

COULSDON  
PARISH  
CHURCH  
St. John



50p

April 2023

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# Holy Week, Easter and after ...

We look forward  
to welcoming you  
to all these  
services and events



## April

### 1—Saturday

- 10.00 a.m.. Gardening Morning in Garden of Remembrance (to 12.00)  
7.30 p.m. Downland Chorale Easter Concert, at St. John's

### 2—PALM SUNDAY

- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church  
9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church *(and live-streamed  
on Facebook/through church website)*

### 4—Tuesday

- 9.45 a.m. Holy Communion, MU, in the Old Church  
4.15 p.m. Life Lent Group meets, in the Old Church

### 6—MAUNDY THURSDAY

- 11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church  
7.30 p.m. Holy Communion—'Remembering the Last Supper'

### 7—GOOD FRIDAY

- 11.00 a.m. Churches Together in Coulsdon Walk of Witness,  
starting at St Mary's RC Church  
2.00 p.m. 'An Hour at the Cross', in Church

### 8—Saturday

- 10.00 a.m. Baptism Preparation, in Church

### 9—EASTER DAY

- 6.30 a.m. Sunrise Service on Farthing Down,  
followed by breakfast in the Cameron Hall.  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church  
9.30 a.m. All-Age Parish Communion, in Church *(and live-streamed)*  
11.15 a.m. Family Service, in Church

**13—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

**16—SECOND SUNDAY of EASTER**

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

9.30 a.m. Worship Together, in Church

**18—Tuesday**

9.45 for 10.00 a.m. Pram Service for Babies & Toddlers, in Church

**20—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

**23—THIRD SUNDAY of EASTER**

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church *(and live-streamed on Facebook/through church website)*

11.15 a.m. Family Service

**25—Tuesday**

7.30 p.m. 'Prayer for the World', in the Church

**26—Wednesday**

2.00 p.m. Pray, Knit & Chat, in the Old Church

**27—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

**30—FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER**

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church *(and live-streamed on Facebook/through church website)*

# May

**2—Tuesday**

9.45 a.m. Holy Communion, MU, in the Old Church

**4—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

**6—Saturday**

10.00 a.m.. Gardening Morning in Garden of Remembrance (to 12.00)

**7—FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER**

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church *(and live-streamed on Facebook/through church website)*

11.30 a.m. Baptism Service, in Church

## WHEREVER YOU ARE YOU CAN STILL JOIN US ONLINE FOR SOME SERVICES:

Follow the Parish Communion services, etc. online live as they're streamed from the Church on Facebook via our website at [www.stjohns.coulsdon.net](http://www.stjohns.coulsdon.net) (or watch later) .





# FROM THE RECTOR ...



## Dear Friends

When King Charles came to the throne last year, following the death of his mother, many people asked, “What sort of king will he be?”. Would he interfere in the business of government? How would he compare with his mother? How would he approach this unique role? As we look forward to his coronation next month it seems to me that he has fulfilled that role as monarch admirably.

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday the same question was going round: What sort of king is this? Was Jesus to be a mighty warrior king who would rid the Jews of the oppressive Roman occupiers? Would he be a king like his ancestor David who would make Israel great again? Would he have places at court for his disciples?



The people welcome Jesus by waving palm branches – an echo of the welcome that was given to the great warrior Judas Maccabaeus, who had led a revolt against the Greeks 100 years earlier. “Here is a king who will bring us freedom and victory!”

But how it changed. Just a few days later Jesus was hanging

on a cross, between two condemned criminals, with a sarcastic and ironic sign that read: ‘KING OF THE JEWS’. There was no earthly king but Caesar, but here was a man who claimed to have a kingdom ‘not of this world’.

He had spent three years telling people about the ‘kingdom of God’; a kingdom in which the poor are blessed, the weak are made strong, the merciful are shown mercy; a kingdom in which the first are last, and the last first; a kingdom in which evil and sickness is defeated. What sort of king was Jesus in this king-



dom? He was a king who served others: he washed his disciples' feet, he mixed with the poor and outcast, he submitted to false accusation, arrest and execution. But he also had power to command evil spirits, he had power to heal, he had power to command the elements to be still, he had power to turn water into wine, and five loaves and two fish into a feast. He drew people to himself and claimed that God was his Father. He claimed to be the resurrection and the life, he claimed to be the light of the world, he claimed to be the only way to God.



Jesus is not a constitutional monarch, but rather a King with ultimate power and authority. Yet he draws near to the humble and raises up the weak. Jesus is not a warrior king, yet he battled with the ultimate powers of darkness and evil and won. Jesus lives in the glory of his Father in heaven, yet he opens the door and welcomes us to be part of his family. This is the King whose resurrection we celebrate and worship at Easter.

Have a blessed Easter with all the joy of our risen Lord and King.

Paul



## PASSIONTIDE AND EASTER SERVICES

**6<sup>th</sup> April—Maundy Thursday:**  
**Holy Communion at**  
**11.00 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.**

On this day, Christians remember the Last Supper. During the meal Jesus took bread and wine and shared them with his disciples – and we continue to share bread and wine as part of our regular worship in church. In the morning we have our weekly Holy Communion service in the old format at 11.00 am. followed by refreshments—probably with hot cross buns! In the evening the service will follow the modern 'Common Worship' service.

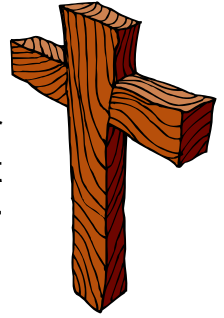


**7<sup>th</sup> April—Good Friday:**



Churches Together in Coulsdon '**Walk of Witness**'. At **11.00 a.m.** we will meet with members of the other Coulsdon Churches at St. Mary's RC Church, Coulsdon Road, for a '**Walk of Witness**' to Old Coulsdon with an open-air service. We hope that as many as possible – adults and children – will

come and help to represent and be a visible presence of St. John's in the community.



In remembrance of the first Good Friday we invite you to join us for '**An Hour at the Cross**' at **2.00 p.m.** in Church. In various quiet ways including readings and prayer, etc. we will reflect on the passion of Christ and sit for a while 'in the shadow of the cross which reaches across the centuries to offer comfort, forgiveness, and hope to us today'.

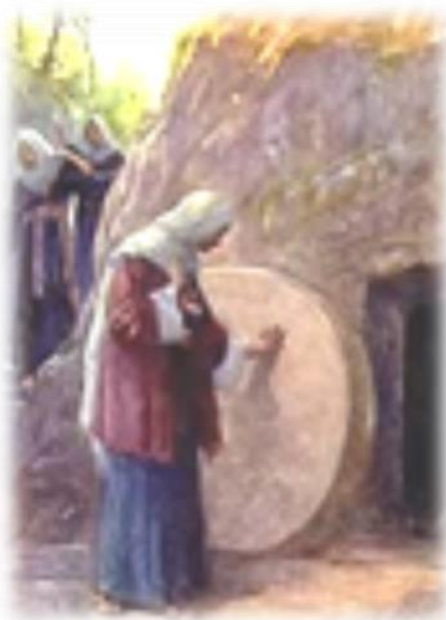
## 9<sup>th</sup> April—Easter Day

**6.30 a.m.— CTC Sunrise Service, Farthing Down car park**

**8.00 a.m.— Holy Communion**

**9.30 a.m.—Holy Communion (all age)**

**11.15 a.m. - Family Service**



***And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb..”***

Early birds are invited to the first service of the day in the Coulsdon area when members of all the Coulsdon Churches meet on Farthing Down for the **Sunrise Service at 6.30 a.m.** and this will be followed by breakfast at Old Coulsdon Congregational Church at 7.15 for all who would like it.

At St. John's the regular **8.00 a.m. Holy Communion**, using the old format still loved by many, will be extra joyful with one or two hymns.

Our main **Easter Celebration will be an All-Age Parish Communion at 9.30 a.m.** .

This will be followed by an **Easter Family Service at 11.15 a.m.** which will be just right for all young families – and grannies, grandpas, and anyone else who might be with you. A very relaxed service for all ages.



## EVERYONE ...

will find a warm welcome at all these services – and with four to choose from we hope you will come and join in our celebrations of this most important and joyful day in the Christian year. If you'd like to know more about any of these events or services please contact the Parish Office on 01737 552461 or email [stjohns@coulsdon.net](mailto:stjohns@coulsdon.net)

**Please note: the clergy team will be away at Spring Harvest during the week following Easter.**



## ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING



The APCM will be held this year on **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April** during the 9.30 service. We'll hear reports of many of the happenings – events, groups, financial situation, fundraising, church maintenance, etc. – during 2022. If you want to get up to speed before the Parish Meeting, look out for the Reports beforehand – always an interesting read, when you see how much has been going on at St. John's. Copies will be available at the back of the church nearer the time.

Elections will take place to the Deanery Synod and the PCC, and we are looking for people to stand for synod and for the PCC. (Synod members are *ex officio* on the PCC as well.) Being on the Synod or PCC is a way of serving God in the church as we take a share in the responsibility of leadership, making sure that the church is keeping to its stated aim of helping people meet Jesus. The PCC has the responsibility of making sure the resources are in place to allow that mission to happen; they speak on behalf of the whole church, and have an important role in representation and communication within the church. There are some leaflets on the Information Desk in the church giving more details of the Deanery Synod and PCC. Please give this some careful thought. It would be good to have a broad representation of the church that reflected all our different congregations.

And of course there will also be an opportunity for you to have your say and to ask questions.



### REVISION OF

### CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL – 2023

The revision of the Electoral Roll for The Parish of St. John's, Coulsdon, will take place between

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March and Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023** inclusive.

Forms of application for enrolment or amendment can be found on the Information Desk in Church and when completed should be placed in the marked box there no later than 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023 after which no further changes can be made until after the Annual Parish Church Meeting on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April. **If your name is already on the Roll you do not need to complete a form.**

### CELEBRATING THE CORONATION WEEKEND

We plan to livestream the Coronation Service in church on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May. You are very welcome to be with us so that together we can join in the celebration of this great event. More details to follow.



## PRAM SERVICE FOR BABIES, TODDLERS & PRESCHOOLERS



All parents and grandparents with babies or toddlers will find a warm welcome at our very relaxed little service on the third Tuesday morning of each month—**Tuesday 19 April** at 9.45 for 10.00 a.m. start in the church this month. Come for songs, an interactive story, activity, prayers, musical instruments and birthday celebrations—and lots of fun. Refreshments after. Lively toddlers, restless babies, tired mums and grannies all welcome. In March we gave thanks for mums, dads, grannies, grandpas and all the people who take care of us. We had a bundle of 'lost baby animals' and searched the church for their mothers. Glad to say all were found! And thanks to one granny, we even learned some new verses to 'Row, row, row your boat'. Who knows what we'll get up to this month? Come and give us a try.—we'd love to see you

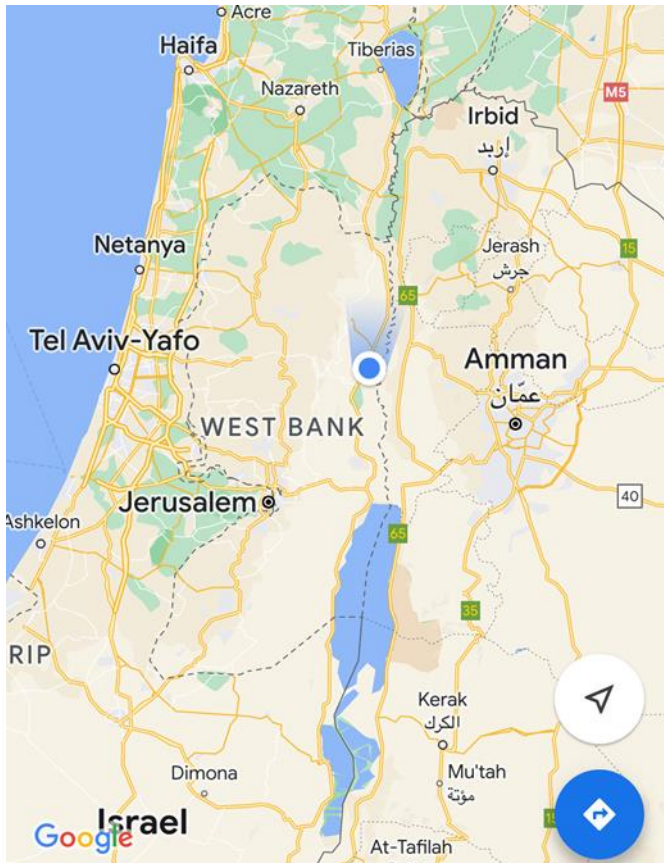


### Israel - Holy Land with Southwark Diocese

*Comments about my tour of Jesus' places of ministry: 'Oh so you've been on a trip'. 'No!' 'She's been on a Pilgrimage!' Someone else, before I travelled, said, 'You're going to follow your hero', ie Jesus!*

Flying to Tel Aviv, as the comments above imply, I, as they, had no idea what I was getting into. On one level everyone thinks seeing where Jesus lived and worked





played a significant role in Jesus' ministry.

Here I am standing in the Sea of Galilee at the place where it is thought Jesus made the BBQ on the beach for his disciples after his resurrection. Jesus had said, before his death, that he would go ahead of them to Galilee (Matthew 26:32, Mark 14:28). He did meet them here, fully alive, after death. The water is calm. The stones black and smooth and there is a sense of deep calm about the place. I have a handful of stones to remember this serene place by.

is going to be fantastic. On another level there's the everyday reality of what it's like to live where real fear infiltrates those whose lives are lived out behind the huge concrete wall. That same fear existed in Jesus' time living under the duress of Roman rule.

There were amazing hotels in Jerusalem and on Galilee with brilliant food. Plus a plethora of people from churches of all kinds. We made great friends and it was a special moment when Isha Polly was baptised in the Jordan River, where Jesus was baptised. Water



A boat trip on the Lake was stunning. Swimming with Bishop Christopher and a whole host of others was fun too!

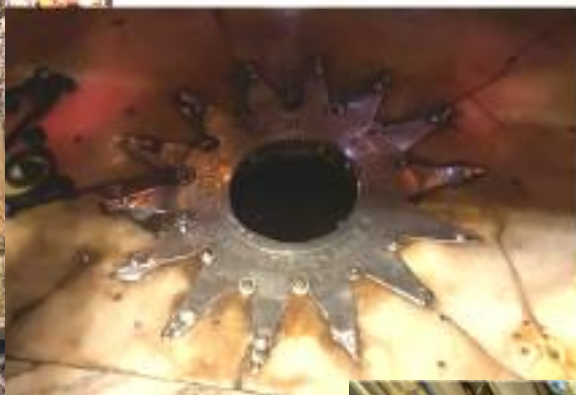






But, I think you're wondering where are the 'real' Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth pictures? Well, those are busier sites. Peace in these places is to be found in different ways. Mostly afterwards! The star marks where the

manger was. Queues and crowds are outside this picture.



Bethlehem was peaceful elsewhere - in this church at the Latin

Patriarchate waiting for an audience with Bishop William.



Here is the RC Dean of Westminster Cathedral, Father Michael Branch, by Bishop Christopher, Southwark Diocese. Standing is Amir, our Muslim friend who was so special in his support of Bishop Christopher and also in sharing about his faith. He made me smile.



This Pilgrimage was about meeting Jesus in his earthly place and in the mess of today: the mess at Nablus and the sad loss of life that prevented us

from visiting Jacob's Well; the mess that lives in the fearful stories shared by the Deputy Mayor of Bethlehem who lost a daughter, Christiana, at a checkpoint; the fear of Palestinian Christians eking out a life behind the concrete wall - water only gets delivered every 2 weeks.





Jesus' was driven to Capernaum from Nazareth to avoid religious officials. He made his home here. Peter and Andrew also lived here. He taught in the synagogue (not this exact one). People were astounded at his teaching with authority, unlike the scribes.

Jesus rebuked a demon, calling him to stop bothering a man. Understandably news about this impressive event spread throughout Galilee. He left the synagogue to go to Peter's home. He took Pe-

ter's sick mother-in-law by the hand. Right away she was healed, and serves them a meal. Crowds came to Peter's house with their sick ones. Jesus laid hands on each of them.

Great, vivid stories, but how does this correlate to us? I met the mess of life here at Capernaum. As a dispute erupted and I calmed the situation, I prayed for peace. Capernaum and the synagogue resonates Jesus' authority and as I called on the Holy Spirit for peace, peace came.



Tension visibly melted away. Jesus' teaching, miracles, and cleansing of lives, remains active today. He is the one who comes to save. Luke writes in his Gospel, 'They were amazed at his teaching because his word had authority.' (4:32). Despite the mess of all that is impacting the Holy Land at present, Jesus' ministry still bears weight as his authority and presence are known. I saw it and I witnessed it.

**Sue**



## Appointment of Two Governors to the Governing Body of Coulsdon C of E School

The PCC of St John's Church is looking to appoint two foundation governors to the governing body of Coulsdon C of E School. Foundation governors are appointed by the PCC, and are expected to be regular worshipping members of St John's Church, or another church. Their role includes that of ensuring and developing the Christian character of the school. Governors are expected to attend 4 full governing body meetings per year, as well as serving on two committees. In addition they are encouraged and welcomed to make visits to see the school in action. The term of office is 4 years.

From **Easter 2023** we are looking for a candidate to replace Adrian Deller on the **Finance and Premises Committee**. This candidate will ideally have financial skills and be able to analyse data quickly and effectively. Skills with website maintenance would also be appreciated.

From **September 2023** we are looking for a candidate to replace Gill Thaxter on the **Curriculum and Standards Committee and the Personnel Committee**. The ideal candidate will have at least an interest in and a willingness to learn about modern school curriculums. Some experience in HR work would be appreciated.

Excellent training and mentoring is given by the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education, and serving governors. This role is a great way to serve the mission of the church through high quality education in our school.

Please speak to me as soon as possible if you are interested and would like to know more. We will set up informal interviews with candidates and make recommendations to the PCC for their approval.

**PAUL ROBERTS** (*Rector, and Foundation Governor*)

## THE PASSION OF JESUS Good Friday—7 April—Trafalgar Square



**Two free  
Performances**

**12 noon &  
3.15 pm**

'100 Wintershall players present their electric and moving portrayal of the final days of Jesus.'

## **MOTHERS' UNION – *Transformation - Now!***

### **APRIL focus: Christ is risen!**

Mothers' Union is a Christian organisation that has been supporting families worldwide for over 140 years. Started by our founder Mary Sumner in 1876 in her local parish, we have grown into an international charity with over 4 million members in 84 countries. We demonstrate our faith in action. This happens as we work towards stopping poverty, stopping inequality, and stopping injustice. Our members work at grassroots level around the world. They bring hope and practical support to millions of people every year through parenting, literacy and community development programmes.

Our prayer is that we can:

***Transform ourselves, personally and spiritually, to live out our faith  
Transform the churches and communities we work with, and of which  
we are a part, to reflect Christ's kingdom  
Transform Mothers' Union to be relevant for 21st Century life.***

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" - Luke 1:37

### **BRANCH DATES:**

**Tuesday 4 April:** 9.45am Corporate **Holy Communion**, followed by refreshments



**Wednesday 26 April:** 2.00pm **Pray, Knit & Chat** in Church - do join us! All welcome whether you knit or not - delicious cakes, good company and time to remember others in prayer.

### **LAST MONTH:**

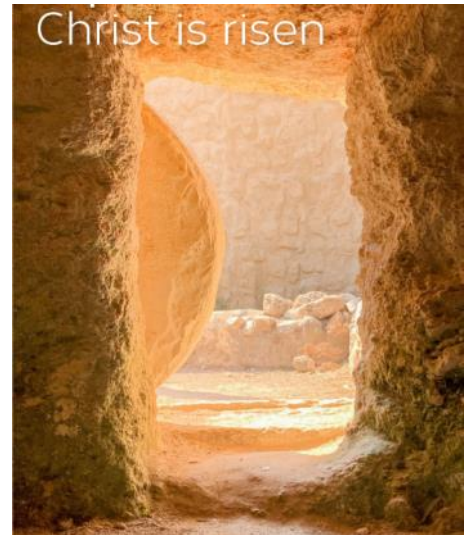
The Mothering Sunday Cake Sale in aid of the annual Mothers' Union 'Make A Mother's Day' Appeal was a welcome sight after the service. Thanks to Sandra and Rob Jeffrey, who set everything up beautifully and successfully encouraged people to buy, the total amount of donations received was £85.00 which was a terrific result! Thank you too to everyone who contributed delicious cakes and treats for the sale - clearly enjoyed by all!



**NEXT MONTH....SUNDAY 28 MAY - CREAM TEAS** in the Rectory Garden (or church if wet) celebrating St John's MU Branch 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! (see poster for more details)

### **Reflection:**

We partake of the Eucharist in glad obedience to Christ's call to "do this in remembrance of me". However, we are not doing so in memory of someone no longer with us. We are not raising a toast to fallen comrades or absent friends. For Christ is not fallen, he is risen: Christ is not absent, he is ever present! And he promises to be with us to the end of the age. The reason we can joyfully proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again is because of his resurrection to life. Christ is risen, he is risen indeed!



### **Monthly prayer:**

Loving Saviour, Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, we worship you, we give you thanks, we rejoice in your resurrection. May our songs of praise resound in heaven and earth bringing glory to your name. Amen



### **CUTTING OUR CARBON EMISSIONS**

We have all been told by now that flying (unless you are a bird) is bad for our planet; but I

was surprised to learn how much less difference it makes than does what we choose to eat. Flying, in fact, only accounts for 2.5% of global emissions, whereas food production accounts for no less than a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions, and the worst culprit is beef.

You can find a very interesting graph at [interactive.carbonbrief.org](http://interactive.carbonbrief.org), which is likely to offer you a few surprises. Just ask "What is the climate impact of eating meat and dairy?"

Fruit, vegetables and pulses produce little more than 1kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per kg - beef herds produce 60kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per kg! Even dairy registers about 20kg. Pork and poultry both score below 10kg.

There are now many alternatives to cow's milk available, but they are expensive! However one supermarket famed for its low prices sells what I consider to be the best-tasting oat milk at £1.09 a litre. Worth a try!

Do try searching for information on the internet. There's plenty there.

And please do send in your questions and useful planet -saving tips to us. We would really like the ECO site to become interactive.

Please send your comments to: [hazel.collis@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hazel.collis@yahoo.co.uk)

**Eco Group**



## Two important pieces of news from Paul ... (which you may have missed in our weekly newsletter)



### Area Dean

First, is to let you know that the Bishop of Southwark has asked Sue Thomas to be the new Area Dean after I step down from that role at Easter. I have been privileged to be Area Dean for the last 7 years, and have enjoyed playing a part in the wider life of the Diocese. Please pray for Sue as she takes on this new responsibility.

### Open Day

Last month's Open Day was a great success, both in terms of the number of people visiting the church to see the displays about the spire restoration project, and the financial outcome.

Financially, I can tell you that on the day itself we took £2753 in cash, and £720 electronically. Add to that recent donations totalling £5250 and a very generous bequest of £10,000, the total in the building fund now stands at **£91,737**. This is a splendid result and has edged us towards sight of the halfway point, which will help us apply to grant-making trusts.

We still have a long way to go, and so we will be repeating the display at the **Village Fair on July 2<sup>nd</sup>**, when we will also be serving cream teas in church. All the funds from the teas and other donations that day will go to the building project. Do let people know about the date, and do tell people about the project. You can find details of how to donate on the Donate Page of our website: <https://www.stjohns.coulsdon.net/donate-spire-fund>



### CATCHING UP WITH TONY!

What is going on? Here we are rejoicing in the imminent arrival of Spring, with the clocks going forward on 26<sup>th</sup> March, daffodils beginning to bloom, and weather forecasters predicting snow during the week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> March; but this morning a very select little band met to tidy the churchyard in some desperately cold conditions. Still – starting reluctant strimmers soon warmed us up, although poor Gill spent some of her time clearing out the rainwater gulley along the front of the church. A cold and miserable task at the best of times, but darn chilly on mornings like this!

I touched on a bit of a 'birdie' theme last month when I talked about Long Tailed Tits playing on the church windows; well over the last couple of days we have had a Red Kite circling over the house and down towards the Dollypers Hill nature reserve. The first one I saw was being harassed by a pair of crows, so I wasn't sure about it as we have seen herons that have filched goldfish out of our pond being



chased by them before, but today there was no doubt as it circled lazily on broad wings, showing its forked tail very clearly. For a number of years there has been a “Wake” of Red Kites (how about that for a quiz question?) that could be seen flying over the M40 on the way up to Oxford, but to see one here is very exciting. Let us hope it is part of a breeding pair; and not only that but Goldfinches have returned to our garden – to celebrate which I dug out the special feeder they have for the Niger seeds which they seem to enjoy.

A few days go by and the forecast snow arrived on a day when our daughter, having driven up from Wiltshire last night, is due in London. With the amount of snow in the road and in the garden I was slightly alarmed at the prospect of driving her to the station, so at about 7:00am I walked to the top of Marlpit Lane to check on the conditions.

It didn't look too bad, but erring on the side of caution I decided to go down Coulsdon Road and along the Brighton Road to Coulsdon South; where she was able to catch the 7:24 without difficulty. Returning home I got half way up Marlpit Lane without trouble, but someone had got into a pickle nearer the top causing a blockage, and with several cars turning round I did the same, and got home perfectly well.



Last Sunday with Rev Sue on her trip to the Holy Land, Rev Paul commissioned a group of us as Prayer Ministers so that this ministry in St John's could be reinstated after the three year COVID hiatus. It has proved very worthwhile in the past, so we hope and pray that it will be successful again, bringing comfort and solace to anyone who needs it. Then this coming Saturday we will be welcoming visitors to the St John's Open Day. Hundreds of leaflets (flyers) have been delivered around the parish so we are hoping for a good turnout – and lots of donations towards the restoration of spire and roof. The day came and went and what a success it turned out to be. Large numbers of people and some very generous donations which brought the total of St John's Building Fund up to nearly £92k. If we can get it up to £125k we will be in a position to start applying for grant aid funding. Of special note were Rev Paul's 'tours' around the church delivered in his own inimitable style with enough information to fill a book. It would be great Paul if perhaps you could do a re-run for church members who missed it as you told us things that even I had no knowledge of.

Somewhat less gratifying has been the loss of landline signal for many people on BT's 01737 exchange. With the loss of service approaching two weeks I wrote to our MP Chris Philp – and had an immediate response with him getting in touch with BT/Open Reach on our behalf, and who replied to him with a full explanation. To summarise what was said, there was a major theft of cable up at the top of Farthing Down affecting some 4200 end users. They said it was a

very complex and challenging repair, exacerbated by the fact that it was on Ancient Heritage land that required permission and agreement from the Rangers before work could be started. I'm not sure about other users but our telephone at home came back on last night (17<sup>th</sup> March) and this morning I received a call from a gentleman from BT's Executive Customer Resolution team. Very apologetic but said that as the complaint had come from an MP he would have to write formally to him. He also said that everyone affected would be receiving compensation – perhaps we could donate it to the Building Fund?

Away from church one or two folks have asked me about my motorbike restoration project, and how it is progressing. Well it is progressing – but slowly – although looking back at what has been achieved I am fairly happy. Bearing in mind that it had lain idle for something like fifteen years the engine is now running (at the start it was partially seized), seven hydraulic systems have been re-



stored into full working order, the four carburettors have been stripped and cleaned, the lights and horn work, and I have installed new direction indicators – LEDs - which now require individual resistors to make them flash properly. When he was still riding, Chris (our son) had taken it to the Santa Pod Raceway, and to lighten the load (!) he'd removed various bits and pieces, including a non-load-bearing part of the rear sub-frame, and the rear indicators. He told me that he'd gone down the drag strip in a little under 11 seconds so the bike must have worked then!

..... and it works now! The 'smoke' coming out of the exhaust is similar to that of a car when first starting in the morning. I can hardly describe the thrill when the engine fired for the first time - be good if I could get my mower to do the same!!

Mothering Sunday turned out to be a joyful occasion, especially as Rev Sue had to dive in to the breach at very short notice when Rev Paul, Nicy, and Christine all tested positive with COVID; let us pray that they all recover quickly, and congratulate Sue on the way she conducted the Worship Together service. Lots of personal anecdotes in her sermon, three young scouts doing the reading, and bunches of daffodils for everyone, not just the Mums but everyone engaged in 'mothering' which was Rev Sue's theme. We mustn't forget either, our three little song-birds up front who led us in the singing without Nicy. So a big 'well done' to Jen, Janice and Enid – thank you. Then a cake sale on behalf of Mothers' Union and the purchase of a whole Victoria Sponge for tea with our own children and grand-children. We hadn't quite counted on the superb meal we'd enjoyed at the La Fiaba restaurant at Caterham-on-the-Hill, but we all managed a slice – and



delicious it was too. We'd highly recommend this Mediterranean style eatery if you're looking for something slightly different.

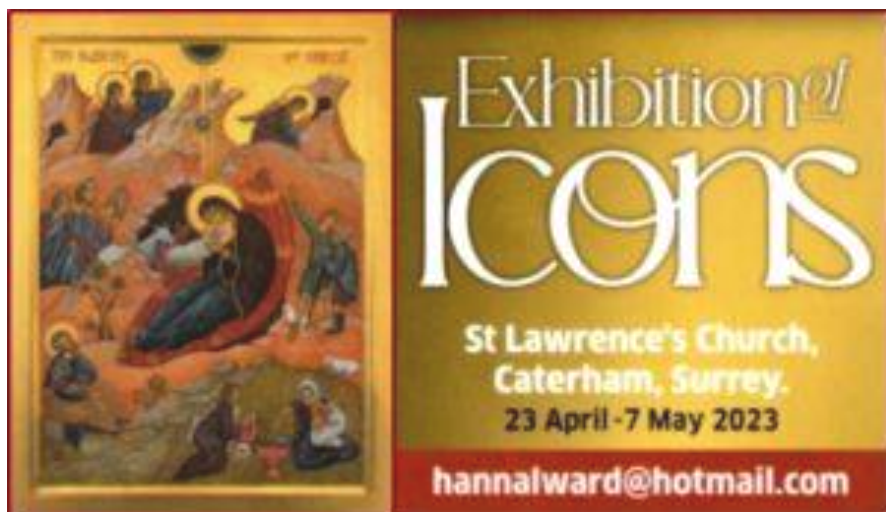
We have the Barn Dance next weekend, I have a very big birthday coming up (boo), and a couple of weeks later it will be Easter and Spring Harvest, so it's all happening, and as our gas bills go down with the slightly warmer weather, Enid and I would like to wish all our readers a happy and fruitful time, and a lovely Easter for all.

**Tony**

*Our daffodil cross blooms again  
with thanks again to Patricia Pegg for  
providing the bulbs*



## EXHIBITION of ICONS



Icons, drawings, frescos and illuminations by the local traditional byzantine iconographer, Hanna-Leena Ward. Open from 24 April, 12noon – 7pm daily. The opening night on 23 April starts with Evensong at 6pm in St. Mary's Church, followed by viewing of the icons in St. Lawrence's Church across the road, from

6.45 – 9.00pm. There will be daily icon painting classes from 10.00am – 2.00pm in St. Lawrence's Church during the exhibition: £35 daily. All levels welcome.

## OBERAMMERGAU – PART 2

**written by Hazel Minter and Vivien Job**

***Vivien Job takes up the story...***

We enjoyed our stay although it was tiring as there were lots of organised trips and it was very hot. The all-day journey from Italy took us through Austria and we finally arrived in Oberammergau, Germany shortly before dinner time. We had thought our hotel had an unusual name 'Hotel Wolf' but it became clear on arrival, it was a dog friendly hotel! We didn't meet any canine residents but there were many gifts to purchase in reception, all for dogs. When I later looked through the list of the cast for the Passion Play however, I noticed there were three people with the surname 'Wolf' including one of the conductors, so perhaps



Jesus enters Jerusalem

the hotel was owned by the family Wolf. That evening we walked around the village and saw many stores and workshops with souve-

The Cleansing of the Temple



nirs and beautiful carvings and paintings.

To be part of the Passion Play the cast had to be born in Oberammergau or have lived there for at least 20 years. So, our hotel manager was not eligible, but his young son was very excited about being able to take part. There are 120 speaking parts and more than 2,000 villagers involved in the play. When we were helped with directions by a man with a beard, we wondered what part he was playing! As has been mentioned already, on Ash Wednesday, the year before the performance, villagers are asked to start growing hair and beards but with the postponement, due to Covid, they ended up growing them for three years!

### ***Hazel Minter continues...***

Our tour guide also arranged for those that wanted to, to go into Oberammergau the day before the play, to visit the actual theatre, an amazing auditorium seating 4,000 people. Here we were given a talk by Abdullah Kenan Karaca, one of the villagers playing Nicodemus. He talked about the history of the play and answered questions afterwards. As Vivien has mentioned, the performers must be born in Oberammergau or have lived in the village for 20 years, *(although children are excluded)*



Living tableau: The Golden Calf



*from this rule*). The main roles are played by two villagers in rotation, as they have their own businesses/jobs to look after as well. This was a very interesting talk and something I'd not done before.

When we did see the play we were seated in the 5<sup>th</sup> row from the front! It takes place in German but you are given an English translation to help you follow proceedings. The over 2,000 performers included children, musicians, and stage technicians, who are all residents of the village. The play comprises spoken dramatic text, musical and choral accompaniment and Living images. The Passion Play Choir consists of a number of soloists and choristers, and during some scenes there will be a total of 64 vocalists on stage.

Although the audience is under cover, the play takes place in the open air, with the sky and mountains as the backdrop. The play would always take place whatever the weather, but in 2009 the stage was covered with a mobile roof construction, which is only deployed in poor weather, so that the cast now don't have to stand in the rain!

On the Passion Play stage there are adults, children and animals. The animals are indeed outnumbered, but they are no less demanding. Two camels, two horses, one donkey and all kinds of sheep, goats, chickens, and caged birds (which are released at the temple scene), took part in 2022. Apparently, the biggest challenge, however, are the horses. There were two this time, so that the Centurion and Pilate can ride onto the stage together, demonstrating Roman power.



The Arrest of Jesus

The Play starts on time at 2.30pm and runs for about 5 hours in total but with an interval of 3 hours for dinner in an allocated local hotel, before returning to the theatre at 8.00pm for final part. Once seated and the music begins, you get so involved in the play, and feel that you really are a witness to the events in the bible. The music is wonderful, and the choir appears seamlessly throughout the play.

The Play begins with the Entry into Jerusalem and tells the Passion from the Lord's Supper through to the Crucifixion and ends with the Resurrection.

Between scenes, moments from the Old Testament come alive as a Living Picture - a live tableau by people who hold their position without moving! They are references to show the interrelationship between the Old and New Testaments – the expulsion from Paradise, the Gold Calf, Red Sea, Burning Bush, Cain and

Abel, Moses before Pharaoh etc. They also serve as meditative points of reflection throughout the play.

I found one of the most moving scenes was the crucifixion, when the actors are put on the cross; you can even hear the nails being hammered and it brings a tear to your eyes.

In the final scene – The Resurrection - Jesus is carried to his grave but is not visible. An Angel tells the women, “He has risen”, and the Risen Lord appears briefly. The final scene emphasizes that the resurrection is a ‘mystery of faith’.

**Vivien adds:** At the end it was absolutely quiet in the theatre, no applause, no encores and no curtain calls. All the audience left very quietly. It was so moving.



## NEWS JUST IN from PURLEY FOOD HUB!

‘Last month was our second busiest March in the Food Hub’s 10-year history, behind only March 2020 (*at the start of the first Covid pandemic lockdown*). It was also the fifth busiest month since we started.

Food for **4,842 meals** was delivered last month for 538 hard-pressed clients and family members across South Croydon, Purley, Coulsdon and Waddon - 1,600 more meals than in February and nearly 1,300 more than in March 2022. Last month’s total took us past **300,000 meals overall** since 2013.

**Louise Willmer**, acting Management Committee Chair, says: “We continue to experience very high client demand and we thank everyone for your generous response following our urgent appeal for extra donations. Every donation received is very much appreciated and makes a significant difference to people facing food hardship at this time.”



### It's back to basics for April's 'most needed' list

To replenish the shelves after our busy March, it's back to basics in April in our monthly appeal for the items we need most. These include, once again, **long life whole milk, jars of peanut butter, packets of dried potato,**



500g packets of pasta, jars of pasta sauce, tins of fruit and hot chocolate requiring only **water**. Non-food items particularly needed are **toilet rolls, unisex shampoo and unisex deodorants**



Thank you to everyone who brought items to fill the wooden box in the church porch to overflowing recently and thank you to Sylvia & Graham who filled their car and took the load to the Hub. As you can see the need is on-going. Please continue to help by adding to the box if you can. Thank you.

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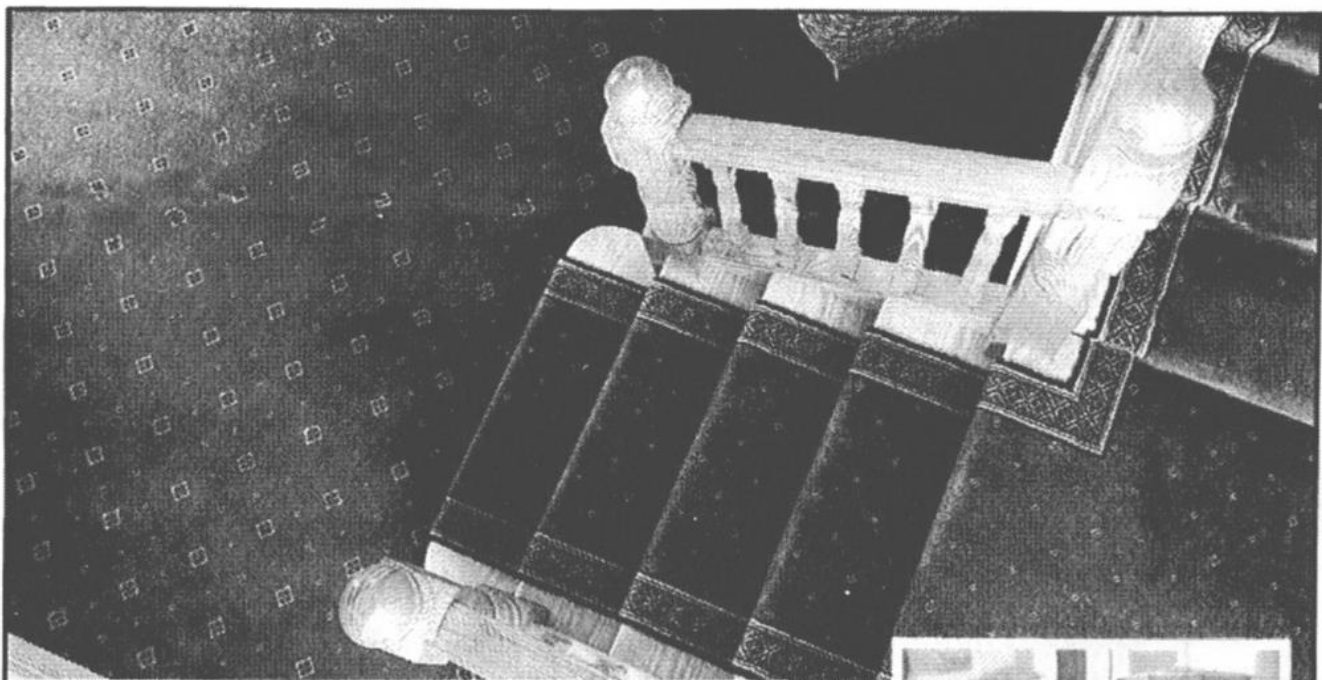
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