.00 p.m.	Occasional Special Services as announced

Tuesday

10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
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To receive Communion at home when you are sick or housebound, or to have the name of a departed friend or relation entered in the Book of Remembrance, please contact Philip or one of the Wardens.

For Baptisms, Marriages or Funerals please phone Philip (Vicar) on 0161 338 2368. Baptisms are usually conducted at 12.30 pm on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

From Our Book of Remembrance

Apr 3	Alan Wilson	1970	Apr 17	Bertha Stanley	1965
	Fred Peck	1977		Dennis Baxter	2001
	William Dawson	1982	Apr 18	Edith Smith	1988
	Joan Brocklehurst	1994		Ada Sayce	1989
Apr 4	Grace Lee	1975	Apr 19	Mary Elizabeth Parkinson	1944
Apr 5	Geoffrey Birch	2006		Doris Hibbert	1970
	Percy Dudleston	1979		Samuel Cook	1989
Apr 6	Herbert Brocklehurst	1975	Apr 20	Louis Bowler	1990
Apr 7	Ellen Ratcliffe	1937		Lena Schofield	1997
Apr 8	Alistair William Rose Forbes	1983	Apr 22	Mary Wright	1989
				Mark Allen Cowley	2009
Apr 9	John (Jack) Ireson	1987	Apr 23	James Johnson	1984
	Kenneth Langton	2007		Jennie Cook	1995
	Howard Steven Fogg	2008	Apr 24	George Wardle	1997
	Robin Edward Morris	2016		Joan Lindley	1983
Apr 10	Walter Bramall	1977		Doreen Lilian Pritchard	2009
	Minnie Talbot	1984		Graham Webster	2009
	Freda Mary Day	1987	Apr 25	John Jepson Thomas	1991
Apr 12	Jacqueline Ruth Gillaspy	1987	Apr 25	Alice Ann Walton	1998
			Apr 26	Elsie Beatrice Dugdale	1974
	Andrea Louise Johnson	2004		Beatrice Isabella Brien	1985
Apr 14	Helen Shaw	1996		Harry Blackburn	2003
Apr 15	Ernest Norris	1965	Apr 27	John Kenyon	2001
	Joseph Parry	2007	Apr 28	Ada Broadbent	1962
	Alice Banks	2009	Apr 29	Laura Wright	2007
Apr 16	Joseph Shaw	1961			
	Emily Spencer	1990			



BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

To have the name of a loved one entered into this special book, and remembered in our intercessions for their anniversary please have a word with one of the wardens or Philip.

The cost for the special inscription is £10 per entry

From the Registers

Baptisms

We welcome into the Lord's family

18 March

Oakley George Ted McDermott, French Street, Stalybridge

Funerals

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord

5 March

Patricia Sadler (aged 83 years) Holme Lea, Stalybridge

12 March

Freda Wild (aged 91 years) Charlestown Road, Glossop

14 March

Colin Bernard Morgan (aged 74 years) Buckingham Road, Stalybridge

15 March

Freda Taylor (aged 80 years) Blundering Lane, Matley, Stalybridge

28 March

Ellen Johnson (aged 94 years) St George's House, Cambridge Street, Stalybridge



If anyone would like to take up the bread and wine at the offertory—to celebrate a special occasion, in memory of a loved one or just to take part, please have a word with one of the wardens for any Sunday this year.

Dear All,

HAPPY EASTER



Easter Day is the greatest festival of the Christian calendar, and this year, of course, it falls on 1st April, (April Fools' Day) which got me thinking of Paul's remarks to the people in Corinth in Ancient Greece. First century Corinth was the place to be if you wanted to have pride. People tried to increase their standing in the community by boasting of their accomplishments. Not surprisingly, the Corinthian Christians were caught up in this self-glorifying culture, and began to boast of their spiritual attainments. This meant that they began to look down on Paul, the founder of their church, because his life was so full of sacrifice, hardship, and deprivation.

Paul then emphasises his "foolishness" as opposed to their "wisdom" – we are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honour, but we in disrepute. (1 Corinthians 4.10).

In today's world, Christians might appear to be fools because of their commitment to Christ. It isn't always popular to believe that Jesus is actually the one-and-only Saviour of the world. Many will think the good news of a crucified and resurrected Jesus makes no sense whatsoever. We who seek to be faithful, might very well end up looking like "fools for Christ." People may often say to you – I don't go to church, it's not worth it, or, I don't believe in Jesus – no one can prove he rose from the dead! We might just accept their words and not say anything about our faith.

But as Christians, it is our duty to speak up about the Lord and Saviour who has given, and continues to give, life to us. Our calling is to have different ways of thinking and being, a way that the world will indeed regard as foolish. If we live out this calling with integrity, if we are truly people of love and grace, if we live sacrificially in service to others, many in the world will be drawn to Christ. It was true 2,000 years ago in Corinth, and it is still true today. That's it, though isn't it? Living out our lives sacrificially in service to others.

PRAYER: O Lord, you know that I don't like being seen as a fool. I want people to think well of me, to see me as wise and cultured. So there are times when I am tempted to soft-pedal the Gospel. Forgive me, Lord, for worrying so much about my own image that I fail to speak and live for you. Amen.

I hope you will be able to come to one or more of our Easter Day services and worship the Son of God who was raised from the dead. They are mentioned elsewhere in this magazine, but here they are again:

6.30am Sunrise Service at the top of Ridge Hill

Drive up to the top of Ridge Hill, park your car just over the brow of the hill and climb up to the grassed area overlooking the town and beyond, for a short service to watch (hopefully) the sun's rising. This will be followed by tea/coffee and hot cross buns at St George's.

8.30am Service of Holy Communion with hymns in church

10.30am Service for Easter Day

We process the Paschal (Easter) Candle into church, renew our baptismal vows and receive Holy Communion.

6.00pm Service of Holy Communion

Hymns are sung as we use form of the service according to the Book of Common Prayer.

I hope to see you there.

With Easter blessings

Philip

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GUIDERS' RETIREMENT



Janet Meredith and Alison Powell, both Leaders with our Rainbow Unit, are retiring this month.

Janet and Alison, along with Sandra Brown, opened St George's Rainbow Unit in 1988. St George's Unit (for girls aged 5 - 7 years) was the first Rainbow Unit to be opened in the Stalybridge District.

Recently Janet and Alison received their 30 years Long Service Awards from Mrs Heidi Booth, District Commissioner for Stalybridge.

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We would like to thank them for all the time and commitment they have given to the Unit and to the girls in their care over the last 30 years and we send our good wishes for a very happy retirement.

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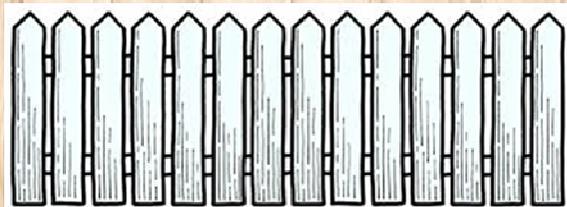
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We all have TOO MUCH STUFF in our homes. But where do you begin to scale down? This is the third of a four-part series that may help.

HOME FREED: the theology of de-cluttering

Part 3: Clutter and Happiness

Advertisers want us to aspire to own the things they are marketing: a house full of beautiful furniture, fast cars, the latest technology. The more we own, they tell us, the happier we will be. Up to a point, this is true. Certainly, people with nothing at all are far from happy! Appeals are made to provide water, food, clothes, and medical supplies, for those who have lost everything in a disaster. Babies cry because their needs are not met. Adults cry too.

Owning things that provide warmth and comfort makes us happy. It is easy to assume that if things make us happy, then even more things will make us happier still, and the people who own the most things will be happiest of all. This seems to be the basis of capitalist culture. Happiness, however, does not follow a mathematical equation. Owning more and more eventually creates problems rather than solving them. Wanting is not the same as needing. Precious time and energy goes into maintaining a wealth of possessions, it can become oppressive.

Yet if "God ... richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment" (I Timothy 6:17) surely an abundance of possessions is a sign of God's blessing? Would that mean the ones with the most clutter are the most blessed by God?

But having something to enjoy is not necessarily the same as owning it, or keeping it long term. I Timothy chapter 6 tells us why God blesses people with material goods:

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to . . . set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches . . . They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous and ready to share (From 1 Tim 6:17,18 NRSV).

So, don't be afraid to give away the things that you really don't need! God's blessings enable us to be hospitable and generous. Once our physical and emotional needs are met, the rest of our possessions are clutter. Creative imagination can come into clearing away too. There are many outlets for selling things, it can be fun taking part in a car boot sale for example. There are even more opportunities to give things away, such as charity shops, and Freecycle (aka Freecycle) online. Look around your locality. How could you bless other people from the rich abundance that you have enjoyed?

Generosity towards other people is a great way to express thankfulness to our generous God.

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CHURCH FINANCES

March 2018 Weekly Giving

Date	Sunday	Open Plate	Envelopes	Total	Monthly Shortfall
04 Mar 2018	3 rd Sunday in Lent	£60.99	£366.80	£427.79	
11 Mar 2018	Mothering Sunday (4 th Sunday in Lent)	£55.85	£514.50	£570.35	
18 Mar 2018	5 th Sunday in Lent	£32.05	£346.50	£378.55	
25 Mar 2018	Palm Sunday	£65.51	£685.70	£751.21	
	Standing Orders etc		£952.00	£952.00	
	Monthly Total	£214.40	£2,865.50	£3,079.90	-£386.10

* Assuming £10 per adult per week needed for running the church this means we need £3,466 per month

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200 CLUB

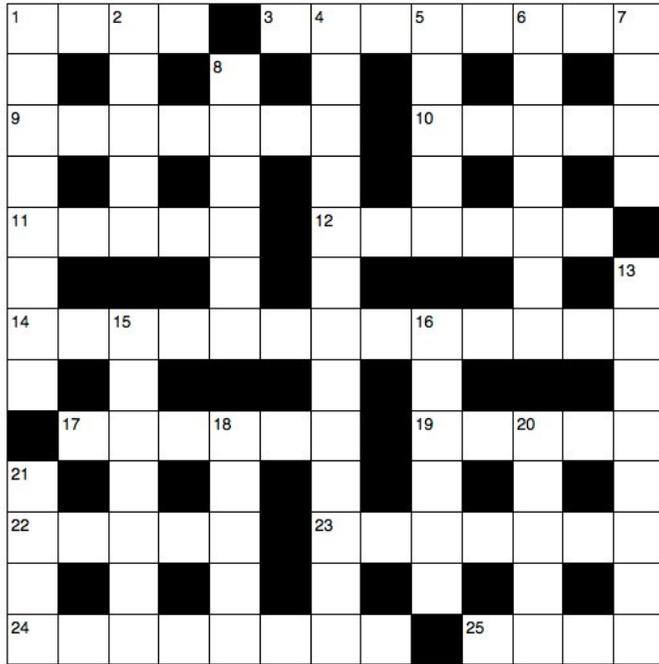
The 200 Club winners for March 2018 are:

1st Prize	£25	17	Alicia Harris
2nd Prize	£15	24	Janice Roberts
3rd Prize	£10	75	Minnie Walsh

Subscriptions for 2018 are now due and should be paid to Rose.
The cost is £12 per year per number and there are still some spare numbers available and new members are always welcome. If you would like to join please see Rose Hayward or ring 303 1731.

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April Crossword



Across

1 'The baby in my — leaped for joy' (Luke 1:44) (4) 3 A 'don't know' in matters of faith (8), 9 In the distant past (Jeremiah 2:20) (4,3), 10 Armada (1 Kings 10:22) (5), 11 Where Moses was confronted with the burning bush (Exodus 3:1) (5), 12 Hair colour indicative of skin infection (Leviticus 13:30) (6), 14 'The worries of this life and the — of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful' (Matthew 13:22) (13), 17 Expel (2 Kings 13:23) (6), 19 What Jesus wrapped round his waist when he washed his disciples' feet (John 13:4) (5), 22 The sixth plague to afflict the Egyptians (Exodus 9:9) (5), 23 For nine (anag.) (7), 24 Where there is no time (Psalm 93:2) (8) 25 Goliath's challenge to the Israelite army in the Valley of Elah: 'This day I — the ranks of Israel!' (1 Samuel 17:10) (4)

Down

1 'I will become angry with them and forsake them; I — — my face from them' (Deuteronomy 31:17) (4,4), 2 Usual description of prophets such as Amos, Hosea, Micah, and so on (5), 4 'They cannot see the light of the gospel of the — — — , who is the image of God' (2 Corinthians 4:4) (5,2,6), 5 An animal's internal edible parts (Leviticus 4:11) (5), 6 Popular 20th-century religious novel by Lloyd C. Douglas, which became a 1953 film starring Richard Burton (3,4), 7 'A — on a hill cannot be hidden' (Matthew 5:14) (4), 8 One of the exiles, a descendant of Bebai, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:28) (6), 13 Old Testament hymn-singing (8) 15 'And O what transport of delight from thy pure — floweth' (7), 16 Of felt (anag.) (3,3), 18 'So — the — sets you free, you will be free indeed' (John 8:36) (2,3), 20 Comes between 'bad' and 'worst' (John 5:14) (5), 21 'Neither height nor depth... will be — to separate us from the love of God' (Romans 8:39) (4)

Readings and Psalms for April 2018

- Sun 1st Easter Day**
 8.30 Acts 10.34-43; John 20.1-8
10.30 Acts 10.34-43; Psalm 118.1-2,14-24; 1 Corinthians 15.1-11; John 20.1-18
18.00 Ezekiel 37.1-14; Luke 24.13-35
BCP Holy Communion
- Tues 3rd** 10.30 Acts 2.36-41; Psalm 33.4-5,18-end; John 20.11-18
- Sun 8th 2nd Sunday of Easter**
10.30 Acts 4.32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1.1-2.2; John 20.19-end
- Tues 10th** 10.30 Acts 4.32-end; Psalm 93; John 3.7-15
- Sun 15th 3rd Sunday of Easter**
10.30 Acts 3.12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3.1-7; Luke 24.36b-48
- Tues 17th** 10.30 Acts 7.51-8.1a; Psalm 31.1-5,16; John 6.30-35
- Sun 22nd 4th Sunday of Easter - Celebrating St George**
 8.30 Acts 4.5-12; John 10.11-18
10.30 Acts 4.5-12; John 10.11-18 ***Worship For All***
- Tues 24th** 10.30 Acts 11.19-26; Psalm 87; John 10.22-30
- Sun 29th 5th Sunday of Easter**
10.30 Acts 8.26-end; Psalm 22.25-end; 1 John 4.7-end; John 15.1-8

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Without the Resurrection, the cross is meaningless.

Billy Graham

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Church Walk

Tuesday 5pm & 7pm
St Matthew's Church Hall, Dean St
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Thursday 7.30pm
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Technology Block

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ALTERED SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Then there is the testimony of Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding. He was the actual Commander-in-Chief of Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain. He knew all too well what was really going on and how desperate things were. After the Battle was over he wrote,

"I pay homage to those gallant boys who gave their all so that our nation might live...but I say with absolute conviction, that I can trace the intervention of God, not only in the Battle itself, but in the events leading up to it. At the end of the Battle one had the feeling that there had been some special Divine Intervention to alter some sequence of events which would otherwise have occurred."

MALTA'S VERY PRESENT HELP

Or what about the account of General Sir William Dobbie who was Governor of Malta during its siege which began in 1940. It was absolutely vital that this outpost be held from the Germans because its capture was key to gaining control of the Mediterranean Sea. Looking back he wrote,

"God in His Mercy, answered our prayers and in the two years and more of the siege, His help was very obvious and very real.... God's protecting Hand was so much in evidence that on a number of occasions officers came up to me and said quite spontaneously 'Do you know sir, I think Someone up there (pointing upwards) has been helping us today.' Such conversations took place not once nor twice but a number of times." Dobbie was so overwhelmed with the sense of God's help during the siege that he later wrote a book about it entitled "A Very Present Help".

EISENHOWER'S ALMIGHTY AND MERCIFUL GOD

Then there is the testimony of General Eisenhower. Eisenhower was none other than the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces responsible for D Day and the ultimate liberation of Europe. Like the others I have quoted, he too held a unique position where he knew everything that was going on. In June 1952 as he reflected on the events of D Day he stated,

*"This day eight years ago, I made the most agonising decision of my life. I had to decide to postpone by at least 24 hours the most formidable array of fighting ships and of fighting men that was ever launched across the sea against a hostile shore. The consequences of that decision at that moment could not have been foreseen by anyone. **If there were nothing else in my life to prove the existence of an Almighty and merciful God, the events of the next 24 hours did it...**The greatest break in a terrible outlay of weather occurred the next day and allowed that great invasion to proceed, with losses far below those we had anticipated..."*

Final part next month

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Wartime Miracles and a National Scandal—Part 2

The World War II testimonies of six of the most senior figures including Eisenhower, Churchill and leading military officers, reveal God's protection of the Nation in response to prayer and faithfulness. If they could see the state of the Nation today, what might they wish us to know?

MORE THAN HUMAN PLANNING

Recently I came across an article written by no less than the head of the British and American Planning Staff, the body responsible for planning D-Day and the liberation of Europe. He was in the unique position of knowing fully what was happening on the war front. His name was Lt General Sir Frederick Morgan and he wrote this article two years after the end of the war, as he looked back on events. These are his words:

"Miracles still happen. How many of them have we not seen enacted before our eyes in these past few years? There was Dunkirk and its flat calm sea. Who planned that? We saw no way out barring a miracle. Then came the miracle. Two years later, the British and American military convoy was sailing in order to land in North Africa. All the enemy submarines were on the lookout. A breath-taking moment came when a U-boat caught sight of the tall ship of one convoy. The rest of the convoy was obscured by a squall that appeared to be travelling along with our ships providing cover. The result was that the Nazi observer thought that what he saw was merely worthy of routine report. Then just as General Patton was due to land on the Casablanca beaches, open to the full Atlantic swell, at the very moment it seemed inevitable that the whole affair must be called off, the wind changed from on-shore to off-shore and let the small craft land successfully. There was surely more than human planning here too. Then there was the miracle of D-Day in 1944 with a last minute change in the weather. The history of other theatres of war tell of many similar happenings."

When you read the reflections of those who were in authority, individuals who had direct knowledge as to what really happened behind the scenes during the War, they all describe the same thing. An overwhelming sense of Divine Intervention at critical moments.

WE HAVE A GUARDIAN

Wartime Prime Minister, Winston Churchill is another example. He like Morgan knew everything that was going on. Towards the end of 1942 as the tide turned in the War he wrote,

"I sometimes have a feeling of interference. I want to stress that I have a feeling sometimes that some Guiding Hand has interfered. I have a feeling that we have a Guardian because we have a great Cause and we shall have that Guardian so long as we serve that Cause faithfully."

Some dates for your diary - April 2018

Sun	1st	EASTER DAY	
		6.30a.m.	Sunrise Service - top of Ridge Hill Lane (sunrise 6.42am)
		8.30a.m.	Holy Communion with Hymns
		10.30a.m.	A Service for Easter Day
		6.00p.m.	Holy Communion BCP
Tues	3rd	10.30a.m.	Holy Communion
Thurs	5th	9.00a.m.	No activities Easter Holiday
		7.30p.m.	No activities Easter Holiday
Sun	8th	2nd Sunday of Easter	
		10.30a.m.	Parish Eucharist & Junior Church
Tues	10th	10.30a.m.	No Holy Communion
		7.45p.m.	Social and Fund Raising Meeting
Wed	11th	7.30p.m.	Safeguarding Meeting at St John, Hurst
Thurs	12th	9.00a.m.	No activities Easter Holiday
		7.30p.m.	No activities Easter Holiday
Sun	15th	3rd Sunday of Easter	
		10.30a.m.	Parish Eucharist & Junior Church
Mon	16th	7.30p.m.	Mission Action Planning Meeting
Tues	17th	10.30a.m.	Holy Communion
		7.45p.m.	Parochial Church Council
Thurs	19th	9.00a.m.	Time 4 Fun (0 to 5yrs)
		7.30p.m.	Tameside Community Voices Practice
Sat	21st	2.00p.m.	to 4.00p.m. Fair Trade Afternoon Tea
Sun	22nd	4th Sunday of Easter & Celebrating St. George	
		8.30a.m.	Holy Communion
		10.30a.m.	Worship For All
		12.30p.m.	Holy Baptism
Mon	23rd	7.30p.m.	Confirmation Class
Tues	24th	10.30a.m.	Holy Communion
		2.00p.m. to 3.00p.m.	Councillor Adrian Pearce - Surgery
Thurs	26th	9.00a.m.	Time 4 Fun (0 to 5yrs)
		7.30p.m.	Tameside Community Voices Practice
Sat	28th	8.00p.m.	Quiz
Sun	29th	5th Sunday of Easter	
		10.30p.m.	Parish Eucharist & Junior Church
		12.00 to 4.00p.m.	Church stall at Family Fun Day in Stamford Park
Mon	30th	7.30p.m.	Confirmation Class

For more information please go to our website www.stg.org.uk



Saint of the Month
Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran Pastor, Martyr, 1945

Bonhoeffer was born at Breslau in Silesia (now the Polish city of Wroclaw) in 1906. The family moved to Berlin in 1912 when his father became Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology at Berlin University. He received his theological education at the universities of Tübingen and Berlin and was greatly influenced by the work of Karl Barth. After serving (1928–9) as an assistant pastor in a German-speaking congregation in Barcelona, and a further year of study at Union Theological Seminary in New York, he became a lecturer in theology in Berlin in 1931.

An outspoken opponent of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis, Bonhoeffer joined the Confessing Church, which had formed in opposition to the infiltration and takeover of the German Lutheran Church by Nazi sympathizers. They sought to be the authentic voice of the gospel in Germany and to oppose attempts to force anti-Semitism on Church and society. Leaving Berlin in protest, he spent two years (1933–5) as pastor of German-speaking congregations in London. While in England he became friendly with Bishop George Bell of Chichester.

Returning to Germany in 1935, Bonhoeffer became director of the Confessing Church seminary at Finkenwald in Pomerania. But this institution quickly incurred the wrath of the Nazi authorities, who closed it down in 1937. Bonhoeffer was in America when war broke out in 1939, but returned to Germany, explaining, 'I shall have no right to participate in the reconstruction of Christian life in Germany after the war if I do not share the trials of this time with my people.' He became involved with the underground anti-Nazi opposition, no small step for a Lutheran accustomed to believe in the God-given nature of the Church–State relationship. In 1942 he attempted to put the German underground in touch with the British government via Bishop Bell. But the net was closing in and he was arrested in April 1943 and imprisoned at Tegel prison in Berlin. The involvement of many of his contacts in the July 1944 plot to kill Hitler may well have sealed his fate, and he was moved several times, finally to Flossenbergl concentration camp close to the Czech border.

It was as American troops were approaching the camp in April 1945 that Bonhoeffer was hanged. His writings, and especially his *Letters and Papers from Prison* have been an inspiration to many who have sought to make sense out of persecution and needless suffering. On New Year's Day 1945 he wrote a poem which included the following verse:

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Should it be ours to drain the cup of grieving
 even to the dregs of pain at thy command,
 we will not falter, thankfully receiving
 all that is given by thy loving hand.

1918 was the final year of the Great War. This year, Canon David Winter is looking back on highlights of those critical 12 months, when the very shape of modern world history was being hammered out on the battlefields.



THE GREAT WAR
 1914 - 1918

Diary of a Momentous Year: April 1918: 'Stand firm and fight it out'

April 1918 was possibly the last really low point in the War for the Allies. Casualties remained high - indeed, so high that it was felt necessary to extend conscription (compulsory military service) to all men up to the age of 50. There were setbacks on the Western Front, too. Another German operation, bizarrely named 'Georgette', was initially successful, pushing the front line back across the river Lys and capturing the towns of Armentieres and Merville.

Mind you, those names are evidence of how static this War had become, because they had been part of the battle zone almost throughout the war. By the end of the month, and at great cost, some of this territory was recaptured. Field Marshall Haig issued a rather desperate call in a 'Backs to the Wall' speech, calling on the troops to 'stand firm and fight it out'. There was at a high level a certain element of panic. Could the whole thing be lost after all those years of sacrifice?

Outwardly, Germany seemed surprisingly buoyant. They invaded Finland and had military gains in Russia, taking the city of Kharkov. Their Operation Michael in France had also had some success. No wonder the Secretary of State for War, Lord Derby, resigned, to be replaced by Lord Milner. British generals and politicians were apparently unaware that the morale of the German people was falling, as international trade collapsed and the cost of the war began to bite. In fact the 'Michael' campaign ended in defeat at the battle of Ancre. The pattern of the War hadn't really changed: gains and losses were simply part of the stalemate, and both sides were approaching exhaustion.

There was, however, one historic first for Britain in this month, the birth of the Royal Air Force. I had an uncle who was in the Royal Flying Corps, which, with the Royal Naval Air Service, was now amalgamated in one fighting force. As if to mark the birth of the RAF, the most outstanding German pilot of the war, Manfred von Richthausen - known as the 'Red Baron' - was shot down and killed over the Somme. In the aerial dog-fights which were now a feature of the war, he had shot down no less than eighty British planes.

On 18th April 1918, the first of the 50-year-old men were recruited. How long would they serve, people wondered? In fact, by the time they finished their training, the war would be over.

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