



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

# REFOCUSSED

ST ETHELDREDA'S CHURCH  
WITH ST LUKE'S CHURCH

March 2018 letter to the Parish  
from Mary Rathbone – Reader in Training



**Holy Week**—comes around each year, culminating in Good Friday and Holy Saturday, as a memorial to the final days of Jesus Christ's earthly mission.

Most of us know at least a bit about the biblical meaning of important Holy Days in the Christian calendar. But how much, I wonder, do we know of our rich Christian heritage and tradition lived out each year in the finer detail of Holy Week? Through the complex layers of detail entwined into each day, I find that I learn something new each year.

Initially, the memorial of Christ's death was a weekly night-long vigil, followed by celebration of the Eucharist at cock-crow— it is uncertain when Christians first began to make it an annual memorial. Over time though, Holy Week developed.

Now, through participation in the sequence of services, Christians are able to share in Christ's final journey, from triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to discovery of the empty tomb on Easter morning. So, an attempt at a very brief outline follows, page seven gives details of our services.

**Palm Sunday** celebrates the day when Jesus triumphantly entered the city of Jerusalem, on a donkey, as was recorded in all four Gospels. This manner of entering the city evokes a prophecy from the Old Testament —Zechariah 9:9:

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!  
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!  
Lo, your king comes to you;  
triumphant and victorious is he,  
humble and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

This, the first day of Holy week, is followed by a week in which Jesus is betrayed, beaten and crucified.

**Maundy Thursday** has a rich variety of themes: humble Christian service expressed through Christ's washing of his disciples' feet; the institution of the Eucharist; as well as the perfection of Christ's loving obedience through the agony of Gethsemane.

Maundy Thursday passes into **Good Friday** commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus and His death at Calvary. There is no celebration of the Holy Communion on Good Friday, however, the consecrated bread and wine remaining from the Maundy Thursday Eucharist is given in communion – this is known as the **Communion of the Pre-sanctified**.



The church continues bare and empty throughout the following day, **Holy Saturday**, which is a day without worship as there can be no adequate way of recalling the being dead of the Son of God, other than silence and desolation.

A Service of Light is held on **Holy Saturday evening** though. This dramatic vigil marks the beginning of Easter. It is a time when Christians await the return of Christ as recorded in the New Testament. Within the silence they begin experiencing a growing sense of consolation, peace and completion. They start looking toward the hope, glory and triumph of Christ's resurrection—and the **Easter Day** Holy Communion—Hallelujah! Our April issue of Refocused will look at the great hope we all have in Easter.

Everyone can learn something new in Holy Week, it is an inexhaustible subject. So, we hope that you might be able to join us for some of our services, and perhaps learn more, when Holy Week comes to life in your parish again this year.

## Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke—Regular Services

### St Etheldreda's Church

**Sunday:** 8am Holy Communion

9.30am Holy Communion with Sunday School

**3rd Sunday of month:** 9.30am All age Eucharist

**Tuesday:** 9am Morning Prayers

**Wednesday:** 10am Holy Communion

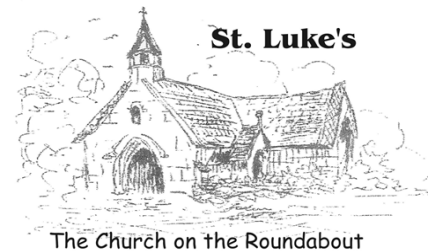
**Thursday:** 7pm Holy Communion or Compline

### St Luke's Church

**Sunday:**

11.30am

Holy Communion  
with hymns



### For Weddings/Baptisms

Please contact Fr. Darren —t: 01707 256638 —e: frdarren@yahoo.co.uk to book your wedding or baptism

### What is on in March at St Eth's unless stated otherwise

**RIP**

**David Shirley**

**Funeral**

**8th March 2.30pm**

**11th March 9.30am**—Mothering Sunday service

**18th March 6pm**—Stations of the Cross—Said Service

**25th Palm Sunday**—usual service times apply

**26th Holy Monday 7pm**—Holy Communion / Compline

**27th Holy Tuesday 7pm**—Holy Communion / Compline

**28th Holy Wednesday 7pm:**

Holy Communion / Compline at St Luke's

**29th Maundy Thursday 8pm:**

Holy communion and Watch Service

**30th Good Friday:**

**1-2pm** Seven words from the cross

**2-3pm** Liturgy of Good Friday

**31st Holy Saturday 8pm**—Service of Light

#### Sunday School

Meets at 9.20am in St Eth's Church

**Team Rector of Bishops Hatfield:** Fr Darren Collins—t: 01707 256638 E: frdarren@yahoo.co.uk

#### Assistant Priest:

Fr William Clocksin

e: wfc@me.com

#### Journey Light Church:

The Rev'd Sue Stilwell

e: susan.stilwell@clara.co.uk

**Curate:** The Rev'd Dr Penny Thomson

m: 07846 429737 e: rev@pennythomson.uk

**Reader:** John Barnard—t: 01707 335074

e: john209barnard@btinternet.com

#### St Eth's Churchwardens:

Malcolm Caie 01707 586438

malcolm.caie@gmail.com

Richard Morton 07979 906330

richard@rm-architects.com

#### St Luke's Deputy Churchwardens:

Michelle Jervis—07584 897872

Alison Churchouse—01707 891567

#### Deputy Church Wardens:

Mark Jackson—07708 199591

Nicky Jackson—07745 630176

**Bell Steeple Keeper:** Rob Goss—01438-718038

**Choir Director & Organist:** Jill Knight—01707 894949

jill.jkmusic@gmail.com

**Church Hall Bookings:** Church Hall is closed for renovation work and not currently available for hire.

**Creative Corner:** ruth.letton@googlemail.com

**Communications Officer:** Linda Barnard

linda.barnard3@btinternet.com

#### Flower Team:

Carrie Shannon—carrieshannonuk@gmail.com

**Parish Team Office:** Open Saturday 9am—10am

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**St Etheldreda's Printing Service (STEPS):**

mikeberwick@ntlworld.com— 07973 469849

**Treasurer:** Mark Knight—01707 894949

knightmark2@gmail.com

## What's On at Hatfield House

## Hatfield House will reopen for the 2018 season on Saturday 31st March

We are delighted to share with you the exciting events we have planned for 2018, please take a look at our website for details:  
[www.hatfield-house.co.uk](http://www.hatfield-house.co.uk)



**We look forward to welcoming you all back for the 2018 season from Tuesday 20th March.**

**Hatfield Park Farm** covers an area of approximately 25 acres on the West side of Hatfield House. The farm shows the animals in a natural countryside setting.

While walking amongst the paddocks, visitors can see donkeys, pigs, sheep, cows, goats, ponies as well as many types of ducks, chickens and geese.

By taking advantage of the feeding stations, visitors can see them up close.

Children can play in the sand pits, bounce around on the tractor tyres and climb up and over the wooden tractor or trek along the goat pass, a play challenge in the heart of the farm.



**www.stetheldreda.org**

## What's on in the Bishops Hatfield Team

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 8.00am**

## Men's Breakfast at St Michael & All Angels Church

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 10.00 am**

## Ramble leaving St Michael & All Angels Church

**10<sup>th</sup> March 12.00-2.30pm**

## Ladies Pot Luck Lunch at St Michael & All Angels Church

**11<sup>th</sup> March 5.30-7.00pm**

Journey Light—Informal gathering to worship and explore the Christian Faith at Howe Dell Community Centre

**13<sup>th</sup> March 2.30pm**

Friendship Teas The Annexe St John's Church, Lemsford

**16<sup>th</sup> March 2.30-4.00pm**

## Poetry Group at St Mary's Church North Mymms

*St Etheldreda's &  
St Luke's Churches*

Invite all to join us for our :

Afternoon Tea/Coffee Break

(cost from £1.80 per cup)

at 2-3pm in Angie's Deli  
The Broadway, Old Hatfield  
every Thursday (not on 8th March)

Why not bring a friend too?

More details from Mary Rathbone

e: maryrathbone@icloud.com

*m*: 07910 902478

## Lady Salisbury's Annual Coffee Morning 20<sup>th</sup> March 10am – 12pm in the Old Palace

You are invited to join Lady Salisbury, Breaks Manor Youth & Community Centre and St Etheldreda's Church in the Old Palace to the ever popular Annual Coffee Morning and West Garden Preview .

The Coffee Morning ticket entitles you free admission to the West Garden allowing you to preview before Hatfield House, Park and Gardens open for the season!

In addition, Adults receive 50% off the Farm entry and Children go free, Bloody Hollow included! Adults must show their Coffee Morning ticket at the Farm to receive this offer.

There will be stalls including home produce, plants, second hand treasures and a raffle. All proceeds from the coffee morning are being shared between Breaks Manor Youth & Community Centre: Improved Security and St Etheldreda's West End Project.

Donations of home baking, second-hand treasures/unwanted gifts, plants, raffle prizes, are much appreciated. Contributions please to Station Lodge,



Hatfield House (opposite Hatfield Station) from 10am to 4pm on Monday, March 19th, or to Breaks Manor Youth and Community Centre, Link Drive, Hatfield AL10 8TP between 9am and 2pm weekdays.

Advance tickets are £3.50 and £4 on the day. Ticket and information in advance can be obtained from Hatfield House Gift Shop in the Stable Yard or alternatively Breaks Manor [info@breaksmanor.org](mailto:info@breaksmanor.org) or St Eth's [hjmorton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hjmorton@hotmail.co.uk). Parking is free in the main visitors Car Park known as George's Car Park (AL9 5HX).

## St Etheldreda's in matchsticks *by Jo Roscoe*

One of the most popular events that happens in St Eth's is picking up our tea or coffee and biscuits after the service – sorry Vicar! And I wonder how many of you have noticed, over the shoulder of the tea pourer, a glass case sitting on the cabinet against the wall; and how many of you noticed that the glass cabinet contains a church – St Etheldreda's in fact. A close inspection will have shown you that this perfect little model is made of matchsticks! And not only is it a faithful reproduction of the building, but it has interior lighting, and the tiny knob on top of the tower sets off a musical carillon! This little gem has been sitting there or thereabouts since its maker's funeral in 1993, when the family donated it to the church.

It was built by Hatfield born and bred Ernest John Jones (generally known as John Jones). Made redundant towards the end of his working life and in ill health, John was the sort of man who could not sit idle. Indeed, his Memoirs (he wrote his memoirs when almost at the end of his life) show that from leaving school at 14 he was never idle if he could find a job to do, especially one that could earn him a few shillings. After a few odd jobs – work was not plentiful for young people at that time in the early thirties – he worked as a gardener to several of the local gentry before settling into a regular job eventually

becoming a skilled precision sheet metal worker with what became British Aerospace. Eventually, with increasing ill health John, hardly able to do his little patch of garden, took up model making.

He made several beautiful models, now scattered and treasured amongst his family, but St Eth's was perhaps his most ambitious work. His ex son-in-law, and son Alan, took photos of the church from every possible angle and he used these and his memory as his guide. We are not sure what his motivation was other than the challenge, but we know that the model was displayed in the then Leeds Building Society window in the Town Centre as a focal point in a major fund raising event, possibly for restoration of the church tower.

John Jones would describe himself as just an ordinary bloke, and I think he probably was; but he was the kind of man you would want on your team. His memoirs detail the harsh difficulties of life before the war and after, but they speak also of happy times and simple pleasures, and above all of his love for his wife Jess and his children. Thank you Jessie (daughter) and Alan (son) for telling us about your father and the St Etheldreda Matchstick Church.

*(Jessie volunteers at Friendship House where she met our own Celia, David and Gladys)*



## The Great War — Roll of Honour — WW1 1914/1918

### Remembering those soldiers from Hatfield who died in service to their country in March 1914-1918

The April 1918 parish magazine refers to 'the gigantic struggle before Saint Quentin' and the May 1918 edition reports: *This is perhaps the saddest issue of the Magazine since the war broke out, because of the long list of losses which Hatfield has incurred.* Excerpts regarding soldier's lost in March 1918 include:

*First among the fallen, must we mourn the loss of Lieut. John Church, who had he been spared, promised well to have taken the leading position in county and local affairs, which his father fills today.... Ones only real regret for such a life, is that he leaves no son to carry on his name....*

*Of the men whose conduct was 'simply superb' we have to mourn the loss of Private Walter Penn, 4th KOR Lancaster Regt., who had been as a son all his life to Mr & Mrs Johnson of the North Road....*

Mrs Page received a letter from her son's commanding officer, saying amongst other things that he was; *a most trusty comrade under all circumstances...*

Many of our Hatfield losses in March 1918, were as a result of the German Spring Offensives. These represented a calculated gamble for Germany in trying to tip the balance on the Western Front once and for all. The first of the offensives, began on the damp and misty morning of 21 March 1918 at Saint Quentin, Northern France. British and Allied troops were met with a concentration of German artillery, gas, smoke and infantry. The German Army achieved unprecedented gains measured in miles rather than yards. Read more at [www.iwm.org.uk/history/10-significant-battles-of-the-first-world-war](http://www.iwm.org.uk/history/10-significant-battles-of-the-first-world-war). **Father Darren**

***Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends*** (John 15:13)

**(Percy) Frederick Bean Age: Not known**

Rank: Private

Regiment: The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment

Date/Memorial of death: 11th March 1918/Merville, France

**Herbert Lee Age: 27**

Rank: Private

Regiment: 7th Bn. Suffolok Regiment

Date/Memorial of death: 19 March 1918/Tournai, Belgium

**Walter Herbert Berry Age: 35**

Rank: Private

Regiment: Bedfordshire Regiment

Date/Place of death: 23rd March 1918/Flanders & France

**James Mundy Age: 37**

Rank: Private

Regiment: Essex Regiment

Date/Memorial of death: 18 March 1917/St Luke's Churchyard

**Edward Hildred Hanbury Carlile Age: 37**

Rank: Major

Regiment: Hertfordshire Yeomanry attn Hertfordshire Reg.

Date/Memorial of death: 22nd March 1918/Arras, France

**Ernest James Augustus Page Age: 22**

Rank: Lance Corporal

Regiment: Royal Engineers No.4 Special coy

Date/Place of Death: 24th March 1918/ France & Flanders

**John William Church Age: Approximately 39**

Rank: Lieutenant

Regiment: Hertfordshire Regiment

Date/Memorial of Death: 3rd March 1918/Poizieres, France

**Walter Norman Penn Age: Approximately 33**

Rank: Private

Regiment: Kings Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment) 1st/4th

Date/Place of Death: 23rd March 1918/France & Flanders

**Frederick Charles Cooper Age: Approximately 25**

Rank: Private

Regiment: Hertfordshire Regiment

Date/Memorial of death: 30th March 1918/Poizieres, France

**John Richardson Age: 26**

Rank: Sapper

Regiment: Royal Engineers

Date/Place of death: 23rd March 1918/France & Flanders

**Robert William Hall Age: 36**

Rank: Private

Regiment: Hertfordshire Regiment

Date/Memorial of Death: 29 March 1918/Poizieres, France

**James Hope Walker Age: 20**

Rank: Second Lieutenant

Regiment: Royal Flying Corps

Date/Memorial of death: 16 March 1917/St Luke's Churchyard

**Thomas Lawrence Age: Approximately 30**

Rank: Private Memorial: Vimy, France

Regiment: 75th Bn. Canadian Infantry

Date of Death: 1st March 1917

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
we will remember them. (Robert Laurence Binyon)**



**RIP**  
**Welwyn Hatfield**  
**mayor**  
**Lynne Sparks**  
**Funeral**  
**17th March 10.30am**  
**St Etheldreda's Church**

### **Ian Sparks made the announcement of his wife's passing on her Facebook page**

Dear friends, we are devastated to have to tell you that Lynne passed away in our arms at 18.45 yesterday evening (10th February) at Isabel Hospice, Welwyn Garden City.

This has all happened so quickly but Lynne and our family have been deeply touched by the enormous amount of love and support which Lynne has received over the last three weeks from you all.

Lynne's legacy is immense and, to us, unequalled and we are unspeakably proud of everything that Lynne is. It's important to Lynne and our family that the strength, determination, kindness, compassion, love and understanding shown by Lynne to everyone she has met throughout her life, that have been so obvious at home and across our community of which Lynne is so proud, be celebrated at this difficult time.

Lynne's greatest achievement, source of joy, pride, happiness and her greatest legacy - our son Tom and daughters Sian and Myfanwy.

Many people have described Lynne as inspirational; so be inspired, be kind, love without condition and tell the people you love how you feel.

Do it today, do it now.

## **Lent Groups in Hatfield Team**

### **St John's Church South Hatfield**

Based on film *The theory of everything*

Using a book by Hilary Brand *The Mystery of Everything*.

Thursday night's Feb 22nd, March 1st 8th 15th and 22nd.

### **St Etheldreda's Church**

*LiveLent: Let your light shine!*

Commences on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February and runs for five weeks (week 5 timings tba).

The course runs from 9-11.30am in St Etheldreda's Church and incorporates Morning Prayer (9-9.30am), coffee time (9.30-10.00am) and the course itself (10-11.15am).

Using stories from the Gospel of John, we will explore how *Jesus, the Light of the World* influences our daily life.

If you would like to join the course please contact Penny Thomson [rev@pennythomson.uk](mailto:rev@pennythomson.uk)

The course is free – and you can join us just for that if you are not able to come to Morning Prayer.

### **St Michael's & St John's Churches**

*Moral Dilemmas in Challenging Times*

This is a new study guide that encourages groups to delve into divisive issues such as nationalism, populism and extremism from a faith perspective, published by the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ) and the educational foundation, Cumberland Lodge.

To be held on Wednesday evenings at:

The Vicarage 9, Great Braitch Lane, Hatfield, commencing 7.30pm

## **Mothering Sunday – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent**

There is an old Jewish saying: *God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.*

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' - as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their



families - which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

## March brings breezes, loud and shrill, To stir the dancing daffodil.

*(from The Garden Year, by Sara Coleridge)*

That's what March means, breezy and mild and hosts of golden daffodils. But this year, more so than usual, March means Church.

We are still in Lent (remember our Lenten piece last month) and in reflective mode as we consider the dark days to come before the glorious gift of Easter Day.

Churches throughout Hatfield and its villages are

### March 11<sup>th</sup> – Mothering Sunday

Traditionally this was the day on which people would visit their 'mother' church – which was usually in the village where you were born. It became a welcome 'day off' for men and women in service on the big estates some miles from their home. We celebrate in church by honouring our mothers and children offer small gifts of flowers.

running Lent courses that you can drop in and out of as time and commitments allow. These are wonderful opportunities not just to learn about the biblical story but to learn more about yourself and your neighbour, in the true sense of the word. Details on page 6, it could be the best therapy group you've ever attended; and its free!

Services at St Etheldreda and St Luke's follow the usual order and times, with the following highlights:

### March 25<sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week. During the next seven days we will remember how Jesus was betrayed, beaten and sentenced.



The gospels tell the story of how Jesus' teaching has excited the people and he rides into Jerusalem on a donkey (see Zechariah Ch 9 v 9) hailed as King and palm leaves strewn before his way. The St Eth's service will start in Stable yard at 9.30am and we will process to the church singing hymns and waving reeds.

**March 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm—Holy Monday—St Eth's**

**March 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm – Holy Tuesday—St Eth's**

Holy Communion and Compline (the monks Night Prayers)

## Holy Week 2018

25<sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday

26<sup>th</sup> Holy Monday

27<sup>th</sup> Holy Tuesday

28<sup>th</sup> Holy Wednesday

29<sup>th</sup> Maundy Thursday

30<sup>th</sup> Good Friday

31<sup>st</sup> Holy Saturday

1<sup>st</sup> April, Easter Sunday

**March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm – Holy Wednesday—St Luke's**  
Holy Communion and Compline (the monks Night Prayers)

### March 29<sup>th</sup> at 8pm – Maundy Thursday

Commemorating Jesus' last supper with his disciples and the washing of feet, a humble and some might say humiliating service from the leader to his followers : Holy Communion and Watch Service at St Etheldreda's.

### March 30<sup>th</sup> Good Friday

**1-2pm: Reflections and Seven Words From the Cross**

**2-3 pm: Liturgy of Good Friday Word,  
Prayers and Communion**

### March 31<sup>st</sup> 8pm – Holy Saturday : A service of Light

The sun has set and we look forward to the dawn of Easter Day; the Paschal candle is blessed and lit, symbolising the dawn light piercing the darkness.

*(thanks to Jo Roscoe for compiling this page)*

**Christ our Lord is Risen today  
Hallelujah!**

### April 1<sup>st</sup>— Easter Day

Holy Communion at usual times at  
St Etheldreda and St Luke's

***The Churches are dressed with flowers, vestments  
and altar cloths sparkle with gold and white.***

***Christ is risen. His Promise is fulfilled and  
His Light is come into the world.***

## Our trip to Cambridge

On Saturday 27th January, members of Y.E.S! and a few brave adults, set off for Cambridge on the train. We were bound for King's College, where we were fortunate to take part in a choral workshop with The King's Men, (the choral scholars from the King's College Choir who had performed a concert for us at St. Eth's last summer).

Part of the session involved working in detail on some of the music we sing at our own choral evensong services, led by the Senior Organ Scholar, Henry Websdale. We were also treated to an impromptu concert from the King's Men, which included an amusing arrangement of "What shall we do with a drunken sailor?"

After lunch in the beautiful refectory, we had a personal guided tour from Richard Morton, our church warden, who used to sing with the King's College Chapel Choir. He showed us all the sights, including the bridge where he proposed to his wife, Hilary, and also, along with a few other students, threw the college chaplain into the river!

We had a short tour of the chapel and were invited to sit in on the service rehearsal and watch the full choir prepare for evensong, directed by Stephen Cleobury. After a warming hot chocolate at the cafe across the street from King's and some free fudge samples, we were ready for choral evensong. It was a beautiful service and in the words of one of our choral scholars, Cheryl "The choir sounded like angels".

Everyone enjoyed the day, and Sophie said "I enjoyed listening to the choir, looking round the chapel, seeing the sights of the college and learning about its history". Catriona was intrigued by the Canticles which she described as "very different from anything she had ever heard before". We returned to Hatfield by bus and train, tired but exhilarated by our awesome day together.

Thank you to all the adults who assisted with this trip, but also everyone who has contributed to our choral scholarship fund, which helped to cover the cost of the workshop.

If you are interested in supporting our young choristers through a contribution to the **Y.E.S! Choral Scholarship Fund** please speak to me or our Treasurer, Mark Knight. Your contribution could be a one-off gift or a regular monthly donation. Thank you for your support and encouragement for all our music here at St Etheldreda's.

**Jill Knight, Director of Music**  
e: [jill.jkmusic@gmail.com](mailto:jill.jkmusic@gmail.com)  
t: 01707 894949

[www.stetheldreda.org](http://www.stetheldreda.org)



***Y.E.S! at King's College Cambridge January 2018***



***Members of Y.E.S! enjoying a hot chocolate after their training session with the King's Men***



***Y.E.S! on a bridge over the River Cam before Choral Evensong at King's College***



## The Bishops Hatfield pilgrimage to The Holy Land with Father Darren on 4th—13th June 2018

**This is last call now for those who may  
wish to join us, there are just three  
spaces left!!**

Travel with us to the Holy Land and let the Bible come alive as we meet the people and see the places of the gospel stories.

The Holy Land is unique in offering so many highlights and contrasts in a compact area. On our journey, we will visit places of pilgrimage and also meet the local Christian community, offering them our encouragement as we hear of the challenges they face. Our pilgrimage is planned for June when the weather is warm and sunny.

Visits include Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Bethany, Nazareth and Capernaum, with a chance to float in the Dead Sea.

As with any pilgrimage there will be a reasonable amount of walking involved. If you are concerned about this aspect, or to find out more, please contact Fr Darren.

t: 01707 256638

e: frdarren@yahoo.co.uk

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or email [Martin.Tiplady@Prudential.co.uk](mailto:Martin.Tiplady@Prudential.co.uk)

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## Visit to Bayfordbury Observatory in Hertford by Liz Fisher

The St Eths and St Luke's ladies group had a fascinating trip to the Observatory on a cold, but beautifully clear evening in mid-January. The evening began with an illustrated talk which described our universe including how stars were formed and the stages they went through until their demise into the Blackhole, where they exploded into stardust. I found myself marvelling at how much scientists had discovered. I kept wondering "How do they KNOW?"!

### The question was posed 'Are we made of stardust?'

In those wee small hours, it made me think. It is written '*All came from the dust and all return to the dust.*' Ecclesiastes 3:20. We are that dust, more over stardust, each of us just a minute spec in the vastness of space and time. God created the wondrous beauty of the universe with its countless host of galaxies, spinning for all eternity, yet here we are, each of us that spec of stardust, just a spark, a blink in time. I am truly in awe!

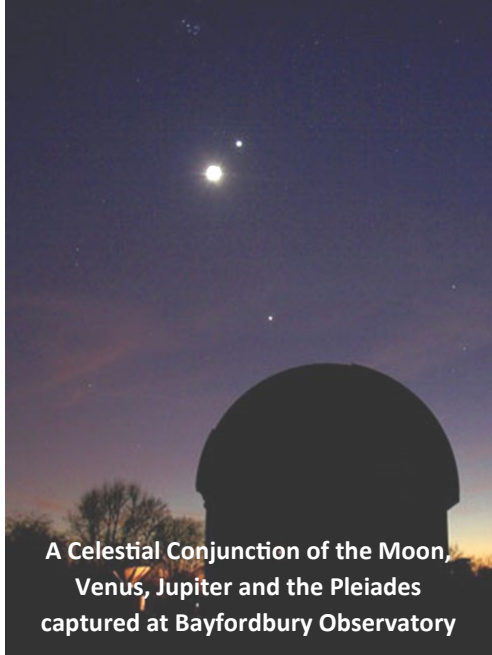
Joan Walker

that if there was anyone on another planet able to look at us, they were probably seeing dinosaurs because we are such a huge number of light years away! **Which is a relief.**

Our speaker was a keen Christian and wanted us to realise how great God is in producing the wonders of Space. He described the science behind the Bethlehem star and showed us how the miracle worked.

The final part of the visit was to the telescope where we were able to view the Orion Constellation, clearly seeing 'Orion's Belt'. It was a most enlightening experience in which we all learnt a great deal. We would recommend a visit as the Observatory is open to all members of the public—see website address below.

### The Bethlehem star would have looked something like this in the sky



A Celestial Conjunction of the Moon, Venus, Jupiter and the Pleiades captured at Bayfordbury Observatory

### Science behind Bethlehem star

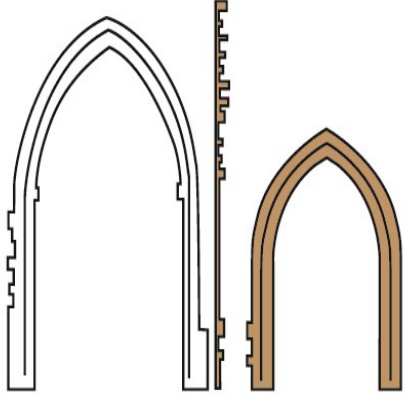
Researchers claim the 'Christmas star' was most likely a magnificent conjunction of the planets Venus and Jupiter, which were so close together (*at the time*) they would have shone unusually brightly as a single "beacon of light" which appeared suddenly. The wise men probably interpreted it as the sign they had been waiting for, and they followed the 'star' to Christ's birthplace in a stable in Bethlehem, as described in the Bible.

This is not an attempt to decry religion (*the article, link below, states*). It's actually backing it up as it shows there really was a bright object appearing in the East at the right time.

[www.telegraph.co.uk/topics/christmas/3687843/Jesus-was-born-in-June-astronomers-claim.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/topics/christmas/3687843/Jesus-was-born-in-June-astronomers-claim.html)


View more images here: [www.herts.ac.uk/bayfordbury/bayfordbury-observatory/photos-and-videos/images-from-bayfordbury-observatory/widefield](http://www.herts.ac.uk/bayfordbury/bayfordbury-observatory/photos-and-videos/images-from-bayfordbury-observatory/widefield)

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