

TOGETHER

The FREE magazine from the Diocese of Rochester | Issue 2 | Spring 2019

GROW | ENRICH | RESOURCE

COVER STORY: INVITING THE HOLY SPIRIT ON BOARD | PAGE 8



YOUTH MENTAL
HEALTH

LIVING
LENT

CROSSING
BOUNDARIES

www.rochester.anglican.org



Everyone has a vocation.
Find yours.



it's your calling

A day to explore how God may be calling you.

11 May | 5 October | 2019

Speak to your local clergy or visit

www.rochester.anglican.org/ministry/vocations/its-your-calling/



CONTENTS

You could say we have almost made it, as the dark nights start to ebb away and signs of new life begin to burst around us.

So, as we look ahead, our centre-spread and **Headspace** sections are devoted to the seasons of Lent and Easter - the most important times in the Christian year.

Here you'll find practical tips, music reviews and resources to inspire you, however you wish to reflect and reconnect with God at this time.

We have inspiring stories too. In **Focus On** we have the Tall Ship in Chatham taking faith out to sea, and the church whose simple idea has led to a big welcome.

And what should our response be to the mental health crisis facing our young people? Turn to our **Big Issue** to find out.

With Spring in the air, if you have a moment, why not share a prayer (back cover) for God's creation?

We love to hear your feedback, so get in touch. All our details are below.

Jennifer Ross
Communications Officer

Editor: Jennifer Ross
jennifer.ross@rochester.anglican.org

In-house design:
Katerina Gerhardt

Design: CPO

Print: CPO

Front cover: Alex Coakley,
Executive Director, Morning Star Trust

Deadline for next edition:
19 April 2019

To discuss copy quantities or delivery,
please contact communications@rochester.anglican.org

FIND US:

@CofERochester

@SeeofRochester



WWW.ROCHESTER.ANGLICAN.ORG



5



12



24



26

INSIDE TRACK

4-7 Latest news

FOCUS ON

8 Morning Star

12 Friendships Overseas

HEAD SPACE

18 The Big Issue:
Youth Mental Health

20 Resources:
Lent books

21 Reviews: Easter music

DON'T MISS

22 Top 10 Upcoming events

PEOPLE

24 One to one: Sarah Rawlinson

26 Faith voices: Angela King

CHURCHES THAT LIKE TO SAY 'YES' TO THE COMMUNITY

Just over 900 social action projects across Medway, north west Kent and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley, have had some form of involvement from their local Church of England church, according to new figures.

From food banks and toddler groups, to community cafes and night shelters, of the 233 churches in the Diocese of Rochester who responded to the 2017 Statistics for Mission report, 93% are involved in one or more form of social action; this is compared to 80% nationally.

Caroline Clarke, Community Engagement Advisor for the Diocese of Rochester, who supports many churches with their outreach says:

"It's so exciting to see Rochester Diocese leading the way. I'm so humble and proud to be working with Church and community leaders who say 'Yes'."

Leaders like the Rev Canon Jim Stewart from St James, Tunbridge Wells who chairs the Tunbridge

Wells Winter Night Shelter. Running until early March, up to 11 churches in the town from all denominations, take turns each night to provide homeless people with shelter throughout the Winter.

Jim says "The shelter has been working with the local authority and others to help people into accommodation in order to reduce the numbers who need to attend a shelter."

Food banks were the most commonly supported type of social action project, with 76% of churches locally supporting food banks in some way; with volunteers or donations, and often in partnership with other organisations.

Responding to the figures, the Bishop of Rochester, the Rt Rev James Langstaff, said:

"This work is right at the heart of how we understand God's calling to us. Our vision is of nothing less than a world transformed through the love of Jesus."

MISSIONAL PROPERTY FUND

Many churches are historic buildings and require lots of time and money to maintain. Funding is also needed to help re-imagine them in ways that make them welcoming and accessible places for the whole community.

The Missional Property Fund, established with support from Marshall's Charity, has been created to help churches in the Diocese realise their aspirations to support their communities.

Applications for this year need to be in by July 2019. For more details about how to apply, visit www.rochester.anglican.org/resources/missional-property-fund/



DELIGHT AS ACADEMY EXPANDS

Two community schools from Rye have been welcomed into the Bromley-based Aquinas C of E Education Trust; meaning it now operates across two geographical areas. CEO Kathy Griffiths says: "We hope to show that, irrespective of area, school designation or level of challenge, effective education is truly transformational."



SHELL LOADS TO CELEBRATE

Members of St Peter and St Paul, Farningham are celebrating completing a four-year journey together, exploring Christian beliefs, the Bible and Christian worship, using the Pilgrim course booklet. Home Group members received a tile in the shape of a scallop-shell - a traditional symbol of pilgrimage - in recognition of their efforts.



KNITTING FOR DEMENTIA

Creativity is being used for a good cause at St Mary's Church, Hadlow, with the knitters and crafters of the Café Plus club creating twiddle muffs for dementia patients. These are then distributed to local care homes and hospitals. Look out for Dementia Awareness week coming up from 20 to 25 May.



HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR SHARES STORY

Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss shared her story of betrayal, loss and survival in a series of video interviews with the Bishop of Tonbridge, as part of an exhibition at St Margaret's Church, Rainham to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. Each powerful interview can be watched online at: www.facebook.com/pg/rainhamchurch/videos/



TUNBRIDGE WELLS NIGHT SHELTER



SPENDING MORE THAN JUST A PENNY

How one church has been revo-loo-tionising its town's thinking on sanitation

It all began last year, when St Mark's Church, Biggin Hill, decided to collect for the charity Toilet Twinning - a water and sanitation initiative.

Mark Newman, who is a Reader and Evangelist at the church and chairs their Outreach and Mission committee, said it seemed such a simple idea:

"We asked people to put money aside throughout Lent which they could then bring in at the end. For £60 you can 'twin' a toilet at your church, workplace, or in your own home. The money then goes to fund a toilet in another part of the world."

By the end of the 40 days, the congregation had raised enough to twin their 5 church toilets, providing four latrines in Guatemala, Myanmar, Uganda and the Central African Republic, and a whole block of toilets in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

But they didn't stop there. Flush from their success, they used the Biggin Hill Festival during the summer as a launch for their campaign to make Biggin Hill a Toilet Twinned Town.

"For this, we needed at least 20 twinned toilets across a variety of buildings open to the public, for example cafés, restaurants, shops, leisure centres, schools and churches."

Local councillors gave their support in promoting the scheme to businesses and by mid-January they had reached their goal of 23 twinned toilets, qualifying Biggin Hill a Toilet Twinned Town!

Mark says that the unexpected spin-off for the church has been the connection with the community: "We have developed some good relations with local people we would not otherwise have met. As a continuation we aim to do some school assemblies and also encourage individuals to twin."



THE EGG THAT SHARES THE EASTER STORY



Original (RRP £3.99)

The 2019 plastic free design includes a large 24 page Easter story-activity book, a prize competition and a super thick milk chocolate egg (150g) with a lovely creamy taste. 35% cocoa - Palm Oil free.

Dark (RRP £5.50)

Inside this plastic free dark chocolate edition of The Real Easter Egg you will find a simple Easter guide and an Easter sharing book, 3 dark chocolate Mini Squares (3x5g) and a luxury smooth dark chocolate egg (165g).

Special Edition (RRP £9.99)

Inside this specially crafted edition you will find a simple guide to Easter, a bookmark/keepsake made by disabled craft artisans in India, an orange milk chocolate bar (80g), and a luxury milk chocolate egg (200g). 35% cocoa - Palm Oil free.

A chance to share the good news

Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in this part of the world every year, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and supports charitable projects.

2019 campaign - we need your help

To date, more than one million eggs have been sold with 750,000 sent through the post directly to churches and schools. The rest have been sold through retailers and supermarkets.

The success of The Real Easter Egg has meant that the production of Fairtrade chocolate has moved to the UK. Over £275,000 has been raised from sales for charitable causes.

New Design Easter Story

A 24 page Easter story-activity book illustrated by Martina Peluso is included in the Original and Dark eggs.



Buy Now Online or In-Store*

The whole range can be ordered online at www.realeasteregg.co.uk or from Traidcraft, Eden.co.uk, TLMtrading.com, Embrace the Middle East and Redemptorist Publications. Christian bookshops and some cathedrals also have stock.

TESCO

Morrisons
Since 1859

ASDA

Waitrose



National Real Easter Egg Hunt

This year there is a chance to reach out to the wider community by taking part in the National Real Easter Egg Hunt using our Sharing Box. See www.realeasteregg.co.uk

See the full shop list or order at www.realeasteregg.co.uk



INVITING THE HOLY SPIRIT ON BOARD:

Youth ministry at sea with Morning Star

It's a freezing cold day down at Chatham Docks. But against the steely-grey stillness of the sky there is a buzz of activity, as five volunteers busily sand and clean the hull and deck of a 62ft yacht, keeping themselves warm at the same time.

She's called Morning Star of Revelation and is the pride of the Morning Star Trust.

A Christian organisation, they offer people from a variety of backgrounds the opportunity to head out to sea and come face-to-face with nature and the challenges it can bring.

"People often find that being 'away from it all' on the boat causes them to think more deeply about life and the issues it throws up," says Alex Coakley, Executive Director, and a member of the congregation of Christ Church, Luton in Chatham.

"On and off the boat, all our staff are Christians, and so they're happy to talk about faith if and when it seems right in those moments.

"Sometimes just a simple act of saying Grace before a meal can be the starter for a lot of questions."

While the Trust has traditionally worked with groups as diverse as homeless people to boarding schools, Alex is helping the Trust get back to its founding roots, by focusing their efforts on offering the Morning Star experience particularly to young people and church youth groups:

"We began in 1972 when our founder, Physics teacher, Tim Millward, followed a call to build a boat

that would take young people to sea to learn about themselves, Jesus and the world."

Tim spent the next 9 years, in his evenings, weekends and holidays, building Morning Star by hand in an old warehouse in East London.

Alex says being on Morning Star is special:

"You can achieve more for people in 6 nights on board Morning Star than you can perhaps over 6 months within a traditional youth group setting.

"We want to use Morning Star to encourage young people to live life to the full, no matter what their background. Privileged or disadvantaged. With faith or without. This is about growing the leaders of the future, for the Church and for the country, and giving people the chance to turn their lives around."

Alex says what happens on board is often quite miraculous and can't really be explained:

"People often find that being 'away from it all' on the boat causes them to think more deeply about life and the issues it throws up"

"It's great being in a friendly environment where conversations about God and praying for each other are the norm."

"When you're sat underneath a clear night's sky, people will often turn to you and say, 'there has to be more to this?' or 'why are you a Christian?' and it just starts the conversation."

He mentions a time when, on one trip, seven of the eleven people on board became Christians while at sea. What's behind experiences like that?

Morning Star has been awarded Maritime and Coastguard Agency Sail Training Vessel of 2019.

"If you look at what young people are up against these days, coming on board is a bit of a leveller and we all become equals. No-one knows each other or how to sail. The Instagram worthy life no longer needs to be important and so people can reinvent themselves. Hopefully when

they go home, they can keep some of that with them."

Back down at the dockside, Rebecca is one of the hardy souls who, muffled against the cold with thick hat and sailor's jumper, is preparing the Tall Ship for the next season of sailing.

She's currently on one of the Trust's gap year programmes, which sees her involved in all aspects of care for both the boat and the young people who come on board. It also connects her to a local church where she gets stuck in where needed, mostly playing drums in the worship band:

"So far I've gained a plethora of knowledge about boat maintenance and I've found that my confidence has grown the more I have learnt."

"It's great being in a friendly environment where conversations about God and praying for each other are the norm. I'm looking forward to the beginning of the sailing season when I can share my faith more and hopefully impact the lives of the young people that sail onboard."



If you are a church, why not try to apply for a grant from the Children and Young People's Fund to support a voyage for your young people?
www.rochester.anglican.org/under18s/children-and-young-people-cyp-fund/

The next closing dates for applications to the fund are 8 March and 14 June, 2019

Bookings are available now and Morning Star Trust is offering a special 15% discount on 2019 voyages for all Together readers using the Promo Code: ROCH2019. Visit: www.mst.org.uk

FRIENDSHIPS OVERSEAS

Across the world, a vibrant network of links between parishes, churches and dioceses is busily at work. It's thanks to the Companion Links scheme of the Anglican family of churches - known as the Anglican Communion.

The men's fellowship group from St Lawrence Bidborough, recently embarked on a visit to the town of Kibagwa in Tanzania, with whom their church has a close connection thanks to the Companionship scheme here in the Diocese. It's had a huge impact on them and the community at home.

'It's a bit of squeeze to get six strapping specimens of mankind, plus Abdullah our driver into our Toyota Land Cruiser,' reads one blog post.

'But we just about manage and rejoice at the opportunity of getting to know each other even more. Still, it's a lovely car, it has air conditioning, and a radio, which might stop Graham singing. We can only hope. We settle in for our long road trip...'

Reflecting on the blog compiled during their trip, Graham Wilkinson, lay leader of the Men of

Bidborough fellowship group says that all those who went to Tanzania, received much more than they gave:

"Wherever we went during the week, people stopped what they were doing to accompany us, prepare meals and just talk with us. We made strong friendships with our hosts and the communication is ongoing."

The link with the town in Tanzania has grown-up through the church over the last 9 years. The aim of the trip was therefore to help nurture their bonds of friendship, to see how a number of the activities jointly sponsored by the parish are faring, and deliver a range of equipment, from laptops to netballs, to various projects:

"It was so encouraging to see how this community-to-community link is so valued by the people there," says Graham, "We visited the local primary school and the Headmaster's office walls were just covered with photos of Bidborough Primary School."

"We also met children at the Compassion Project, a global organisation that strives to help children achieve through education and pastoral care.

The Diocese of Rochester enjoys flourishing links with Anglican communities in Harare in Zimbabwe, and Kondoa and Mpwapwa in Tanzania and a friendship link with the Evangelical Estonian Lutheran Church

There was a poignant moment when one of our group, Andy, met for the first time the child he has been sponsoring for the last few years."

Other highlights included a day spent repairing 'broken' computers – which meant blowing out loads of red dust, replacing the batteries and clearing hundreds of viruses.

All involved are clear that the priority for the link should be about joint working between Kibagwa and Bidborough on projects that empower people in the town to support themselves. The opportunities for spiritual and cultural learning are vital too:

"The church services we experienced were amazing!" says Graham. "Before reaching one service at 7am we heard the beautiful singing of 300 voices, and there was dancing – as well as personal witness.

"During the offering, everyone flew to the front to give their offering. One man came forward with a bag of cement to help with the new church building!"

Visiting has made it much easier for all involved to

build a picture of how they might journey forward together.

And, for those who could not go, the Men of Bidborough have come back inspired to share their experience and get people involved: "It was a life changing experience. And the link is about more than fundraising ... it is about building friendship and understanding of each other's communities and culture."

To find out more about forming a friendship with a parish in one of our Companion Dioceses, please get in touch with Mike Fawcett, Companion Diocese Link Coordinator email- coordinator.cdsg@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW?

The Diocese has an annual fundraising appeal called the Poverty and Hope Appeal. It supports projects in the UK and abroad that help eradicate poverty in all its forms. One of this year's projects is Anglican Relief & Development in Zimbabwe (ARDeZ); they tackle HIV stigma in our Companion Diocese of Harare and across Zimbabwe.

Find out more about the appeal at www.rochester.anglican.org/poverty-amp-hope/poverty-hope-new.php and request to receive the 2019 launch material from povertyandhope@gmail.com.



Lent is the 40 days that we remember Jesus spent in the wilderness, facing challenge and temptation. It is the most important time of the Christian year, and when we reflect on God's purpose for our life. Traditionally it has been a time of fasting, or for 'giving up' something.

How might you journey through Lent this year?

Here are some ideas you might like to try and some thoughts you shared with us.

"Half an hour in the garden a day. It is penitential when the weather is bad, but also makes you focus on getting rid of the weeds in your life and nurturing the fruitful aspects. And at the end of it you have a beautiful garden ready for summer!"

GET COLOURFUL Grab your pens and pencils and remind yourself that colouring is not just for kids. Bible art journaling and colouring have become popular ways to reflect creatively on Scripture. Try the book 'Colouring Lent'. (ISBN-13: 978-0827205475)

*When I wake up on Easter Sunday morning,
how would I like to be different?*

Count your blessings:

Give up your morning coffee from the café and put your savings into a jar. Donate what you collect at the end to a good cause. Take a look at Water Aid's Jars of Change Appeal (www.wateraid.org/uk/get-involved/fundraising/lent-appeal-jars-of-change)

LIVE GENEROUSLY

Let people go ahead of you all day, clear up after someone else's lunch at work or school. 40acts is a generosity challenge for Lent created by UK Christian charity, Stewardship. Sign up for daily challenges at www.40acts.org.uk/

“My favourite ways in recent years have been to do a prayer walk, do a secret good turn, set an alarm to pray in the day. It feels helpful to do things as part of a wider initiative and to be able to swap notes with others.”

CONNECT WITH TEXT

Why not commit to spend time reading the Bible each day, or even a series of books with a Christian message like the Chronicles of Narnia? Check out the Bible Society's array of resources and online tools: www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/

GET APPY Join the Church of England's #LentPilgrim campaign. Sign up for regular prayers or download the app for daily reflections. Visit: www.churchofengland.org/lent

"...Stop, Look, Listen, Serve and Pray. Smell the damp air, be more aware...see something nice about the people you see every day and tell them... Listen more, talk less... do something for others – take a neighbour's dog for a walk...pray and connect with God."

Tread more lightly on the earth

Reduce your use of plastic. Buy a bamboo toothbrush or why not use a bar of soap during Lent? Follow the Plastic Free Challenge www.churchofengland.org/environment

Check out some ideas for good reads this Lent in our Resources section on page 20

BEING A PLACE OF WELCOME

It's often said that the simplest ideas are the best, and for those involved in the first 'Place of Welcome' in Medway, it couldn't be truer.

'Place of Welcome' is a national initiative which is committed to seeing every neighbourhood offer a place for people to find a friendly face, a cup of tea and a conversation if and when they need it.

From community centres and libraries, to mosques and temples, churches are among the 200 places across the UK, that have taken-up the opportunity to become part of the network.

"It started with the simple idea of being able to offer decent tea and cake, but it's now blossomed into so much more," says Sharon Copestake, vicar of St Francis of Assisi Church in Strood, where the café meets every Tuesday.

Since its initial launch last September, the café now

includes a pop-up furniture shop run by Emmaus Medway, offering low cost or free second-hand furniture to anyone who needs it, and a toddler group.

"It made us realise there were many other areas of our church life where we could think about our welcome. So one development has been a weekly service called 'Belong', which is tailored for those with learning difficulties."

A quick look at the church's Facebook page bears this commitment to welcome; 'Come as you are' says one post, 'You're Invited' beams the message on their profile picture.

But isn't every church that offers tea and coffee, or opens up its doors a 'place of welcome'?

"Well of course" says Sharon, "but by being part of this network it means we are all on the same page. We recognise certain values that we think are

the minimum needed to offer a consistent welcome."

Indeed, the five 'Ps' of the network, exist to ensure visitors can rely on the welcome they will receive, and that volunteers are not chained to their teapots, but are empowered and available to talk and actively listen to all who come.

With a further Place of Welcome due to open at St Augustine,

OVER 9 MILLION
ADULTS* IN THE UK
ARE EITHER ALWAYS OR
OFTEN LONELY.

*BRITISH RED CROSS

Gillingham in April, the concept is clearly gaining appeal. However, Sharon says every situation is unique:

"This is not to say that we have all the answers or are doing it the 'right way'. But while St Francis has always been an important part of the community, we felt this was the next step for us in offering the whole area a place to meet that is warm and friendly; a place where people can come with friends or come alone."

Find out more at
www.placesofwelcome.org.uk

THE FIVE 'P's OF A PLACE OF WELCOME

PLACE An accessible and hospitable building, open at the same time every week

PEOPLE Open to everyone regardless of their circumstances or situation, and staffed by volunteers

PRESENCE A place where people actively listen to one another

PROVISION Offering free refreshments (at least a cup of tea and a biscuit) and basic local information

PARTICIPATION Every person will bring talents, experiences and skills that they may be willing to share locally



VOLUNTEERS AT THE CAFE

MENTAL HEALTH – ARE WE READY TO ‘SHOW UP’ FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?’

With mental health services in crisis, Ian Soars, Chief Executive of Fegans, an independent Christian charity offering professional children’s counselling and parent support services in the South East, London and Oxfordshire, asks whether Christians are ready to step-up to the plate to support our young people.

“Reading headlines like “Vulnerable children facing ‘catastrophe’ over crisis-hit councils” (BBC, 4 August 2018) or announcements like “Poor mental health has become part and parcel of childhood for many children” (Anne Longfield, Children’s Commissioner) would cause any right-thinking reader to pause for thought.

Indeed, the concerned reader might dig a little and find that 1 in 8 children have a diagnosable mental health disorder, rising to 1 in 5 girls aged 15...and the numbers are escalating.

In my job I have watched as Directors of Children’s Services have confessed to me that they are not sleeping because of the horrific funding cuts they are being obliged to implement; I have seen Heads of Early Help cry in front of their teams as they confess to being overwhelmed.

A non-governmental intervention needs to be found quickly and I believe the Christian Church is fundamental to it if we do so in a Godly and public way.

Christians have responded nationally in such a way in the past. For example, Wilberforce used the idea of Christian equality before God to argue for emancipation of slaves. A group of vicars considered the abuse of children an outrage, so they formed the NSPCC. Dr Barnardo, Lord

Shaftesbury, James Fegan and others, moved by Christian compassion, founded children’s homes.

The Church has an opportunity, in partnership with the State, to respond to this need in a stunning way. It has powerful social assets that the Government can no longer afford: it is present in every town, its people are motivated, local and engaged, it has buildings, services and expertise...and its second greatest commandment is to ‘love its neighbour’.

What if, under the guidance and responsible oversight of the statutory services, vulnerable families at point of breakdown were referred to the local church marriage course? Or vulnerable teenagers to the youth minister? Or hurting children to caring youth groups?

In our work of counselling children and supporting vulnerable parents, Fegans does exactly this; we abide by statutory requirements whilst working with local churches. We have proved that Christian agencies, working in Christian churches, can resolve the most complex of needs in partnership with our statutory referrers. The fundamental question is whether Church and State are prepared to do this nationally and comprehensively?

I believe that the Church, as a corporate body, is being called to God’s purpose to love the vulnerable, to be bold, to build and to pray. I believe, just like the prophet Elijah did, that our nation watches silently to see what happens if we, as a body, show up for it”.

Find out more at www.fegans.org.uk

Fegans have produced a booklet called **Headspace** designed to open up conversations with young people and encourage self-help strategies. Available for £5.

Visit: www.fegans.org.uk/headspace

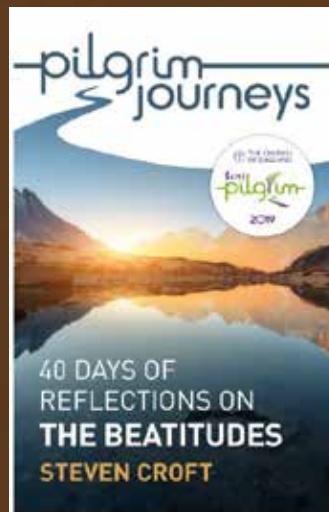
HEADSPACE



Give yourself a good read this Lent with these resources that will guide, challenge and help you deepen your relationship with God.

PILGRIM JOURNEYS: THE BEATITUDES

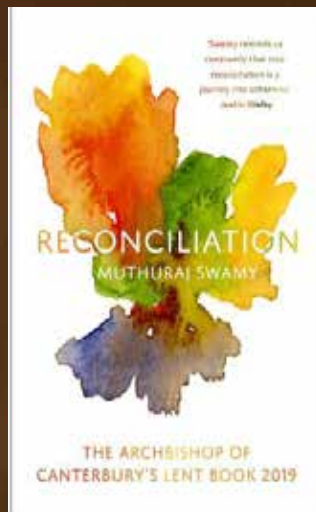
Author: Bishop Steven Croft
ISBN-13: 9781781401118
From £2.99



Focused on the eight, 'Blessed are the...' teachings of Jesus known as the Beatitudes, this year's offering from the Church of England, provides a short reflection on a Bible reading, an invitation to pray and a suggestion of how one might respond to the Beatitudes' challenge to live as God intends, both as an individual and in community. The Pilgrim Journeys booklets are ideal daily companions for anyone seeking to grow in the Christian faith.

RECONCILIATION

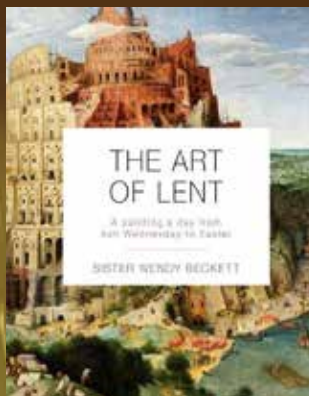
The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2019
Author: Muthuraj Swamy
ISBN-13: 9780281080083
£9.99



Forty biblically-based meditations introduce topics such as barriers to reconciliation, risking the self, humility and self-criticism, radical openness to the other and peace with justice. Questions for reflection are included, making Reconciliation suitable for use at weekly gatherings or for everyday devotion during Lent.

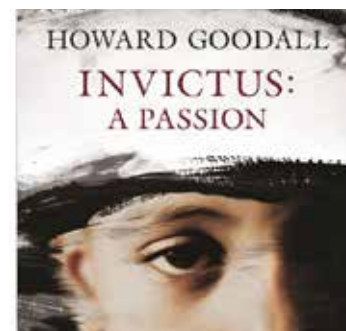
THE ART OF LENT

Author: Sister Wendy Beckett
SPCK
ISBN: 9780281078554
£ 9.99



Guided by the engaging and much-loved and missed Sister Wendy, discover some profound spiritual truths with these Lent reflections inspired by famous, and some lesser-known, works of art. Each of the days is based around a different theme. From joy to tranquillity to courage and sacrifice. A great way to take a visual journey through Lent.

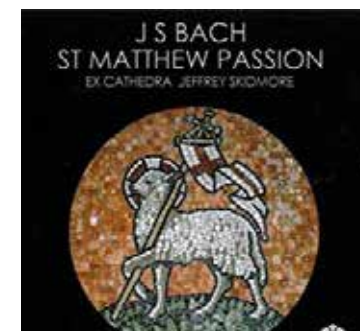
Holy Week is a time to engage anew with the suffering - or Passion - of Jesus, his Death and Resurrection. Music has long played a key part in setting the mood and conveying the message of this special season. The Rev Dylan Turner, keen musician and one of the clergy in the Rural North West Kent Group of churches, reviews a selection of music to refresh and enhance your experience of Holy Week and Easter.



'INVICTUS – A PASSION'
Howard Goodall (2018)
Christ Church Cathedral Choir

Verdict: A great new choral work to take you on a reflective journey.

Label: Coro



'ST MATTHEW PASSION'
JS Bach (2009)
Ex Cathedral

Verdict: An interesting and accessible re-working of a seasonal favourite.

Label: Orchid Classics



'MESSIAH – A SOULFUL CELEBRATION'
Various Artists (1995)

Verdict: Definitely one for Easter Morning as you get ready for church!

Label: Wea / download only

From the composer most famous for the theme tune to the Vicar of Dibley, 'Invictus – a Passion' is a deeply spiritual work, taking the listener on a quiet and often contemplative journey through Holy Week and into the joy of Easter. Sections like 'Easter Hymn' and 'I will arise', where one might expect explosive joy, are majestically understated, enhancing the work as a whole. A musical soundtrack which chimes closely with the very latest film and TV music, this work evokes a musical landscape which makes the events of 2000 years ago feel as though they are happening right now in the 21st Century.

Bach 'purists' may wish to look away, as a distinctive feature of this recording is that it is sung in English rather than the original German. For those more used to the German setting, this recording might be a little unsettling. However, hearing the words of the Passion sung in a familiar language may well deepen the spiritual encounter with God beyond simply the beauty of the music. You might like to 'dip in and out' of this recording as Holy Week unfolds around you. Let this music guide your spiritual journey - I promise you will not be disappointed.

Handel's 'Messiah' is an iconic work telling the significance of Jesus from his birth to his death; it's been re-imagined many times. And wow! This is different, with Soul, Hip Hop, RnB and Gospel influences completely reinvigorating the original. Compiled in the early 90s it does on occasion have a slightly 80s feel, but it's impossible not to be uplifted by the joyful exuberance of its praise. Yet, in quieter moments, there is a soulful nature too which reminds of both the agony of the first Holy Week, and the struggles the African American and Caribbean community have endured.

TOP 10 EVENTS NOT TO BE MISSED



ECO CHURCH CONFERENCE

March 2, 10am
St Luke, Holloway, London, N7 9JE

Explore how we can better care for God's earth in our church life, through the Eco Church award-scheme from A Rocha UK. Find out more at: www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/eco-church-conference-3/



VISUAL COMMUNION

March 2, 10:30am
Chichester Cathedral

A series of regional symposia exploring the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, in relation to art, architecture and craft. Material gathered will inform a conference in London in November 2019. Visit: www.artandchristianity.org/v-c



THY KINGDOM EQUIP AND INSPIRE DAYS

March 5, 7:30-9:30pm
Christ Church, Chislehurst

Get ready for the annual global wave of prayer, Thy Kingdom Come, which takes place in June. This event will help you explore how you and your church can get involved. Email: Inspireandequip2019@gmail.com



SIDCUP SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

March 9, 7:30pm
St John, Sidcup

Canadian pianist Carson Becke plays Rachmaninov's rarely performed Fourth Piano Concerto, alongside Elgar's Cockaigne Overture and Sibelius, Symphony No.5, conducted by James Ross. Tickets from £5 - £12. www.facebook.com/StJohnsSidcup/



MESSY FIESTA

March 16, 10am-4pm
Christ Church, Orpington

Do you run a Messy Church, or want to start one? Join this day of celebration, conversation, and inspiration. Led by Director and Founder of Messy Church, Lucy Moore. Cost £15. For more information or details contact Carol.Kitchener@messychurch.org.uk



HOPE – DEMENTIA SERVICE

April 7, 6pm
Burrswood Health and Wellbeing Centre, Tunbridge Wells

Rochester Diocese's Anna Chaplains welcome people with dementia or other long-term conditions to this time of creative Worship and Spiritual Refreshment. First Sunday of every month. Contact julia.burtonjones@rochester.anglican.org



THE EIGHT WORDS

April 7, 7:30pm
Rochester Cathedral

Acclaimed jazz musician and priest the Rev Dr Tim Boniface performs his jazz suite, a reflection on the eight sayings of Jesus found in the Passion according to St John. Tickets £10-£15. Visit: www.rochester-cathedral.org



SPLENDOUR REMAINS

April 6, 10am - 4pm
St Benedict's Centre, West Malling

Hosted by artist Nicola Rose and the Rev Canon Matthew Buchan. A day to listen, reflect and create. Cost £25 For more information or details email bookings@stbenedictscentre.org



READINGS AND MUSIC FOR HOLY WEEK

April 15 - 17, 5:30pm
Rochester Cathedral

Share in a daily service of readings and music for Holy Week. All are welcome to join the major services of Holy Week too, from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. For full details visit: www.rochester-cathedral.org



BIG CHURCH DAY OUT

May 25 - 26
Wiston House, West Sussex

The UK's largest annual gathering of the wider church for two exciting days of worship and celebration. Whatever your age, denomination or musical taste, everyone is welcome. Visit: www.bigchurchtickets.com

BELIEVING IN YOURSELF

Craft loving Sarah Rawlinson is the new Youth and Community Engagement Officer for Ebbsfleet, Greenhithe and Swanscombe. She has been tasked with helping support and grow relationships between new and existing communities in the area, and she's already got off to a great start.



Can you explain what you do?

It's a brand-new role, so it's constantly developing. But I'm undertaking a lot of projects around obesity, such as Edible Ebbsfleet, as well as talking to young people about online safety and working with companies to tackle young people who are 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEETs). Not forgetting sourcing and running a lot of craft and games for the Holiday Hunger projects during the half terms.

What does a typical week look like?

It's a real variety of meetings and at least one trip to a community café! Then helping or assisting in local projects or events, and a couple of hours behind the laptop to catch up on emails that have come in throughout the week!

How did you get involved with youth work?

I was doing my Duke of Edinburgh Award, part of which you must complete a residential. I was in Swatenden doing Global Camp for over 250 young people across the globe. A lady approached me and asked me if I was a youth worker and if I wasn't, had I considered this as a career? It was a real turning point.

What's the best piece of advice you have been given?

Believe in yourself. I am probably told this every week by my line manager, but it's

something I have always been told by my Nan. I think we can all be bothered by doubt at times; are we achieving enough? I often draw strength from the belief others have in me. I think it is something really important to tell young people as well. They have so many pressures today.

What are those pressures?

So many that weren't around when I was younger, not just about your appearance in the flesh, but your social media presence and living up to an expectation that is set by the social media 'status'. There is exam pressure too; on average young people take around 27 exams just at GCSE levels.

SARAH'S ROLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER, THE COLYER-FERGUSON CHARITABLE TRUST, SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL, WITH SPECIFIC PROJECT SUPPORT FROM THE EBBSFLEET DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

Is there someone you find particularly inspiring?

Not one person. I am inspired by all the people I have met in this role so far. There is such amazing work happening in these communities, and I am always in awe of what people do in their spare time, or full-time now they are retired. I am blessed to be involved in three wonderful communities and with a number of local churches, all have such inspiring people within them.

Best moment in the job so far?

I worked with some local families in the area to showcase different meals, cooking skills and education around healthy foods. At the start there was one young person who wouldn't talk to me at all but, by the end of it, would not stop talking! Seeing a young person grow over time and becoming more comfortable and confident within themselves is why I have always enjoyed working with young people.

Do you have any hobbies?

I love to scrapbook. When I came back from 10 months of travelling, I decided I would scrapbook all my photos from my trip. I've ended up scrapping a lot of photos for my friends and family instead. Being creative or crafty in all capacities is my 'chill out' (even if I do get irate if it goes wrong!).

Do you like to cook?

I love to cook. Am I good at cooking should be the next question... after burning my waffles the other day, I try to leave the cooking to my fiancé!

And what plans have you got for young people this year?

I'm really excited about something called Muddy March, which is a collaboration between two KCC libraries. These will be free events for young people and their families to get involved in planting, eating and making all things to do with fruits and vegetables.

Muddy March will be held on the 5 and 19 March at Greenhithe Library 3:00pm – 4.30pm and 13 and 27 March at Swan Valley Library 3:00pm – 4:30pm

You can follow Sarah on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Search for @SarahYCEO





ANGELA KING (LEFT) WITH MEMBERS OF THE 3 FAITHS GROUP

CROSSING BOUNDARIES

For the last year, the Rev Angela King, a retired priest in Bromley, has been regularly visiting a Syrian Muslim refugee family who have settled in the local area. She explains the personal impact upon her.

"Following a holiday to Syria in 2009, like many I was horrified to watch the terrible conflict and chaos that has since descended within the country, with children frequently caught up in the cross fire.

So, when I had the opportunity to meet a real Syrian refugee family through a food drop organised by the 3 Faiths Group in Bromley, I was keen to volunteer.

Originally from the Syrian city of Homs, they arrived by plane from Jordan - where they had been refugees for 6 years - through the British Government's initiative to help refugees who are particularly vulnerable; they are one of 14 families supported by Lewisham Council and other local organisations.

My visits are usually immersed in laughter over our language problems as they speak Arabic and I don't! Over the year I have liaised with the children's schools, accompanied the mother and grandmother to medical appointments and invited them occasionally to visit us at home.

In return they have shown me unfailing middle eastern hospitality, saying that 'their home is my home'. I feel I have been the recipient of hospitality, rather than the giver of it and I thank God for them!

Offering friendship to the family has been important in giving them regular contact with a typical English-speaking person in the area but, as a Christian, crossing this boundary has also been important for my own growth.

After all, Jesus showed great openness towards people, whether it was his readiness to heal the Roman Centurion's servant or speak to the Samaritan woman at the well.

Christians follow Jesus by leaving their comfort zones in different ways: donating food to the local food bank, volunteering to help at a homeless shelter, prison visiting, street pastoring, visiting the lonely or elderly in our own congregations.

When we find something that is not only a duty but also a joy, then we flourish in our faith and receive as much as we give".

Choose the UK's most trusted home insurance provider and we'll donate

£130

to your church

Take out a new home insurance policy with us before **31 December 2019**, and we'll donate £130* to a church of your choice through our Trust130 promotion. Find out more at www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance or call our team on 0800 783 0130 and quote **Trust130**.

* Terms and conditions apply and can be viewed on the offer website page above.



Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc (EIO) Reg. No.24869 is registered in England at Beaufort House, Brunswick Road, Gloucester, GL1 1JZ, UK and is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.



*Loving God, thank you for
the gift of creation.*

As we experience each day, may we take
time to wonder and give you thanks.

From each sunrise to every sunset, in every
season, and with every breath, may we
celebrate our home in creation, and the
glorious gift of life.

Give us passion to act now, to pray for the
changes needed within our communities, our
churches, and among the nations, for climate
change to be brought under control.

May our prayer and our actions flow from our
love for your creation, in all its beauty and
diversity, a longing for justice for the poor,
and our commitment to all future
generations of your children on this Earth.

Amen