

# ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

April 2020

50p



# **St Martin's Church, Hale Gardens, London W3 9SQ**

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

[www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk](http://www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk)

Email: [stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com](mailto:stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com)

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<b>SSM Assistant Priest</b>	The Rev'd Brandy Pearson (c/o Parish Office)
<b>Permission to Officiate</b>	The Rev'd Robert Pearson
<b>Assistant Curate</b>	The Rev'd Bryony Franklin (Fri & Sun)
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<b>Magazine Editor</b>	Ren Balcombe

The Vicar is available for consultation and enquiries by appointment.  
Please ring the Parish Office.

Articles for the next month's magazine should be sent to  
The Parish Office (email: [stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com](mailto:stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com))  
Please title the email "magazine item"

**They should reach the Editor by 18<sup>th</sup> April.**

**The May magazine will be on sale by 25<sup>th</sup> April.**

## **DATES FOR THE DIARY**

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March:** Remember, the clocks go forward!

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April:** Palm Sunday

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April:** Maundy Thursday

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April:** Good Friday

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April:** Easter Sunday

## **NOTICE**

During the current situation, the Church of England has advised that our public services of worship are suspended for the time being.

We are considering ways of streaming services and sending out resources for people using email and other social media.

If anyone is in self-isolation and needs help with groceries, etc, please get in touch with the Church Office or Rev. Julia Palmer on 07939 043959.

Updated information can be found on our website  
<http://stmartinswestacton.co.uk/>

And on our Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/stmartinswestacton/>

## Hope

One of my previous cats, was very fond of the film *Kung Fu Panda* – she would watch it from beginning to end. It also contains a version of a favourite, much repeated, quote:

Po (Kung Fu Panda) is feeling very depressed, and says to his foster father, Oogway, *"Maybe I should just quit and go back to making noodles."*

Oogway replies, *"Quit, don't quit? Noodles, don't noodles? You are too concerned about what was and what will be. There is a saying: yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, but today is a gift. That is why it is called the 'present.'"*

Very cheesy, a bit of a joke, but true. Even more than usual, the media are stirring us up to huge levels of anxiety about Covid-19, this coronavirus. What will tomorrow hold – for you, for me, for the church and the world? New guidelines and instructions are coming daily. Who knows where we will be by the time you read this? But we cannot see the future. It is a mystery. In the present, we can wash our hands, sneeze into a handkerchief... If we have a temperature, we can quarantine ourselves for a week or so (with the help of our friends and family). We are being asked to physically distance ourselves. We know all this, we are being told again and again. What seems missing from all this is hope.

In the Greek myth, when Pandora let all the ills of the world out of her box, at the bottom of the box, the last to be let out, was hope. As Christians we are called to hope, *"For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love*

*abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."*

-1 Corinthians 13: 12-13

Amid the anxiety and panic, it is better for our mental wellbeing to hope. To hope that we and those we love stay well, and to hope that if we are infected by the virus we will recover. Hope is also about getting things in proportion – what are the risks in percentage terms? How does this compare with the life expectancy of a child in the Yemen? But it is also about so much more – about our relationship with the Eternal Divine.

In the present, we must follow good practice, find ways to be as healthy as we can be, do what we can to strengthen our immune systems and have faith in God to love us and be with us whatever happens. Have hope, and – of course – love. Love one another, love God, even love ourselves.

Easter is coming, and no virus can stop that – the time of Resurrection and new life.

Brandy

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## **Parish Survey and Future Plans**

Over the last month we undertook a parish survey to look at the future plans for the church. We had 60 respondents, who highlighted: improving our junior church and provision for youth; enhancing our reach into the local community; improving our communication systems and enhancing our ministry of music.

The PCC had an away day on the 29th February to discuss the survey in the light of the principles of a healthy church. Evidence shows that churches that are healthy and grow share some common features. They:

- Are energised by faith, rather than just keeping things going or trying to survive;
- Have an outward-looking focus, with a 'whole life' rather than a 'church life' concern;
- Seek to find out what God wants & discern the Spirit's leading rather than trying to please everyone;
- Face the cost of change and growth, rather than resisting change and avoiding failure;
- Operate as a community rather than functioning as a club or religious organisation;
- Make room for all, being inclusive rather than exclusive;
- Do a few things and do them well, being focused rather than frenetic.

Ideas for action were brainstormed under the four areas of: community/social action, youth, communication, and music. These ideas are set out over the next pages.

## Community & social:

- To find what our community actually needs and then respond with loving action. This possibly to be achieved by joining Ealing Citizens.
- Celebrate the creative arts in West Acton by hosting an 'arts festival' in the church.
- Help with the problem of homelessness in the area.
- Affirm what we are doing with regards to social action by having a social action notice board.
- Use St Martin's Day in the parish as a way of connecting with social action projects and promoting them.

## Communication:

- Make the magazine and sermons available online.
- Add Japanese news & children's news into the magazine.
- Update notice boards & put another in the church hall.
- Have a leaflet about the parish to give away.



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- Promote ourselves on neighbourhood websites.
- Circulate a church monthly email.
- Make sure the website is updated and that we use social media to promote the church.
- Get local sponsors & promote special events.

### **Music:**

- Recruit a new Director of Music.
- Re-establish choir rehearsal.
- Start a Junior Choir by first finding someone to run it.
- Re-start the St Martin's Concerts.
- Reassess pianos in church and hall and vestries.

### **Youth & young people:**

- Have regular meetings for young people.
- Help young people to grow in faith.
- Organise away days/outings.
- Maybe organise provision during school holidays.
- Do some research on funding resources.
- Maybe offer partnership with other churches.
- Explore school partnerships.

The plan now is for St Martin's to have working groups in these areas and develop specific action plans.

If you would like to be involved get in touch. It is your church! I'm excited by our future work and mission.

Julia Palmer

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## Spending time with God

As measures to contain the spread of coronavirus are implemented, more people are working from home, self-isolating and practicing social distancing. As we move away from each other in order to take care of one another, it's important to look after your mental health, and maintain a relationship with God even while services are suspended. Here are some things you might like to do to support yourself, your neighbours and your faith.

### The Body Prayer

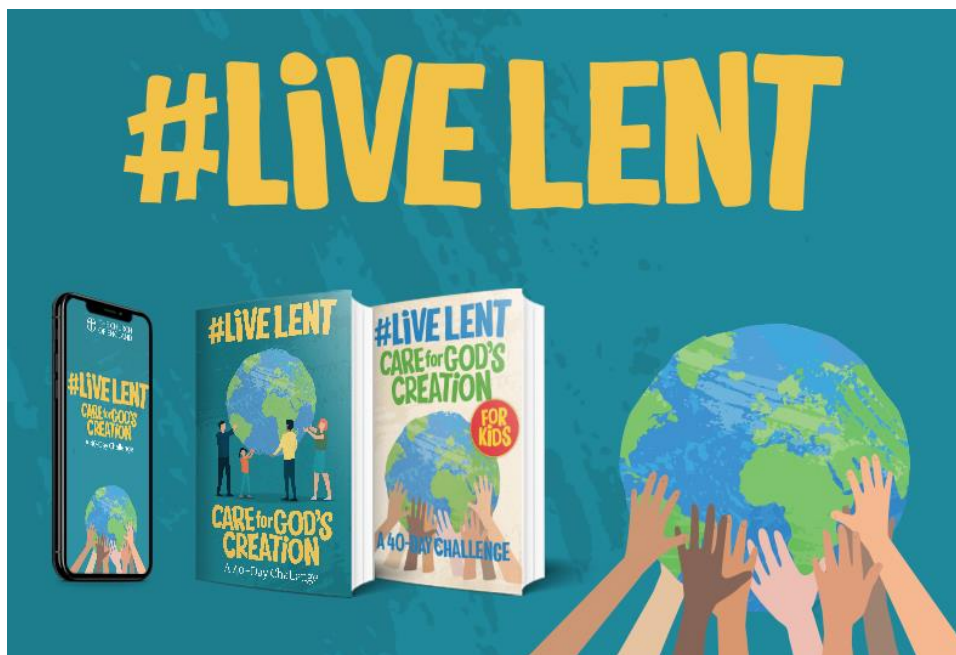
Julian of Norwich created the Body Prayer as a simple way to pray without words. It has four postures:

- Await: With hands at your waist, cupped up to receive. Await God's presence, however it may come to you.
- Allow: Reach up with open hands. Allow God's presence to come, or not, and be what it is.
- Accept: Cup your hands over your heart. Accept the gift of whatever comes or doesn't. Accept that you don't know everything. You aren't in charge.
- Attend: Stretch your hands out, palms upward. Attend to what you're called to, willing to be present and to be God's love in the world, however God calls you.



## #LiveLent

The Church of England's #LiveLent campaign runs throughout Lent 2020 and has weekly themes, shaped around the first Genesis account of creation and exploring the urgent need for humans to value and protect the abundance God has created. It offers 40 short reflections and suggested actions to help you, your family and your church live in greater harmony with God, neighbour and nature. Visit the Church of England website or download the #LiveLent app to find out more.



## Walking a labyrinth

This is an ancient meditation practice drawn from Celtic Christianity. Labyrinths can be found cut into hillsides, or laid into the floors of cathedrals. If you're self-isolating or have mobility issues, you can trace the path of a labyrinth with your finger, following the lines slowly and meditatively into the centre and out again.

As you travel inwards, think about the turning points, the highs and lows of your life, when you have noticed God at work. Offer them all to God. When you reach the centre, rest in God's presence. Be still and attentive. When you're ready, trace your way back out of the labyrinth. Imagine walking back to the world, knowing God's presence with you. Listen to what new things God may be calling you to.

Chartres Cathedral  
Labyrinth



## Resources

If you use Spotify for music, it's easy to find playlists of worship music that are updated weekly. I can recommend *Forest Town Church Worship* (curated by your magazine editor's brother!), and *Worship Wednesdays*.

If podcasts are more your thing, I've been reliably recommended *The Bible for Normal People*, *The Liturgists*, and *On Being*.

Perhaps you, like me, have a stack of books you bought at a Christian festival three years ago and haven't touched since? Now feels like a good time to engage with that pile. I'm looking forward to finally finishing *Storylines* by Andy Croft & Mike Pilavachi, digging into *Queer Virtue* by Rev. Elizabeth M. Edman, and exploring *The 21 Most Effective Prayers of the Bible* by Dave Earley.



## Community

Check in with your neighbours. Some people in the area have already begun dropping their email addresses and phone numbers along their road, setting up WhatsApp groups or chain calls to support anyone feeling lonely, or connect anyone struggling for supplies with those who can help. Some of these groups are based online, such as the Ealing Covid-19 Mutual Aid group on Facebook.

Contact your local foodbanks and charities. Are they short on anything in particular? If you can, donating food and other supplies will help to support some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Maintain a good standard of hygiene. Washing your hands for 20 seconds often, coughing and sneezing into a tissue or the inside of your elbow and avoiding groups of people are some of the things you can do to protect those around you who may be particularly vulnerable. Visit the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> for up-to-date advice.

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## **Easter around the world**

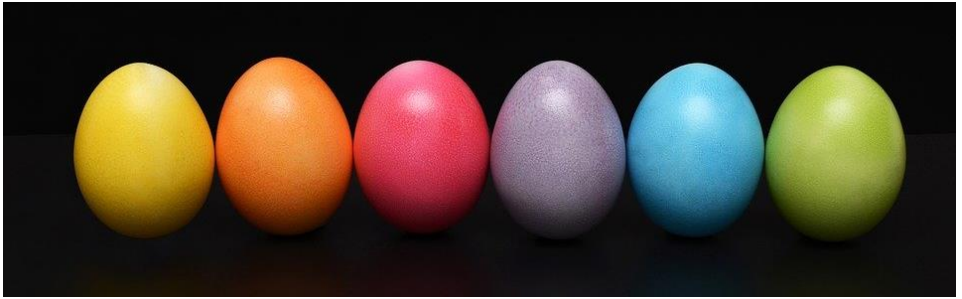
Easter is a very special time in the Church calendar. We remember Jesus' sacrifice on the cross that we might have eternal life with God, and we celebrate his resurrection on Easter Sunday. We're all used to chocolate Easter eggs – but there are many more Easter traditions around the world!



**Russia:** The Easter meal is accompanied by a knob of butter in the shape of a lamb. It used to be a lucky omen to meet a lamb, because it was the only animal Satan could not turn into.

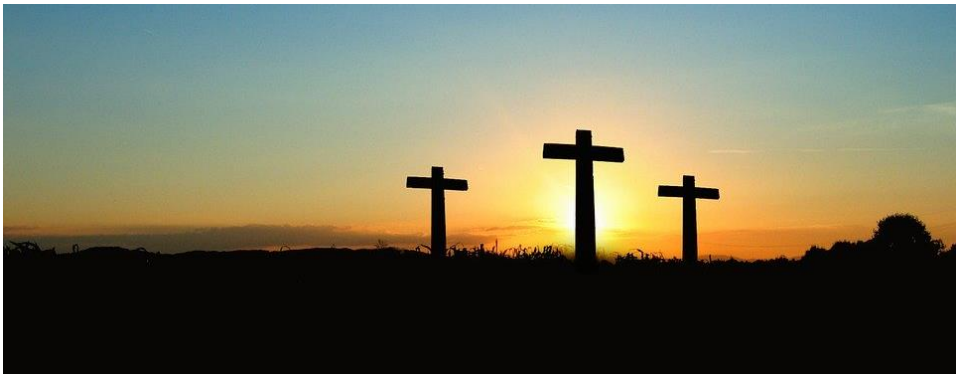
**Australia:** The chocolate Easter Bilby is an attempt by Australian confectioners to raise awareness of the dwindling population of these small rabbit-sized marsupials.

Greece: Eggs are dyed many different colours around the world at Easter. In Greece, they're almost all dyed red, to symbolise life and the blood of Christ.



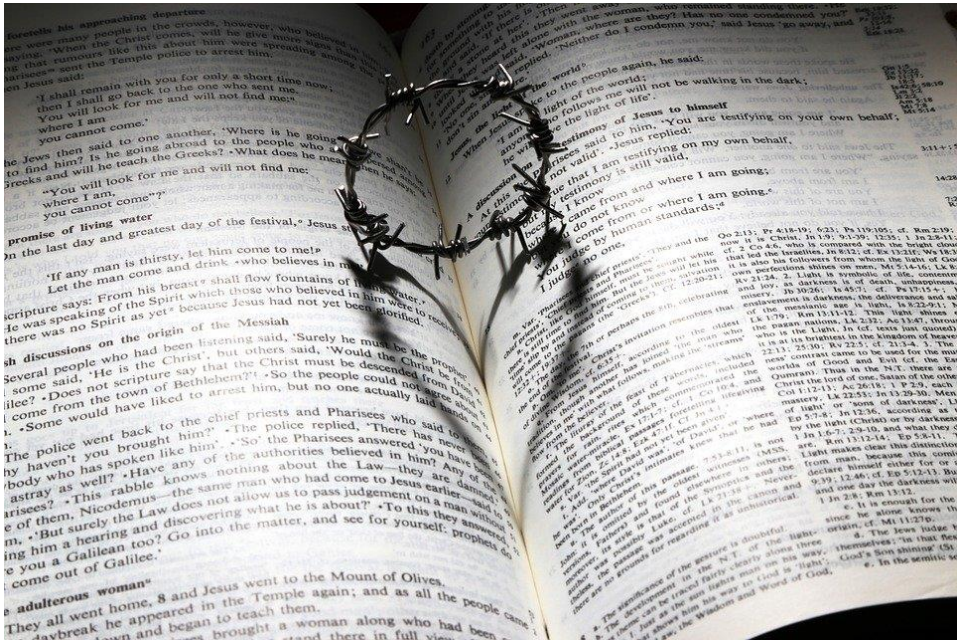
Florence: Locals celebrate the 350-year-old tradition of the Scoppio del Carro (explosion of the cart). An ornate cart packed with fireworks is led through the streets before being lit during Easter mass outside the Duomo.

Another famous Easter tradition around the world is egg jarping, involving two players smashing hard-boiled eggs together. Whoever's egg survives is the winner! The World Championships are held in Durham.



# A prayer for Lent

Holy God,  
our lives are laid open before you:  
rescue us from the chaos of sin  
and through the death of your Son  
bring us healing and make us whole  
in Jesus Christ our Lord  
Amen



## Holy Week

**Palm Sunday:** Jesus arrives in Jerusalem to crowds and cheers. His triumphant entry into Jerusalem has been celebrated on the Sunday before Easter since the first centuries of Christianity.

**Maundy Thursday:** Jesus shares the Last Supper with his disciples before his death. The day gets its name from the Latin '*mandare*' meaning 'to command'. We remember Jesus' command: 'Love one another as I have loved you.'

**Good Friday:** The crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ, this is a sombre day spent in reflection on the sacrifice Jesus willingly paid for all our sins.

**Holy Saturday:** The Easter Vigil begins in the evening with a symbolic waiting for the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter morning. This quiet and thoughtful time involves fires and candles to represent new life and light.



**Easter Sunday:** On the third day after being crucified, Jesus' tomb was found to be empty. This is the day of Jesus' resurrection – a day of celebration!



# **The Parish of St Martin Hale Gardens, London W3 9SQ**

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## **Usual Sunday Services**

8am: Holy Communion  
10am: Parish Communion  
6.30pm: Evensong

Our Junior Church meets in the Church Hall at 10am  
except when there is an All-Age or Parade Service.

## **Japanese Anglican Church UK**

meets every third Sunday of the month:  
(except July, August and December)

3pm Bible Study and Evening Worship in Japanese

Every **Wednesday** in the Parish Room

11am: Informal Eucharist followed by the Coffee Club at 11.30am