



St Hilda's  
Ashford

# St Hilda's News



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We are looking for more contributions from the St Hilda's community, if you would like to contribute, please either call, email or send an article to the Parish Office.

If you would like help or to speak to a member of the ministry team please contact:

- Parish Office      Tel    01784 253525  
   Email  
   [office@sthilda.org](mailto:office@sthilda.org)
- Father Joseph can be contacted on  
01784 254237  
[www.sthilda.org](http://www.sthilda.org)

## Easter Day Sermon by the Bishop of London



And there was Mary Magdalene going to the tomb of Jesus early on the first day of the week “While it was still dark” and she wept.

I suspect that there are few of us who have not wept in the last year and yes, I believe that we should live in a society where to weep is seen not only as a normal emotion but as an action of hope.

In the Bible there are significant occasions when we see people weep – Hannah because of her infertility weeping before the Lord and misunderstood by the priest in the temple; David wept over the death of Jonathan, Jesus wept over Jerusalem, Jesus wept at the grief of his friends who were weeping at the death of Lazarus and Jesus wept because of his own inner struggles in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Weeping in scripture involves more than tears, it is about outright bawling and a culturally shaped expression of grief and sorrow. In scripture, it was associated with action which comes out of a deeply troubled spirit – it is the same movement when Jesus feels compassion – that movement which comes from deep inside.

Jesus, after talking to the grieving sisters and seeing Lazarus’s friends weeping, was deeply troubled and moved and we are told in the shortest verse in the Bible that ‘Jesus wept’ (John 11: 35).

Belden Lane says ‘in the beginning you weep. The starting point for many things is grief, the place where endings seem so absolute. One would think it should be otherwise but the pain ... it is an antecedent to every new opening of our lives’.

Weeping is the starting point of new openings and beginnings in our lives. We are told by the Psalmist that weeping is part of the path to joy (Ps 30:5).

When Jesus was deeply troubled, he was moved to heal the sick, raise the dead and care for his sheep.

And there was Mary Magdalene going to the tomb of Jesus early on the first day of the week while it was still dark and she wept.

Yet when it was still dark...God was at work on her behalf. He was making a way where there seemed to be no way. In the midst of what seemed hopeless, while Mary felt helpless, God was still working.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ proclaims to us in flesh and blood that fear and death are not the last words. God has spoken life, hope and purpose. Even when it is still dark God is at work, even in the midst of our tears God is at work. As the prophet Isaiah proclaims “The Lord will wipe away tears off all faces” (Isaiah 25:8).

As Mary stands weeping outside the empty tomb Jesus's first words to her are 'Woman why are you weeping?' (20:15)

'Woman why are you weeping'? It is a question asked by the angels and then by Jesus – and it is asked of us – why are you weeping?

Jesus takes Mary's – ours – all humanity's – grief seriously; respecting it and recognising it. Not rushing to answer it or telling us why we are wrong to feel it. God doesn't just know our sorrows; he notices them and he enters into them and asks, 'Why are you weeping?' Our reason for weeping may be clear or it may be deeply held within us. Jesus say to us "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest' Matthew 28:11.

The reality that God was still working whilst it was still dark, while Mary was weeping, tells us that we can act in hope in spite of the doubts which at times might overwhelm us; we can behave as though things are going to get better even though we're really not sure that they are, or when they will. We can turn ourselves – and point others – towards the light at the end of the tunnel, even when we are struggling to see far enough to put one foot in front of the other – that is hope. That is the hope which the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ speaks of. It is that hope that we bear witness to today. It is that hope which we celebrate.

To hope in this way is not to deny our grief. It is not to deny the fear, the loss, the pain which are very much a part of life for many people, at least for some of the time. In the Christian tradition when we read the words 'Do not be afraid' – whether it's God who says them, or the angels in the narratives of Jesus's birth, or Jesus himself – these are not words of denial. 'Do not be afraid' doesn't mean shut your eyes and ears to the pain of the world, the struggles of our neighbours or of ourselves. But because the words are always followed by the promise and the assurance of God's presence with us in the world's pain which is what we celebrate today in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, it gives us a model for our response to our grief, our fear and our loss and to human suffering. God is there for us and we are called to be there for others, in their service, offering the gift of our presence, of God's presence, our attention and our love and the reckless love of God.

And there was Mary Magdalene going to the tomb of Jesus early on the first day of the week while it was still dark and she wept.

Only then does Jesus say something that isn't a question – but it isn't an answer either. It's not even an explanation. It is simply her name. 'Mary'.

Mary met the risen Jesus weeping and he speaks to her her name. Then he asks her to go and tell others of the hope that she has found – the life that there is after death – to proclaim the good news of the Gospel. It is a call to action.

This Easter morning let each one of us know that Jesus meets us when and where we least expect him, in ways we often don't recognise at first. He takes our feelings seriously, whether they are positive or negative. And in our weeping, the start of new things exist, and he speaks to us our name and he asks us to go and tell other people – tell them things

we are hardly sure of ourselves and announce things we feel very unprepared to proclaim – and in doing so to bring hope to others.

Let's hear for ourselves this morning the words that Jesus spoke to Mary while it was still dark.

Why are you weeping? What are you looking for?

And let us then hear Jesus speak our name. And he says to us:

Go now. Go to my friends and tell them that you have seen the Lord. Jesus is alive. Death is no more, no longer do we live in darkness. The light has come.

For Mary, and for us, our tears are the starting point of hope.

Alleluia, Christ has risen. He has risen indeed. Alleluia. Amen

## The 'WhatsApp Church' bringing services to people's phones

Weekly services, daily reflections, and worship songs are being shared on an easily-accessible 'WhatsApp Church,' by a Church of England priest.



Up to nine videos are posted on Sundays by [church@five](#) on the Strawberry Vale and Grange Estates in East Finchley, in what is thought to be the first-of-its-kind in Britain.

Around 35 people are on the group – with added engagement on Facebook. There they receive both the service, and a daily 'thought for the day'

Revd Helen Shannon of [church@five](#) said the WhatsApp service could be used by people with limited phone data allowing them to download the services while using free WiFi provided outside a local community centre and supermarkets.

"Some people watch all the videos in one go while others watch in small parts according to how much time they have and their home circumstances," she said.

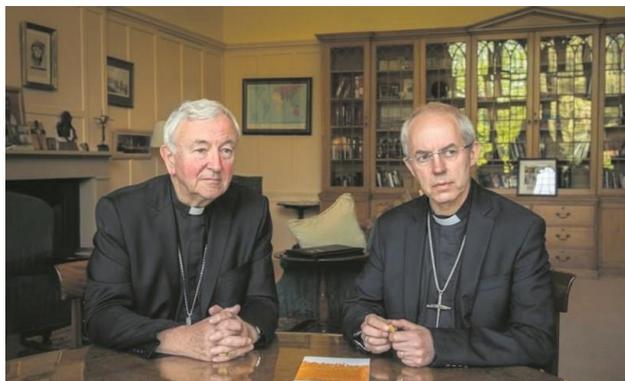
"We remind people every Wednesday that the services are still there and that they can still watch."

The church has set up a food bank since the first lockdown, run at St Barnabas Church in Finchley. It has also made food deliveries over the summer.

Its next project is to deliver 650 'goodie bags' on Easter Day with Easter cards to people in both estates. The cards will have a link encouraging people who have never been to church before to view [church@five](#)'s Easter service.

## Overseas aid cuts are doing harm and should be restored, say Welby and Nichols

*The Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols (left), and the Archbishop of Canterbury pictured at Lambeth Palace in 2019*



THE Government's promise to restore the UK aid budget to 0.7 per cent "has been broken and must be put right", the Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster have said.

In November, the Government announced that it was cutting its aid budget from its commitment of 0.7 per cent of gross national income to 0.5 per cent, as a result of the pandemic. Last month, the Prime Minister told MPs that they would not get a chance to vote on the cuts to the aid budget, as the proposed reduction was only temporary, and the figure would return to 0.7 per cent "when the fiscal situation allows".

In a joint article published in the *Evening Standard* on Tuesday, Archbishop Welby and the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, write: "In the small print of the recent Integrated Review of defence, diplomacy, and development was a pledge to return the aid budget to 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income. This would honour the many promises made and deliver on the duty imposed by Parliament.

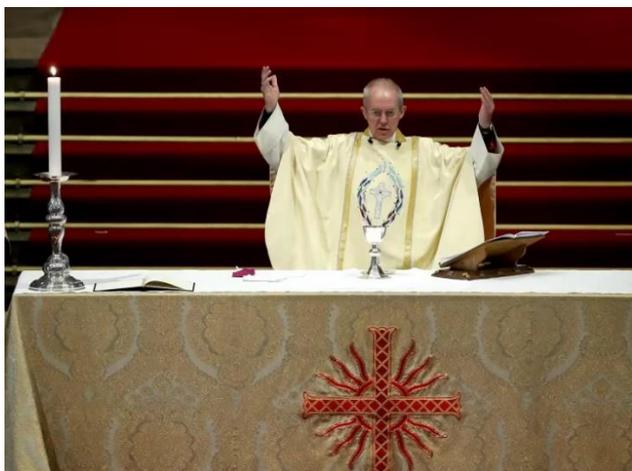
"But saying the Government will only do this 'when the fiscal situation allows' is deeply worrying, suggesting that it will act in contravention of its legally binding target. This promise, repeatedly made even during the pandemic, has been broken and must be put right."

The "hastily implemented cuts" were already "doing real damage to life-saving work" in Yemen, Syria, and South Sudan, they write. "Promises — and truth — matter in politics, as in all walks of life. It is never too late to do the right thing. . . Britain cannot prosper if it shrinks from its international responsibilities."

The Archbishops conclude: "Just as the UK has shown leadership on global efforts on vaccination, so we must show leadership on the climate crisis and that requires leadership on international development. Keeping our promises to the world's poorest people would be a good start.

"Balancing the books during a pandemic on the backs of the world's poorest is not acceptable, when Britain should be setting an example and proving our standing as a world leader. Ultimately however, this is not only about 'global Britain', it is about morality and fulfilling our promise to people who live in poverty. Too often we use the phrase 'the world is watching', but on this occasion it is true. We must rise to the occasion."

## Justin Welby urges us not to live in a society 'that only benefits the rich and powerful'



The Archbishop of Canterbury has urged people to choose a "better future for all", rather than live in a society that only benefits the rich and powerful.

In his Easter Sunday service, Justin Welby said society had a "choice" to make over the coming years as it emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic.

And he encouraged people to take inspiration from the "overwhelming generosity" of God to

ensure acts of love, charity, and international aid are maintained.

The archbishop said: "In this country, in this world, we have a choice over the next few years.

"We can go on as before Covid, where the most powerful and the richest gain and so many fall behind.

"We have seen where that left us.

"Or we can go with the flooding life and purpose of the resurrection of Jesus, which changes all things, and choose a better future for all.

"The overwhelming generosity of God to us should inspire the same by us, in everything from private acts of love and charity to international aid generously maintained.

"We have received overwhelmingly, so let us give generously."

The archbishop's message also touched heavily on the topic of death, with reference to all those who had died since the start of the pandemic.

He described the past 12 months as "yet another cruel period of history taking from us those we loved, ending lives cruelly and tragically".

Heavenly Father,

May we live the life you want us to with love and compassion for the poorest members of society.

At this Easter time may more of us come to know you and walk with you, Lord.

In Jesus' name.

Amen

## 'Police exceeded their powers:' Catholic Church complains after officers break up Good Friday church service over Covid 'rules breach'

A Polish Catholic church in London is to complain to Metropolitan Police authorities after officers stopped a Good Friday church service.

The Met was called to a report of crowds of people queuing outside Christ the King church on Balham High Road in south London on Friday evening.

In a letter to parishioners on its website, the Polish Catholic church said police had exceeded their powers and that all Government requirements were met.

The church said worshippers obeyed police orders, and the Met said no fixed penalty notices were issued.

The Archbishop of Southwark, John Wilson, visited the church on Saturday and said in a statement on Facebook: "Officers told parishioners the gathering was in breach of Covid regulations and, if they did not disperse, they would be subject to substantial fines. The Liturgy was terminated and parishioners left the church building. The remaining Liturgy would have taken approximately thirty minutes to complete."

He added: "the Rector of the Catholic Polish Mission, Mgr Stefan Wylezek ... intends to contact the Metropolitan Police authorities about how the situation was handled."

A Metropolitan Police spokesman said: "Officers attended and found a large number of people inside the church.

"Some people were not wearing masks and those present were clearly not socially distanced.

"We are particularly concerned about the risk of transmission of the Covid-19 virus as a result of large indoor gatherings at which people are not socially distanced and some are not wearing masks.

"As such, officers made the decision that it was not safe for that particular service to continue.

"Understanding the sensitivity of the situation, officers engaged with the priest outside the church and were invited inside to address the congregation.

The Met spokesman said this was one of a series of events taking place at the church over the Easter period, adding: "We are engaging with church authorities today and will continue to do so in the coming days."

On its website, the church said all scheduled services over Easter would take place in the order indicated.



The Government website says: "Limits for communal worship should be decided on the basis of the capacity of the place of worship following an assessment of risk."

## All 42 English cathedrals to be linked by cycle route

A 2,000 mile Cathedrals Cycle Route has been created in a bid to promote greener travel along with better mental and physical wellbeing.

Visitors to any of the 42 Church of England cathedrals will be able to arrive by bike via the cycle route, officially launched next month.



The route is the invention of academic, entrepreneur and keen cyclist Shaun Cutler, from Northumbria University and has been made possible due to a partnership between Sustrans, Cycling UK, the British Pilgrimage Trust and the Association of English Cathedrals.

Cutler and a small group of cyclists will launch the route with a relay event, Cycling With Purpose, setting out from Newcastle Cathedral, the most northerly Anglican Cathedral, on Sunday May 30. The

relay will coincide with The World's Biggest Bike Ride, marking the opening day of Bike Week (May 30 - June 5 2021).

"The Cathedrals Cycle Route is about connecting our historic cathedrals and enjoying the spaces between them," Cutler said in a statement.

"Now more than ever, after a year of living with the coronavirus pandemic, this is a way to support people's mental and physical health and promote the mission of England's cathedrals through pilgrimage, wellbeing and heritage," he added.

The Dean of Blackburn, the Very Revd Peter Howell Jones, a keen cyclist and an executive member of the Association of English Cathedrals added: "Every cathedral has an opportunity to be at the heart of initiatives to support its communities in recovery and as Christian people we have a huge responsibility for the stewardship of our creation.

"The Cathedrals Cycles Route is a wonderful way of bringing together these two important strands of our mission and ministry, and together with the pilgrim routes, allows visitors to appreciate not just the beauty and sanctity of our building, but to enjoy the journey between them as well," he said.

Currently only five per cent of visitors to cathedrals arrive by bike. Each cathedral aims to have a dedicated cycle champion to improve the cycle-readiness of their buildings, ensure a warm welcome for visiting cyclists and increase the number that arrive on two wheels.

## Prince Charles records poem God's Grandeur to show support for Christians

Prince Charles has recorded a poem by acclaimed poet and Catholic priest Gerard Manley Hopkins to show support for Christians at Easter, Clarence House said.

Charles has narrated the Hopkins poem God's Grandeur which will be played during a virtual service on Sunday morning at Stonyhurst College, a Catholic boarding school in Lancashire where the Victorian cleric taught.

Clarence House said: "The Prince of Wales has recorded the Gerard Manley Hopkins Poem, God's Grandeur, to show support for Christians around the world at Easter.

"Easter is the most important festival of the Christian Church, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day after his crucifixion, and Hopkins's poem captures the hope and joy associated with that season."

The poem begins with the lines: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

"It will flame out, like shining from shook foil; It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil Crushed."

Hopkins was one of the most influential poets of the Victorian era who converted to Catholicism, but gave up writing poetry after deciding to train to become a priest.

Some years later, he took up his pen again when inspired to write a long poem in memory of five nuns who died in a shipwreck.

His poems were not published in full until 1918, almost 30 years after his death, and Hopkins' use of language, new rhythmic effects and unusual word combinations were a huge influence on major literary figures like WH Auden and Dylan Thomas.

News of the recording comes as the Prince of Wales and the Queen were pictured together enjoying a walk in Windsor ahead of Easter.

The monarch and her eldest son strolled alongside the daffodils in the garden of Frogmore House, a royal residence around half a mile south of Windsor Castle, where the Queen has been spending lockdown.

The photos were taken on March 23, a week after the Duke of Edinburgh returned to the castle from spending a month in hospital, but only released on Good Friday.

The pair appeared in good spirits and were pictured smiling and laughing as they crossed a small bridge over a stream in the gardens.



Heavenly Father,

We give thanks for the inspirational words found in God's Grandeur, for Prince Charles' narration and his admiration for other members of the Christian community.

May his narration inspire many this Easter time.

Amen

## Church congregations could be allowed to sing again 'by late June'

Communal singing could resume in England's churches by June 21, according to the government minister who oversees faith.

In an interview with The Telegraph, Lord Greenhalgh pinpointed the June date as the earliest possible time for congregations to be permitted to sing hymns:

"I'm very hopeful then that we will be able to return to singing. It is of course quite strange to go through a service and not be able to sing. It's an integral part of an act of worship, really," he said in an interview with the paper.

Communal singing is currently prohibited except for a handful of singers, if deemed an essential part of worship.

Lord Greenhalgh, who's Catholic, added that he expected some online services, launched as a result of the pandemic, to continue but said he valued attending in-person and hoped in the coming months that church services would resemble more closely those held prior to the pandemic.

"My personal view is that nothing beats being in a place of worship and praying and just having that time to think about all the things that you want to think about, as well as participating in a structured service," he said.

When asked when church weddings with larger numbers would be permitted he said June 21 would also be the earliest date "but that's not a guarantee."

June 21 is the date Boris Johnson cited as the projected date for no attendance limits on weddings and funerals. It is also the date when large venues such as nightclubs could re-open dependent on coronavirus rates continuing to fall.

## Sheep and Lambs Together

### Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages

**11<sup>th</sup> April 2<sup>nd</sup> Second Sunday of Easter**

Read John 20 – 19-23

*Make a reminder of the proof Thomas needed*

Draw round your hand on a piece of card or paper and cut it out. Punch a hole in the middle of the palm, then write the words 'Do not doubt, but believe' around the hole and decorate the hand. You can use a hole punch or a pencil to make the hole.

If you have more than one hand coloured in you can stick the hands onto a long strip of paper to create a banner and write the words 'We believe' onto it.

If you don't want to cut out a hand why not make a mark on the centre of both palms.



Take time to reflect on what it is you believe about God. Do you need any physical evidence to aid your belief in God?

## St Hilda's Parish News

***If you have any Parish News you would like to share, then please send them into the Parish Office.***

### **A Reminder to book your seat for services early**

It was so lovely to see so many attending the Easter week services, whether in person or taking part in the live stream. I'm sure you will agree that the services were wonderful, from the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, the beautiful candle light watch on Saturday night to the joyful Easter morning celebration.

On Sunday we had more than 80 people attending our service which was fantastic, we had so many wanting to join with us that we had a waiting list.

As you can imagine the logistics of seating everyone safely within the Covid guidelines can take some time. In order for seating to be arranged in good time, would you kindly book your seat for the Sunday service by **5pm on Friday**.

If for some reason you are unable to attend would you kindly e-mail or call the Parish Office, we will then be able to re-arrange the seating to accommodate someone who may be on the waiting list. Thank you. Bobbie and Frances

### **Sheila Freeman celebrating her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**



Sheila had a very select gathering of six in her garden to celebrate her special birthday. It was a rather chilly day hence the blanket but a very happy occasion.

### **Thank you from Sheila**

I must thank you all for the beautiful bouquet which I received on my birthday. It was very kind of you and comforting to know that I have many friends.  
Best wishes Sheila

### **St Hilda's Memorial Garden**

Victoria from Lodge Brothers has been working on our Memorial Garden, she will be there on Saturday again if anybody would like to help. If anyone has any plants suitable for the garden, preferably perennials as we have evergreens already, please contact the office.



**Canaan Ministries** are open for any of your needs. Just simply phone or email them and they will look after you. They also offer a delivery service.

Any other information can be found on their website [www.canaanchristianministries.co.uk/](http://www.canaanchristianministries.co.uk/)

**1 Corinthians 6: 14**

And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

## This weeks services

### Sunday Eucharist – 11<sup>th</sup> April @ 9.30am

This service can be viewed via our Facebook page, our new YouTube channel (St Hilda's Ashford), and Twitter.

### Wednesday Eucharist – 14<sup>th</sup> April @ 9.45am

Tickets can be booked for this week's services via the links on our website and Facebook page or by contacting the Parish Office.

**Please remember a face mask must be worn whilst in the church.**

## Tea and Chat after Sunday Service

We would like to invite you to join us for a virtual Tea and Chat after the service on **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 11.15am**. See below on how to join.

The meeting is hosted by Zoom.

- Download the Zoom app – [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)
- Click – Join a Meeting
- Enter the Meeting id – **926 9043 0539**
- Enter password – **017275**



**Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.**

**The Sick**

James Bedford	Eileen Gilbert	June Prentice	Chick Wilson
Michael Browne	Jim Hennessey	Elizabeth Savill-Burgess	Peter Wilson
Robb Clarke	Jean Iddiols	Delphine Scrivener	Jo Wood
Rebecca Cohen	Jane Johnson	Riley Shaw	Erin
Ann Considine	Pat Kyle	Elsie Stone	George
Michael Dixon	Libby Mills	Roy Stone	Joey
Jackie Forsbrey	Raymond Nation	Sandra Swain	
Peter Garner	Pat Parish	Rev. Peter Taylor	

**The Recently Departed**

Patsy Forsbrey	Joyce Small	Michael Orchard	Daphne Leader
John Radford	Peter Richardson		

**Prayer**

Lord of all life and power,  
 who through the mighty resurrection of your Son  
 overcame the old order of sin and death  
 to make all things new in him:  
 grant that we, being dead to sin  
 and alive to you in Jesus Christ,  
 may reign with him in glory;  
 to whom with you and the Holy Spirit  
 be praise and honour, glory and might,  
 now and in all eternity.

Amen

## Puzzle Page

### Ladies of the Bible Wordsearch

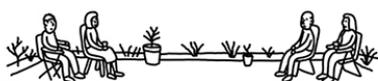
(puzzle created by Terry Rickson)

V	C	L	D	S	N	A	W	N	C	K	D	J	B	Z
Z	T	N	A	P	R	D	W	R	E	H	T	S	E	W
B	P	R	U	T	H	F	J	A	V	X	F	O	L	D
F	A	L	F	J	S	C	D	H	B	J	B	V	I	J
I	S	J	E	K	Y	S	L	A	N	L	R	A	Z	C
T	X	B	G	R	J	S	K	B	P	K	T	J	A	U
P	O	C	A	I	A	T	M	O	R	D	T	C	B	N
D	H	M	K	N	D	C	P	Q	C	F	S	G	E	P
J	A	W	L	Z	E	U	H	T	S	E	W	L	T	C
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L	E	V	Q	X	O	K	J	C	L	Z	C	D	G	S
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S	E	J	W	P	T	N	A	O	M	I	G	K	N	T
W	R	T	Y	O	X	P	W	D	E	Y	H	N	O	R
A	B	P	B	Q	Z	B	S	J	M	Z	L	E	A	H

- ESTHER
- ELIZABETH
- LEAH
- MARY
- NAOMI
- RACHEL
- RAHAB
- REBEKAH
- RUTH
- SALOME
- SARAI

# EASTER

THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR THIS YEAR



THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE FRIENDS AND FAMILY AGAIN



THE TECHNOLOGY THAT HAS KEPT US CONNECTED

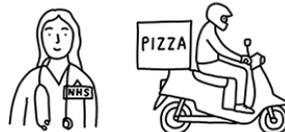
IT'S AMAZING THAT IT'S STILL SO LIGHT



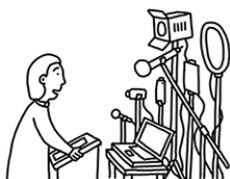
LONGER EVENINGS



ALL KINDS OF CREATIVE ENDEAVOURS



THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE SERVED US DURING THIS TIME



CHURCH MINISTERS, WHO HAVE KEPT EVERYTHING GOING



HOT CROSS BUNS WITH CHOCOLATE BITS IN



THE POSSIBILITY OF NEW LIFE



MEETINGS IN GARDENS