



St Mark's Parish Magazine
May 2022

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Donations to cover the cost of this publication are welcome

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Your Views & Contributions

Next issue will be available from Sunday 5 June 2022

All contributions to the editor by Friday 13 May 2022

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LETTER FROM THE VICAR

Dear Friends,

We are privileged to be living in Britain and to have such distinct seasons. Whilst climate change is causing some worrying changes in our weather, the seasons still help us mark time and help give rhythm to our lives. Along with the seasons we also have the Festivals that help our spiritual journeying. We have experienced the light in the darkness at Christmas, and now we are in the Easter season. It feels like over recent years we have had far too much Good Friday horror and Easter Saturday waiting. After the disruption and disharmony of Brexit came the fear and loss of the Covid Crisis. Just as it felt like we were beginning to emerge from that, we are plunged into the dreadful situation in Ukraine. How we have been longing for Easter Sunday resurrection joy when we declare "Alleluia, Christ is risen". We want for everything to be made right, made whole again, and for the pain to go away.

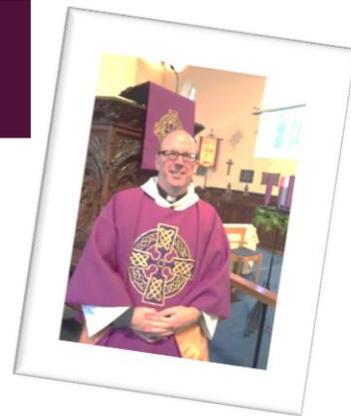
But as we look at that first Easter when Mary finds that Christ has risen and death has been overcome, we see that outwardly the circumstances of the disciples hadn't changed. They were still living as oppressed people, under Roman occupation. That didn't end with the resurrection. Some would go on to suffer great persecution, even death. Their lives were not changed on the outside but they were changed on the inside. Christ's resurrection didn't change their circumstances but it did change their destiny. The journey remained hard but the destination was different.

They experienced hope that wasn't dependent on what was happening on the outside but was from knowing that they were loved by Jesus, loved enough that he died for them and that he overcame death that they may have eternal life.

We too can know that whatever is going on in our circumstances we can live in the reality of Easter Sunday every day. Eternal life is not just for when we die, it is from today – from now. Writer Henri Nouwen says, "This is the enormous revolution, that in this fleeting, temporary world, he comes to plant the seed of eternal life ... it is the life of the Divine Spirit within us ... Become aware of this mysterious presence and life turns around."

May you know the hope and joy that is found in Christ this Easter, and join us as we proclaim, "He is risen indeed, Alleluia!"

With my prayers and blessings.

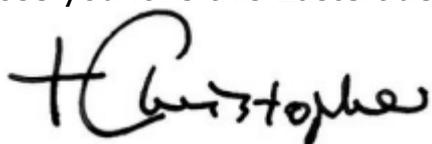


Letter from Bishop Christopher

'Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and bestowing life on those in their tombs'. These are the words of the Orthodox Paschal Troparion celebrating the Resurrection, a great hymn of the Eastern Church reminding us that the Passiontide journey has not been made in vain. Whether in Kyiv or Moscow where this year Orthodox Christians will celebrate Easter one week after our paschal celebrations in the Western Church, we are all able to meet the challenges of life because Christ has met them before us. Christ is with us in our suffering. He is with those fleeing their homes as a result of unprovoked acts of aggression. He is with those sheltering in the basements of their bombarded cities. Moreover, Christ has met the last enemy - death itself - and destroyed it (1 Corinthians 15. 26). Powers and dominions cannot separate us from God's love.

The Resurrection is not a promise that we shall avoid trouble: it is the promise that there is life on the other side of whatever trouble we shall face including death, the fear of which can hold us in such subjection. But it is more than the simplistic assurance that everything is going to be alright in the end somehow. For if the Cross is the accomplishment of our redemption, the Resurrection is our entry into its eternal manifestation. 'It is finished', said Christ on the Cross (John 19. 30). 'Do not be afraid', says the Risen Christ, 'I am the first and the last, and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive for ever and ever' (Revelation 1. 17-18). The first words of the risen Christ to the traumatised disciples in the Upper Room were 'Peace be with you'. May these words be heard and taken to heart by Christians in Russia and Ukraine and in every nation of the world and may our living hope become our lived reality. We need to keep the Risen Christ firmly before us if the hope and forgiveness found in Him are to be proclaimed effectively. For our proclamation is confirmed by the witness of our lives and we will best communicate hope if we know that hope ourselves. Similarly, we shall invite people into God's forgiveness if we have repented and so discover for ourselves the freedom that forgiveness brings. We shall answer the fear that stalks so many lives if we, both in community and individually, have encountered the 'perfect love that drives out fear' (1 John 4. 18).

As we proclaim 'Christ is risen' may we find ourselves more firmly rooted in a joy that cannot be overcome by the traumas of this life. Our hope, our purposefulness, our openness to the future - all these come from knowing the living Christ. Let us not lose sight of how good God has been to us, nor of the truth that God desires good for the whole of creation. It is ours simply to look to the Risen Christ, 'the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God' (Hebrew 12. 2). His is the authority, the power, majesty and the might and he is worthy of our trust. May our troubled world accept his gift of Peace. May God bless you and those you love this Eastertide and may your hearts know the joy of the Resurrection.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'C'.

Silence

I attended a Deanery Quiet Day at Wychcroft before Easter which I really enjoyed. We were not silent all day but were lead in our thoughts by Archdeacon Cutting using the theme of the "5 marks of Mission and Us." These were:

1. To Tell the Good News
2. To Teach the Good News
3. To Tend to human needs by loving service
4. To seek to Transform unjust structures in society
5. To Treasure creation and sustain life on earth

We might have added a 6th being Thankfulness

The periods of silence were enhanced by the peacefulness of the beautiful surroundings and the lovely weather we enjoyed. I live alone and so you might wonder why I should look for a day of quiet when in some ways I am often alone. I love company and probably talk too much but these periods of disciplined silence were refreshing. The building and grounds were large enough for us to enjoy the quiet, undisturbed by radio, television or casual chatter.

I rarely hear birdsong because of double glazing and even in the car, in the shops and in so many other places noise prevails.

Of course I gave some of this precious time to prayer, trying to listen to God rather than speaking myself. But for much of the time I could just gaze in wonder at the countryside and clouds floating by.

Thomas Carlisle said "Speech is human, silence is divine" and "Silence is deep as eternity, speech is shallow as time."

I think I must give more time to silence in the future. Why not try to do the same?

Ian Archer

News from the Church of England

Up to 500,000 children's storybooks on faithfulness distributed for Platinum Jubilee

Up to half a million story books will be given to primary school-aged children ahead of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by the Church of England and Thy Kingdom Come, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York's global prayer movement.



The book, 'Queen CJ and the Bouncy Castle', is the latest development from the Cheeky Pandas, a children's online cartoon series created by Swell Revolution, led by Pete and Nicola James which has featured contributions from people including Archbishop Justin Welby, Nicky Gumbel, and CBeebies' Gemma Hunt previously.

The free storybook, based on the theme of faithfulness, helps children understand the faithfulness of the God – in honour of Her Majesty the Queen's 70 years of faithful service.

The book's creation and distribution is part of plans for this year's Thy Kingdom Come, a global ecumenical prayer movement initiated by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, which unites Christians in nearly 90% of countries worldwide to pray for evangelisation from Ascension to Pentecost. It is also an official Church of England schools resource for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Alongside the book, similar in size to Mr Men and Little Miss books, there will be a brand new five-part online TV series of the Cheeky Pandas, based on the Fruit of the Spirit and inspired by the Bible.

There are also Platinum Jubilee music videos for toddlers and young children, and a special 'Royal' episode to accompany the story book, created by the makers of CBBC's 'Andy and the Band' and CBeebies' 'The Baby Club', with voiceovers from Gemma Hunt.

Story taken from: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-and-news/press-releases/500000-childrens-storybooks-faithfulness-distributed-platinum-jubilee>

Rogation Sunday – 22 May

Rogation means an asking of God – for blessing on the seed and land for the year ahead. It is appropriate in any emergency, war, plague, drought or foul weather.

The practice began with the Romans, who invoked the help of the gods Terminus and Ambarvalia. In those days a crowd moved in procession around the cornfields, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, and driving away Winter with sticks. They wanted to rid the cornfields of evil.

In about 465 the Western world was suffering from earthquake, storm and epidemic. So Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the popular pagan custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields on the days leading up to Ascension. With his decision, “beating the bounds” became a Christian ceremonial.

Rogation-tide arrived in England early in the eighth century and became a fixed and perennial asking for help of the Christian God. On Rogation-tide, a little party would set out to trace the boundaries of the parish. At the head marched the bishop or the priest, with a minor official bearing a Cross, and after them the people of the parish, with schoolboys and their master trailing along. Most of them held slender wands of willow.

At certain points along the route – at well-known landmarks like a bridge or stile or ancient tree, the Cross halted, the party gathered about the priest, and a litany or rogation is said, imploring God to send seasonable wealth, keep the corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to an ample harvest. At some point beer and cheese would be waiting.

In the days when maps were neither common nor accurate, there was much to be said for “beating the bounds.” It was still very common as late as the reign of Queen Victoria. Certainly, parish boundaries rarely came into dispute, for everyone knew them. (Do you know yours today?)

On Rogation Sunday, 22nd May, we will be “beating the bounds” by walking around the parish boundary starting from the Church at 2pm and returning by 5pm for some refreshment. Please join us (dogs welcome too!) either for the whole walk or for the second half, meeting at the Reigate Hill car park at about 3.30pm to 4.00pm (depending on how fast we walk!) for the last part back to the Church.

Instructions for giving a pill to a cat

1. Pick cat up and cradle it in the crook of your arm as if holding a baby. Position right forefinger and thumb on either side of cat's mouth and gently apply pressure to cheeks while holding pill in right hand. As cat opens mouth pop pill into mouth. Allow cat to close mouth and swallow.
2. Retrieve pill from floor and cat from behind sofa. Cradle cat in left arm and repeat process.
3. Retrieve cat from bedroom, and throw soggy pill away.
4. Take new pill from foil; wrap, cradle cat in left arm holding rear paws tightly with left hand. Force jaws open and push pill to back of mouth with right forefinger. Hold mouth shut for count of 10.
5. Retrieve pill from goldfish bowl and cat from top of wardrobe. Call spouse from garden.
6. Kneel on floor with cat wedged firmly between knees, holding front and rear paws. Ignore low growls emitted by cat. Get spouse to hold cat's head firmly with one hand while forcing wooden ruler into mouth. Drop pill down ruler and rub cat's throat vigorously.
7. Retrieve cat from curtain rail, get another pill from foil wrap. Make note to buy a new ruler and repair curtains. Sweep shattered figurines from hearth and set to one side for gluing later.
8. Wrap cat in large towel and get spouse to lie on cat with its head just visible from below spouse's armpit. Put pill in end of drinking straw, force cat's mouth open with pencil and blow down drinking straw.
9. Check label to make sure pills not harmful to humans, drink glass of water to rake taste away. Apply sticking plaster to spouse's forearm and remove blood from carpet with cold water and soap.
10. Retrieve cat from neighbour's shed. Get another pill. Place cat in cupboard and close door onto neck to leave head showing. Force mouth open with desert spoon, flick pill down throat with elastic band.



Apply sticking plaster to spouse's forearm and remove blood from carpet with cold water and soap.

11. Fetch screwdriver from garage and put door back on hinges. Apply cold compress to cheek and check records for date of last tetanus shot. Throw T-shirt away and fetch new one from bedroom.



12. Ring fire brigade to retrieve cat from tree across the road. Apologise to neighbour who crashed into fence while swerving to avoid the cat. Take last pill from foil wrap.

13. Tie cat's front paws to rear paws with garden twine and bind tightly to leg of dining table. Find heavy duty pruning gloves from shed. Force cat's mouth open with small spanner. Push pill into mouth followed by large piece of fillet steak. Hold head vertically and pour a pint of water down throat to wash pill down.

14. Get spouse to drive you to A and E, sit quietly while doctor stitches fingers and forearm and removes pill remains from right eye. Stop by furniture shop on way home to order new table.

15. Arrange for cat rescue people to collect cat and call local pet shop to see if they have any hamsters.

Ian Archer

P.S. Obviously no cats were actually harmed in creating these instructions. Please consult a VET for real instructions on how to medicate your pets safely.



Official Provider

EAST SURREY ADVANCED MOTORISTS

will be running their popular Better Driving theory course in Nutfield Memorial Hall, RH1 4HF at 8pm on Thursdays 12th, 19th and 26th May and 2nd June 2022, completely free of charge. Our vastly and variously experienced group of highly trained and voluntary Observers will host four different informal illustrated talks and discussions. There will be an opportunity for a demonstration/assessment drive with our

Nationally qualified Observers. Although based on training for the skilled advanced driving test, this course is designed to benefit all road users and everybody is welcome. Book with Janne 01737 821331 or info@eastsurreyiam.org.uk

Local History Month

May is local history month so in honour of this, here are some photos of Reigate's local history. The photos have been taken from exploringsurreypast.org.uk.

Reigate Old Prison from 1905 and now as the Cage wine bar.



The town hall in 1896 and 2007

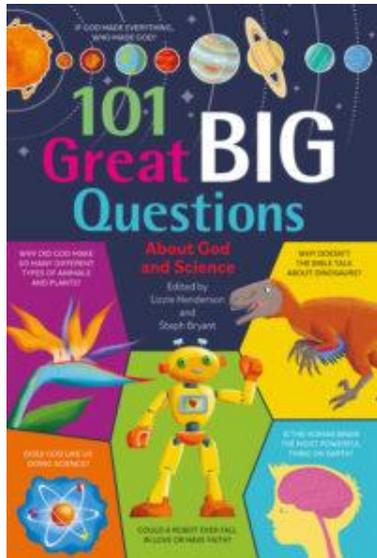


The west end of the high street in 1914 and 2008



Book Review

This month we review: 101 Great Big Questions



Have you ever wondered how the universe began, what the point of life might be, or whether God likes science? Then this is the book for you!

101 Great Big Questions asked by children with fascinating responses from leading experts in the areas of science, theology, philosophy and beyond! Explore questions about the universe from the Big Bang and beginnings to what might happen in the future.

Discover what the experts think about: could humans ever become mermaids? Do other animals have religions? Why the Bible doesn't mention dinosaurs? Could Jesus get out of a black hole? And does God like aliens?

Read personal stories from world class scientists and theologians about their experiences of exploring their own big questions about God, life, and the amazing universe we live in.

Perfect for budding scientists, theologians, and all those curious about the really big questions of life. This exciting question and answer-based book for 7+ year olds to explore key questions asked by children about science-faith interactions.

This review was taken from the Parish Pump. We'd much prefer to hear your reviews and recommendations. Please send them into magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk

Reader recipes

Sausages and Apples

Ingredients:-

- 4 pork sausages
- 2 small eating apples, cored, unpeeled, halved
- 1 Peeled large onion
- 9 ounces of black grapes in small clusters
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- Rosemary leaves from 2 sprigs
- 2 tsps of soft brown sugar
- 3 ½ fluid ounces of sherry



Method:-

1. Halve the onion and cut each half into 3 sections.
2. Put these, the apples and grapes into an ovenproof dish just large enough to take them comfortably.
3. Add 1 tbsp of olive oil, the rosemary and seasoning to the dish tossing them with fingers so they are lightly coated.
4. Spoon the sugar to the tops of the apple halves.
5. Pre heat oven to 190c, gas 5.
6. Heat the remaining oil in frying pan and fry sausages just enough to make them golden on each side.
7. Put sausages onto dish with fruit and pour over the sherry.
8. Put dish in oven and cook for 50 minutes, putting foil over it if sausages begin to burn.
9. Serve with mash or baked potato.

Thank you to Ian Archer for this recipe (photo for illustration purposes only – not actually Ian’s cooking). If you have a favourite recipe you’d like to share. Please send it to magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Tea and Service

On Sunday 5th June 2022 St Mark's Church will be holding an Afternoon Tea and an All-age Service to mark and celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. No other monarch has achieved this milestone in our country's history and so this is a time for thanksgiving to God and for celebration.



3.00pm Afternoon Tea in the Hall and Garden

4.30pm All-age Celebration and Thanksgiving Service in the Church

All are welcome at the Service which will be suitable for all ages as we come together as one church family.

Tickets for the Afternoon Tea should be ordered in advance from the Parish Office:

Single Ticket: £3.00

Family Ticket £7.50

During the Afternoon Tea, a Tree will be planted in the Hall Garden to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee.

CALENDAR FOR MAY 2022

Now that more services are taking place again in Church, this is our plan for May and June 2022 – subject to change at short notice so please check the details on our website or with the Parish Office.

Sunday 1st May

3rd Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Holy Communion – in Church and Online
4.00pm Family Service – in Church

Monday 2nd May

Wednesday 4th May

Thursday 5th May

St Philip and James

3.25pm T-Time Tales
12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Sunday 8th May

4th Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Holy Communion – in Church and Online

Wednesday 11th May

Thursday 12th May

3.25pm T-Time Tales

12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Saturday 14th May

St Matthias

Sunday 15th May

5th Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Holy Communion and APCM –
in Church and Online
4.00pm Messy Church

Wednesday 18th May

Thursday 19th May

3.25pm T-Time Tales

12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Sunday 22nd May

6th Sunday of Easter – Rogation Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Holy Communion – in Church and Online

Wednesday 25th May

Thursday 26th May

3.25pm T-Time Tales

Ascension Day

12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Sunday 29th May

7th Sunday of Easter

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Holy Communion – in Church and Online

Tuesday 31st May

The Visit of Mary to Elizabeth

CALENDAR FOR JUNE 2022

Thursday 2 nd June	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 5th June	Day of Pentecost 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Holy Communion – in Church and Online 3.00pm Afternoon Tea for the Platinum Jubilee 4.30pm All-age Jubilee Service – in Church
Wednesday 8 th June	3.25pm T-Time Tales
Thursday 9 th June	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Saturday 11th June	St Barnabas
Sunday 12th June	Trinity Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Holy Communion – in Church and Online
Wednesday 15 th June	3.25pm T-Time Tales
Thursday 16th June	Corpus Christi 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 19th June	1st Sunday after Trinity 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Holy Communion – in Church and Online 4.00pm Messy Church
Wednesday 22 nd June	3.25pm T-Time Tales
Thursday 23 rd June	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Friday 24th June	Birth of St John the Baptist
Sunday 26th June	2nd Sunday after Trinity 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Holy Communion – in Church and Online
Wednesday 29th June	St Peter and St Paul
Thursday 30 th June	3.25pm T-Time Tales 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Please remember that planned services are subject to change at short notice so please check the details on our website or with the Parish Office.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (AGM)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING
WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY 15 MAY 2022 AT THE 10.00AM SERVICE
FOLLOWED BY THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

VESTRY MEETING - AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 2021 Vestry Meeting
 2. Election of Churchwardens (2)
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ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING - AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 2021 APCM
3. Matters arising
4. A report on changes to the Electoral Roll
5. Election of Deputy Wardens (4)
6. Elections to the Deanery Synod (see note below)
7. Elections to the Parochial Church Council (see note below)
8. Chairman's Remarks and Presentation of the Annual Report
9. Fabric Report
10. The Treasurer's Report and the Accounts for 2021
11. Appointment of Independent Examiner
12. A report of the proceedings of the Deanery Synod
13. Any other business

Notes Item 6: There is 1 vacancy for a term of 1 year
 Item 7: There are 2 vacancies each for a term of 3 years

All persons whose names are entered upon the Church Electoral Roll of the Parish and all persons whose names are entered on a register of Local Government Electors by reason of such residence are entitled to attend and only those attending in person can vote at the Vestry Meeting.

ONLY persons whose names are entered upon the Church Electoral Roll and present at the Meeting are entitled to vote for members of the Parochial Church Council. Lay representatives to the Parochial Church Council MUST be at least 16 years of age and MUST have their name on the Electoral Roll. Nominations for any of the elections may be made at the meeting. The express consent of the proposed candidate is desirable, but not essential if, in the opinion of the Meeting, there is evidence of willingness to stand.

Honorary Secretary Saint Mark's Parochial Church Council April 2022

Gift Day at St Mark's – 15 May 2022

Our Annual Gift Day is an opportunity for you to make a one-off donation to the ongoing work of St Mark's and to the running costs of the church buildings. This year Our 'Gift Day' will coincide with the APCM on 15th May and is the launch of a time of annual giving as donations will be welcomed until the end of June.

In 2021 our church income was £210,000 with planned giving, collections and other donations representing approximately 50% of the income, rental income 20%, lettings 8% and other activities 9%. The balance of 13% came from Gift Day donations which last year totalled over £27,000 including Gift Aid. Weekly collections have reduced since the pandemic and we therefore rely on these one-off donations to cover our regular outgoings.

Looking ahead, St Mark's is committed to the Church of England target to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 with solar panels being installed in February at a cost of £26,500. This was funded from reserves. In the next few years further capital expenditure will be required to replace the ageing gas heating systems, to carry out building repairs outlined in the quinquennial inspection and essential work on the organ. Grants will be sought where possible, but the balance will need to come from church funds.

We appreciate that household expenses are rising, and that this is a difficult time for many of you, but please consider making a donation if you feel you are able to.

Thank you, Mel Crighton, PCC Treasurer

Please make donations by bank transfer to the following HSBC account

Name of Account - SAINT MARK, REIGATE

Sort Code 40 18 22 Account Number 72393263

(Please use 'Gift Day' as the reference and make sure to select 'Paying a Business')

Alternatively, cheques made payable to 'Saint Mark Reigate' can be brought to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Sunday 15 May or handed in to the church office in an envelope addressed to the treasurer.

If you are able to Gift Aid your donation the church will receive an additional 25%. If we do not already have a gift aid declaration from you [please complete this form](#) or ask the Office for a paper form.

A Different Life

For a first child, the birth was comparatively easy and thereafter the child seemed unusually content. But as the months, then years passed, his parents understood that he was going to be "backward." Decades later it would be called less hurtfully; "learning disabilities." For most of the time the child was unusually happy with a ready laugh and great affection towards mother, father and his older sister.

One day the stray cat wandered in tail high in the air examining closely the new home it had chosen. The boy welcomed the new visitor which seemed to behave as if it had known him before. So the boy got the job of feeding the cat at the same time each day and that seemed to help him tell the time. Whenever the cat came in from the garden it went straight to the boy and whenever the boy was sitting down there was the cat. His mother had thought cats did not like their paws touched but the boy could ever so gently stroke the back of the small padded foot and the cat would purr contentedly. Then, also with great care, the cat would use the padded paw to stroke the boy's face. Together they were so relaxed and became great friends.

For the first years the boy went to a special school but that was cut. His parents could not afford the replacement private nursery so he went to the local infants school. The current advice, well received by politicians, was that it was better for the child to be with normal children than in a special institution. That was also much cheaper, though the teacher still had thirty-four in her class and no time for extras. So he went to the infants school in a class where he was two years older than the rest. His mates varied. Some were kind and understanding, others got delight from teasing him. But he was unreasonably good natured and when they were laughing at him he was often laughing with them.

The boy had an older sister eleven years his senior. She had done well at Junior school both academically and at sport. She had played for the boys' team at both cricket and football. She loved her little brother and played with him frequently. His slow development seemed not to affect their mutual understanding.

When he was eight the long summer holiday stretched ahead and his father got out what seemed like a roll of old cloth but which held twenty very sharp carving chisels. With great patience the father showed the boy how to hold the chisels safely and for the various ways to carve and, unlike many children, the boy was unusually attentive taking great pleasure from the sight and feel of curls of wood turning away from the sharp, probing point of his chisel or with harder wood, a chip bouncing across his bench. Quite soon he was relief carving small figures such as a rabbit or small bird. He could be left for hours with his tongue curling out the side of his mouth, first copying some animal picture onto the wood, then "raising" it up, shaping by carving

away the surrounding wood. His father made him his own bench in the little shed and installed an electric heater for when it was cold.

One day there was a knock at the front door. The boy found a policewoman on the step and ran to his mother. What had he done wrong? The two women spoke in lowered tones and then came into the kitchen and suddenly they were wound together as the policewoman comforted his mother. The father had been killed in a road accident.

Over the next few days the boy realised he would never see his father again and was very quiet and desperately sad and lonely. His mother was in shock and anguished but she also knew that their lives were changed for ever. From now on money would be very short. She would have to go out to work. Help with the boy would be necessary until she got home each day. He would be more on his own.

His sister was equally affected by the death of her father but she put her grief into looking after her confused little brother, reaching down to play in ways he understood. She encouraged him in his carving which was now taking up much of his time and helped with his attempts to read.

Social Services in the form of a rather austere young woman who took so many particulars and made so many provisos, but underneath she did her best and somehow they got by. At first the mother worked part-time but then she landed quite a good office job with regular hours and life assumed a new pattern.

School was not a success. The boy made no real progress. What other children picked up with ease seemed beyond him and more and more he found ways to stay at home and spend his time in the shed with his chisels. He was in his teens now and outside of the normal passage of life, pursuing his obsession with carving so that the shelf in the sitting room had dozens of much loved figures dominating the room.

Meanwhile his sister had flourished at school. It was not so much that learning came easy to her but she had developed an interest in all her subjects whether science, arts or French and so she put in the effort. She had also represented her school in hockey and netball and was amongst those learning to play cricket. She now was away at University studying Maths and Physics and still enjoyed her hockey but now less seriously.

By chance the social worker allocated to the family, lived in the next street. Her hobby was painting and although her canvases were mediocre she had a good understanding of the capacity of art to express feelings and moral standards. She often called in and got on well with the young man who she treated as an equal and greatly admired his carvings which, through long application, now were quite remarkable and they used to talk at length about that and what he was attempting to portray both in the actions of animals and the stance of people at work.

The university breaks were the highlight for the family. The daughter brought happiness with her though she had to spend most of her time either on study or doing a holiday Job. Her study results were very encouraging and she was beginning to think about taking a further degree.

Unhappily, their mother developed a persistent cough and made frequent visits to the doctors. By now she was close friends with the social worker who was very concerned, and they had many long talks about the future. After a long time at home, and a much-shrunken figure low in her bed, she finally died. The young man was devastated and for some time felt desperately isolated.

His mother's will provided for the house to be given to the social worker who was also to have legal care of the young man. So she sold her own house and moved in and paid off the mortgage. The young man now had a great hole in his life and though he got on well with his carer he was less full of fun and that was reflected in his art.

The daughter had achieved an Upper Second in her degree subjects and a PhD in physics, married a fellow student and was now dividing her busy time between teaching, further research and sharing the running of her own home. Their home was heavily mortgaged but she managed a small monthly sum towards the maintenance of her brother and his carer.

The social worker, now retired, had previously spent much of her spare time on her hobby of painting and always attended an art class. This brought her into contact with the Principal of the art college and her understanding nature helped develop a sound relationship with the Principal who had many social as well as psychological problems with his students. Of those students few showed any real promise and that was not very rewarding for his staff.

Now the Principal had two years to retirement and a teenaged son who specialised in philosophy and politics and a daughter who wanted to study maths and business studies. His wife was also of an artistic background and he used to ask her where their children had got their interests from. "Not me, certainly!" he said. However, he was very proud of them and it would be costly on his pension to put them through university, but he was determined that he would do it. He planned to return to painting and hoped to supplement his pension by selling some. But how should he go about that? He decided he needed to sell where the money was and that was the USA. Next what was the most popular subject?

By chance an American Art consultant came to his college as part of a visit to English art education. He himself had been a promising artist but had changed to an art agent for more money; representing artists and selling their work. He was well aware of the rich markets.

The Principal had heard of the woodcarver and when the American art agent came he took him on a visit which gave him a relaxed opportunity to question him on what

subjects sold well and the way to sell his future paintings in the States. The agent was far from impressed by the Principal's paintings but when they went to the carver's workshop he immediately recognised its quality and the potential. He offered high sums for some of the carvings but the carver, now of a mature age, simply stared at him, not really understanding and declining to respond. Looking at the carvings displayed in the sitting-room the agent was even more impressed and surreptitiously slipped one of the best into his pocket. Back in the US he made enquiries and arranged for the carving to be used to form a mould from which plaster images could exactly reflect the detail of the carving and what is more they could be produced cheaply by the dozen. Carefully he controlled their display and marketing to find high prices were paid for what were really only plaster imitations, but it was hard to tell that. He must get hold of more of this work.

The Principal too had been impressed by the carver for quite different reasons. He thought the young man might be able to communicate the connections between art and emotions and ethics to his students, most of whom were still wet behind the ears. He arranged through the social worker for the carver to visit his college each month and show his work to staff and selected students. The carver had great difficulty in expressing himself, but used examples of his carvings to show the concepts and emotions he was trying to communicate. He really enjoyed the contact with the young people. They were lively and full of enthusiasm. They began to understand the depth of art. The sculpture students were especially impressed with the way he chose the kind of wood from which he worked and they realised many of his ideas could be incorporated into sculpture. Most students were also impressed both by the underlying meanings and the standard of craft in his carvings. The young man became part of the curriculum and was paid a fee which went into the household purse. One young woman student got into conversation with the social worker and she was invited to see the workshop.

When the young woman visited he was engaged in a particularly difficult carving and she sat holding her breath as he so patiently and gently eased the wood away across the grain. They were able to talk happily afterwards and she found a great desire to try to emulate his work. He understood that and was smiling now, sharing in her enthusiasm. She began tentatively to chip away using his father's old bench. The social worker was delighted to see that he now had another friend.

The American agent returned, but in spite of encouragement from the Principal, the carver remained uninterested. The social worker watched all this and smiled. They simply could not understand his values and the last thing she wanted was for him to be upset from his chosen way of life. He was much happier now.

The young woman was a good, devoted student and learned quickly, but she realised she would never have his concepts, skill and patience. At first, she treasured her carvings and like him had no intention of selling them, but as time went on she needed the money for living and through the Principal, now retired, sold some to the American. But she was also worldly wise and under the guidance of the Principal,

drove hard bargains. Nevertheless, she was appalled when she found out that her work was being turned into mass produced plaster images and stopped using him.

On the other hand, so keen was the American to maintain the contacts that he opened up an avenue for sales of the Principal's paintings who now had cash for his children's education and still some left over to finance Mediterranean holidays. He and his wife so enjoyed the sunny warm climate, the pastel colours of so many of the ancient buildings and most of all the relaxed feeling as he swam effortlessly through the mellow waters.

The years passed. The carver enjoyed his visits to the students who soon adapted to his way of talking and he enhanced their understanding of how to express their art. The young woman improved and had her own studio but often preferred to squeeze into the cramped shed to talk to and learn more from the man. The social worker, now retired, also enjoyed the atmosphere of the house which to her felt full of creative enthusiasm and promise. She was well content with her painting.

The daughter was now well settled into academic life and had two small children of her own. Twice a year the whole family descended on her brother for short stays and the young man greatly enjoyed those holidays with his sister and small nieces.

The young man shared a short holiday on the wild coast of North Wales with his live-in carer who spent her days painting. One evening she painted a dramatic sunset over a calm sea. She felt the young man watching her patiently and her thoughts turned to that young woman who had died so tragically and missed the lives of her son and daughter. The beautiful sunset was mixed with sadness.

An art critic saw the carer's painting in a local exhibition and stood for a long while contemplating the colourful sunset reflected over the sea. There was a depth of both rainbow colour and peacefulness which was very rare. He arranged for it to be exhibited at a London showing and it was widely acclaimed. When interviewed for the BBC she admitted the scene came from an evening view at the wild, mid-Welsh coast, the dying sun reflected over the sea. She had shared the experience with her "friend," as she called him. "It was not just the view," she said, "but the peace which flowed from my companion. I think that is what many people would like to achieve in their lives. They strive for security, comfort, drink, take drugs and buy things they hope will bring them tranquillity and happiness, but that man seems to have brought happiness with him from his birth. It has carried him through all his many difficult and sad experiences. He takes a simple joy from the chance of living and passes it on."

Harry Ingram

Puzzles

May Sudoku Puzzle

	3	7	1	8		4		
2				9	3	7		
5			2			6		
	5		8		6		2	
8		2	5		4	3		6
	7		9		2		5	
		3			8			9
		5	4	2				3
		4		5	1	2	6	

April Solution

2	5	7	6	4	8	1	3	9
8	6	1	3	9	2	5	4	7
3	4	9	1	5	7	6	8	2
4	9	6	7	8	3	2	5	1
7	8	5	2	1	4	9	6	3
1	2	3	5	6	9	4	7	8
6	3	2	4	7	1	8	9	5
9	1	4	8	3	5	7	2	6
5	7	8	9	2	6	3	1	4

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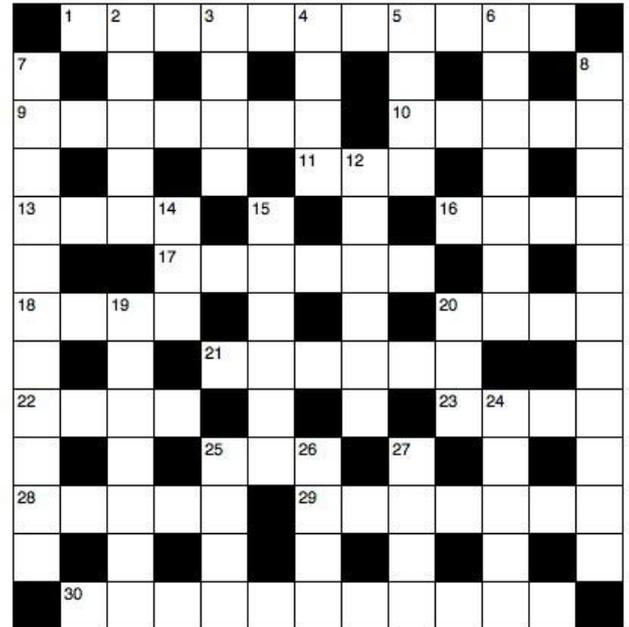
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May Crossword

Biblical references are from the New International Version

Across

- 1 Overpowered (Deuteronomy 11:4) (11)
- 9 'The — are mantled with corn' (Psalm 65:13) (7)
- 10 'Each man—a sword to his side' (Exodus 32:27) (5)
- 11 On the death of Jesus the curtain in the temple was torn from— to bottom (Matthew 27:51) (3)
- 13 Stagger (Isaiah 28:7) (4)
- 16 'Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought—and doesn't do it, sins' (James 4:17) (2,2)
- 17 Stir up or provoke (Acts 13:50) (6)
- 18 Burden (Luke 11:46) (4)
- 20 'As far as the east is from the—, so far has he removed our transgressions from us' (Psalm 103:12) (4)
- 21 Sign (Luke 23:38) (6)
- 22 'After that, Jesus poured water into a basin and began to—his disciples' feet' (John 13:5) (4)
- 23 The nature of the seven ears of corn which swallowed up the good ears in Pharaoh's dream (Genesis 41:23) (4)
- 25 Has(anag.) (3)
- 28 'This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth,— sons' (Genesis 10:1) (5)
- 29 'I will...make them drunk, so that they...sleep for—and— awake' (Jeremiah 51:39) (4,3)
- 30 Paul said of him, 'he often refreshes me and is not ashamed of my chains' (2 Timothy 1:16) (11)



Down

- 2 Worth (Matthew 13:46) (5)
- 3 'A bruised — he will not break' (Matthew 12:20) (4)
- 4 'Suddenly a great company of the heavenly — appeared with the angel' (Luke 2:13) (4)
- 5 Slip (anag.) (4)
- 6 'Take an awl and push it through his — — into the door, and he will become your servant for life' (Deuteronomy 15:17) (3,4)
- 7 Bountiful (2 Corinthians 8:2) (11)
- 8 'Therefore, as we have —, let us do good to all people' (Galatians 6:10) (11)
- 12 Acquire (2 Timothy 2:10) (6)
- 14 Container cover (Numbers 19:15)(3)
- 15 'He...became obedient to death, even death on—!' (Philippians 2:8) (1,5)
- 19 Refrain(1 Peter 2:11) (7)
- 20 'She began to—his feet with her tears'(Luke 7:38) (3)
- 24 One who worships Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva (5)
- 25 'Give to everyone who—you' (Luke 6:30) (4)
- 26 'I lift up my eyes to the hills; where does my—come from?' (Psalm 121:1) (4)
- 27 One of those whom the Lord said would be taken from Jerusalem and Judah as judgment on them (Isaiah 3:2) (4)

April Solution

ACROSS: 1 Womb 3 Agnostic 9 Long ago 10 Fleet 11 Horeb 12 Yellow 14 Deceitfulness 17 Banish 19 Towel 22 Boils 23 Inferno 24 Eternity 25 Defy
DOWN: 1 Will hide 2 Minor 4 Glory of Christ 5 Offal 6 The Robe 7 City 8 Zabbai 13 Psalmody 15 Chalice 16 Let off 18 If son 20 Worse 21 Able



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