

COULSDON  
PARISH  
CHURCH  
St. John



50p

March 2023

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# Spring is here!



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

## **March**

**2—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

**4—Saturday**

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

**5—SECOND SUNDAY of LENT**

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

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

**7—Tuesday**

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

4.15 p.m. Life Lent Group meets, in the Old Church

**9—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

**11—Saturday**

10.00 a.m. **CHURCH RESTORATION OPEN DAY** (to 4.00 p.m.)

**12—THIRD SUNDAY of LENT**

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

11.15 a.m. Family Service

**14—Tuesday**

4.15 p.m. Life Lent Group meets, in the Old Church

**16—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

**18—Saturday**

10.00 a.m.. Baptism Preparation, in Church

**19—FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT**

**Mothering Sunday**

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

9.30 a.m. Worship Together, in Church

**21—Tuesday**

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

4.15 p.m. Life Lent Group meets, in the Old Church

**22—Wednesday**

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

**23—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

**25—Saturday**

7.00 p.m. **BARN DANCE, in the Church**

**26—FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT**

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

11.15 a.m. Family Service

**28—Tuesday**

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

4.15 p.m. Life Lent Group meets, in the Old Church

**30—Thursday**

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

# 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)*

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

### Our worldwide family – the church

During February we will have had two visiting speakers at our Sunday services: on the 12<sup>th</sup> Mervyn Thomas, Founder/Director of Christian Solidarity Worldwide, and on the 26<sup>th</sup> Rev. Tracy Marlow, Vicar of St Peter's Church, St Helier Estate, Sutton.



Mervyn told us very movingly about the work of CSW as a 'voice for the voiceless', speaking up for Christians, and people of other faiths, who face persecution for their faith. Mervyn was a founder of CSW 43 years ago, and was instrumental in starting the all-party parliamentary group for Freedom of Religion and Belief. That group started with just 3 MPs, and now numbers over 170 MPs and Peers.

We heard about the situation in Cuba where many church pastors and activists are imprisoned because they have spoken up for human rights in a state that is tightly controlled by its hardline communist government. After our two services nearly 50 people signed a petition calling for Pastor Lorenzo's immediate release.

CSW is campaigning for 20 individuals and churches in Cuba alone, and we



can be part of that campaign by praying and writing letters. CSW produces a six-monthly booklet, 'Connect & Encourage', with the names and addresses of people who we can support by writing to them; some are in prison, some under house arrest, and some are the families of those in prison. Using Google Translate, because I can't speak Spanish, I have written to Pastor Lorenzo in prison and to his wife assuring them of our prayers and support. It

says in Hebrews 13: 3 *'Continue to remember those in prison as if you were*



*together with them in prison, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering’.*

You may not feel you can join a demonstration holding a placard or banner, but you could write a letter; it would mean so much to those in prison, or whose husbands or wives are in prison. You can download ‘Connect & Encourage’ from [www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk) or phone 020 8329 0010 for a printed copy.

On February 26<sup>th</sup> Rev. Tracy Marlow will be speaking about generosity. Last year our PCC made a grant of £750 to St Peter’s Church to enable them to buy a new noticeboard. The church has become a centre of mission, but the building was in a poor state, and the congregation wanted to smarten it up in order to be more attractive and welcoming to visitors. The Bishop of Croydon, Bishop Rosemarie, has encouraged churches in more wealthy areas, like Old Coulsdon, to partner with churches that are active in financial resources, so we were happy to help. At the time of writing we are looking forward to Tracy’s visit to St John’s and I hope this might develop into a fruitful partnership in the gospel.



As we launch our Spire Restoration Project on 11<sup>th</sup> March let’s not forget that the church is the family of God, and that although we have a responsibility for the upkeep of our historic building, we also have an obligation to our brothers and sisters in Christ who struggle and suffer here in the UK and around the world.

With all good wishes

Paul



**The first day of meteorological spring is 1<sup>st</sup> March.** However the **Spring** or Vernal **Equinox**—20 March this year (at 9.24 p.m.)—marks the astronomical start of spring. Personally I like to think of the first day of March as the turning



point from the winter months when the daffodils—heralds of spring—are already announcing its arrival! And there’s plenty to announce at St. John’s with ‘Lent Groups’ popping up around the parish, a grand ‘Open Day’ and a lively Barn Dance not forgetting all our regular services and events. So it’s definitely time to come out of hibernation and join in all that’s happening!



St John the Evangelist Church  
Old Coulsdon



Spire Restoration Project

# **Church Open Day**

## **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March**

Join us at any time between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. for the launch of our  
Spire Restoration Project

- Exhibits about the history of the church
- Plans of the proposed work to repair the spire
- Children's activities
- Tours of the church at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Light refreshments throughout the day
- Opportunities to donate to help save our spire

*Help us save this historic landmark.*

## YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN THEM...

... and they'd love to have your help and your company! Why not come along and join the small group that meets once a month on the first Saturday to keep the area of the churchyard put aside as the Garden of Remembrance neat and tidy. You would find a warm friendly group and the gentle exercise in the fresh air would be a bonus.



**See you any time between 10.00 & 12.00 on Saturday 4 March.**

## And here's why it's all worthwhile ..

"My brother and I had an encouraging and happy visit to St John's Church last week. We were able to find the gravestone of my grandmother who died in 1950. The grave was in good condition after many years. Thank you to the team who have seen it so well preserved after many years. We found the grave without much difficulty thanks to the excellent plan in the Church Porch"

## THINKING ABOUT GIVING UP SOMETHING FOR LENT?



One suggestion is that you could give up a couple of hours each week to joining a 'Lent Group'. During Lent our house-groups and Life Group will be studying '**Dust and Glory: A Lent journey of faith, failure and forgiveness**'. How about joining one of the groups when '*we are all invited to explore how we can live well with the mess of everyday life?*' '*Dust and Glory*' encourages us to take a fresh

*look at the frustrations and failings that every day brings and, rather than pretending we can always avoid them, seek to learn from them and grow closer to God through them.*' Why not take the plunge and contact Sue Thomas – 07712 507142 or at [sue.thomas431@gmail.com](mailto:sue.thomas431@gmail.com) to find out more about joining a house-group or the Life Group (meetings on various days/times) – just for Lent?

## PRAM SERVICE for Babies, Toddlers & Preschoolers



We did it—we all helped to make a pancake we could share at Pram Service on Shrove Tuesday! Everybody played a part in making the batter—even the babies were helped to add some of the milk and stir it up. Then, thanks to Jo who whisked it off to the church kitchen, we were able to share some fresh warm pancake before the end of the service!

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 21 March** 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. Come and give us a try.—we'd love to see you.



## GET YOUR DANCING SHOES READY!



A live band - 'The Crooked Stovepipe' with their Caller - is coming to St. John's to lead our Barn Dance on **Saturday 25 March** with a zing! It's a real treat to have live music and with the chairs cleared to the sides with tables for supper there will be plenty of space in the church for us to enjoy it to the full with some lively dancing. Bring friends along and you can book a table for up to eight people—or come on your

own or with a friend. The wonderful thing about barn dancing is you don't need to know how to do it—you can just join in. If you don't fancy dancing why not come along and watch everybody else and enjoy the supper and good company. You will need to bring your own plate, cutlery, drink and glass—and you must buy/book a ticket beforehand. Full details further on.



## *Sewing Days and Upgrades...*



Ebony, our rescue cat, is the most unhelpful animal!! Trying to make curtains is impossible in 'her' kitchen. The table makes a great space for cutting fabric and pinning header tape, but she just would not allow any threading of needles or trimming of thread ends. She is impossible! She thinks that the threads look like some intriguing prey and she jumps with delight, and with a great pounce, on every pull and stitch of the thread.

I've taken to laying everything down until she's settled elsewhere before sewing out of her sight. And when that's all over, with the curtains complete, she then 'owns' her precious curtains before she sleeps on them.

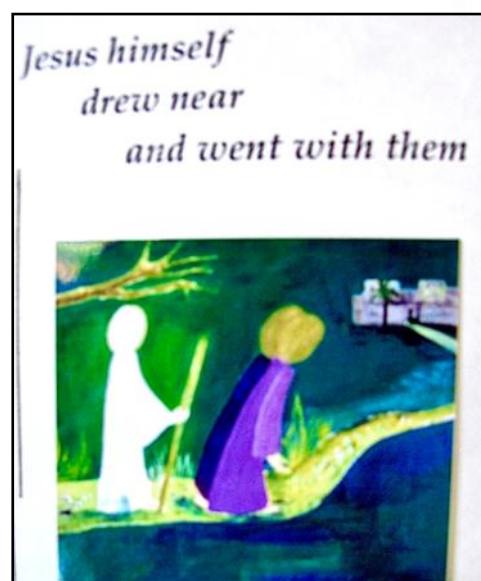


Making curtains is a chance to slow down, to think, to reflect and to get excited for new times ahead. Because these curtains are really quite something...they mark a change of room use and the fact that both our sons have moved into their own homes. I'll be gaining a study, so no books will be spread between three rooms, and the Guest Room is being upgraded to a bigger space.

It took me ages to decide on a fabric - the fabric is a 'cow parsley' design in muted blue, though it looks green. I recycled the old curtains by using the outer fabric as the lining and the old lining itself, plus I re-used the header tape. I even used up my Grandmother's Silko green and cream cotton reels. No wastage at all and it saved me having to source these things. Sometimes it's about thinking out of the box but that does take time. And it's time we often don't think we have, yet it's important.

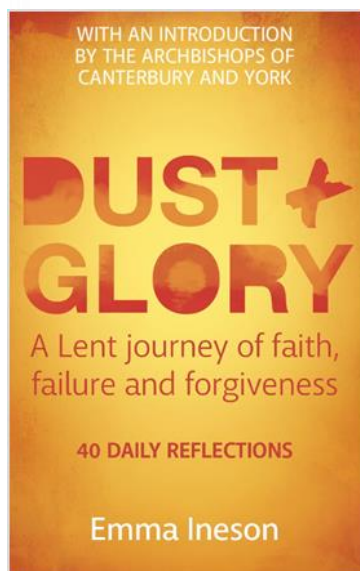
Lots happens in the planning, when we take the time, to make the end result more pleasurable. Had I just bought a pair of curtains that would have done the job, there isn't then the satisfaction of knowing the love and care put into every stitch: how re-using my grandmother's threads is somehow weaving her backstory into this new room. The labour of love adds something that is missing had I just quickly put some curtains up. It was important to me in re-owning space in the house to mark new times and a new season ahead. It can be hard moving on from some very happy times in these 'old' rooms, yet with beautiful care and attention to detail, they begin, with me, a new chapter as we put them to new use. I look forward to a new study and perhaps a craft table with the sewing machine poised for the next project!

Taking time, reflecting, brings insight and clarity: you may like to try it with your own favourite project and take time out to appreciate what matters. It happened to the disciples as they slowed down, walking on the road to Emmaus. They reflected back to what had happened in Jerusalem. Their hearts were yearning for the past, but then a stranger came and walked beside them and **'...he opened their minds so they could understand...'** (Luke 24:45). Jesus came, going right into their home, to put things to rights by breaking bread. Then they recognised him. What more do we need?



**Sue**

*A time to reflect begins this Lent:*



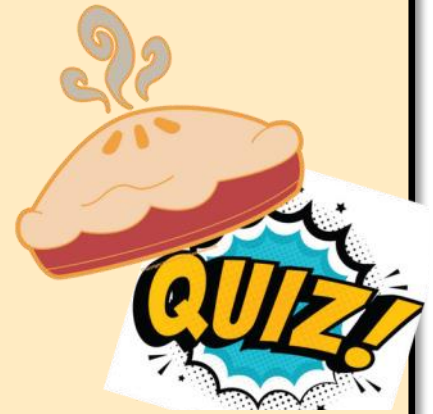
House Groups, Life Group and individuals will be studying this booklet. Due to demand there is now just one copy of the 'Dust and Glory' booklet available to browse on the Prayer Table in the old church. However each week Christine is producing helpful guidance sheets for individual use which you are welcome to take. If you'd like something more substantial, there is an accompanying book, entitled 'Failure' (recommended by the Archbishop of Canterbury) Like to know more about joining a house group—contact Sue (see p.8)

House Groups or Life Group:	
Tuesday	4.15pm & 8.00pm
Wednesday	2.30pm
Thursday	3.00pm

# **‘A QUIZ’**

with  
**AFTERNOON TEA**

Old Coulsdon Congregational Church invites you to join them for a Quiz afternoon with Tea on **Saturday 18 March** at 1.30 for 2.00 p.m. start in the Cameron Hall. Come on your own or bring some friends (teams of up to 8) Tickets at just £5 each must be bought in advance from Malcolm on 01737 554362 or at [pastormalcolm@btinternet.com](mailto:pastormalcolm@btinternet.com)



## **MOTHERS' UNION –Christian Care for Families** **MARCH focus: Valuing women**



Mothers' Union is a global family committed to sharing God's love through practical action, spiritual sustenance and compassion. As an international Christian movement, our 4 million members across 84 countries work together to help transform lives in the world's hardest-to-reach families and communities.

With kindness, courage and compassionate action, we will not stop until we live in a world free of violence, poverty and injustice, where everyone can thrive.

We work with people of all faiths and none. We welcome people from all walks of life to join us, and we offer whatever help is needed., to whoever needs it, whenever it is needed. We believe that when people come together to solve challenges, amazing things can happen.

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 7 March: 9.45am Corporate Holy Communion, followed by refreshments**

**SUNDAY 19 March: *Mothers' Union Sunday* - MU Cake Sale in aid of MU Appeal—*'Make a Mother's Day'***



**Wednesday 22 March: 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.**





**DATE FOR YOUR DIARY....SUNDAY 28 MAY - CREAM TEAS** in the Rectory Garden (or church if wet) celebrating **St John's MU Branch 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!**

### **LAST MONTH: MU AGM**



**Congratulations to  
Hazel & Elfi.**

After a good catch-up over coffee and cake we had the opportunity to look back and think about all that happened in the past year and give thanks for the many and varied contributions that members have made during that time. We celebrated with Elfi Osborn, her 30 yrs membership of MU and also welcomed Hazel Collis as a new member.

We also looked forward to this year, particularly as we celebrate our branch's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a Cream Tea on Sunday 28 May. Over the next few months we will consider all the

different seen and unseen work of MU to ensure that we have the resources to continue to thrive once Paul and Nicy move at the end of August. To round off the morning we enjoyed a most enlightening talk and presentation about The Passion Play performed every ten years at Oberammergau, given by Hazel Minter and Vivien Job with additional input from Hazel Collis - as all three had been to the Passion Play at different times last year. We were so inspired by this talk that we felt it was well worth sharing with others - so Part 1 appears in this month's magazine, and Part 2 next month.

### **Reflection on values:**

One way of assessing the value of anything is by how much someone is willing to pay for it. In the past (and in some places in the present) there has been the unjust situation of women receiving a lower salary than men for doing exactly the same work. When we look at our value in the light of the price Christ paid for our salvation, however, there is no inequality at all. God deemed each of us worth the cost of redemption, male and female alike. May we reflect God's example in the way we value one another.



**March:**  
Valuing women

### **Our monthly prayer:**

**Loving Lord, who has created us all in his image,  
open our eyes to see your face in those of our sisters and brothers.  
Transform our hearts and minds that we may respect and value each  
other as beloved children of God. Amen**





# **BARN DANCE**



## **SAT. 25 MARCH**

7.00 p.m.

St. John's Church, Old Coulsdon

**with LIVE MUSIC from  
'CROOKED STOVEPIPE'**

**Tickets £15 (under 12s £7)  
[INCLUDES SUPPER]**

*Advanced booking only*

from St. John's Parish Office

on 01737 552461 or email: [stjohns@coulsdon.net](mailto:stjohns@coulsdon.net)

## Creme Egg filled Chicks and Rabbits

We will have knitted chicks and rabbits filled with creme eggs on sale in church on **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March**, priced at £1.40 each. We will also have a few without chocolate eggs, so that you can personalise your gift, priced at £1. Any funds raised will be allocated to the General Fund to support the running of St John's.

**Lynn H and Hazel M**

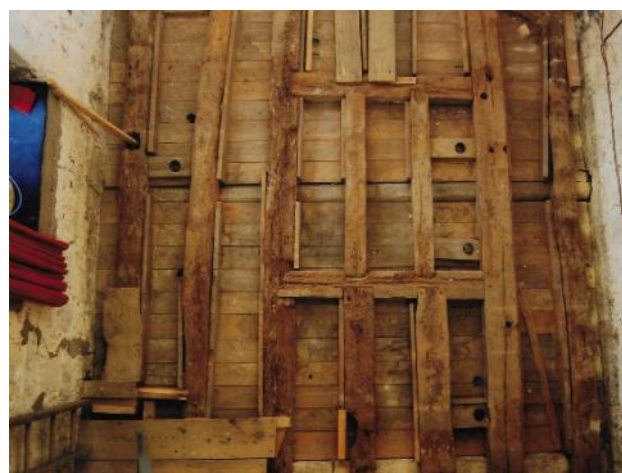


## FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT WITH TONY!

With just a week to go (deadline 15<sup>th</sup> mthly) before our Editor Wendy politely enquires as to whether I have anything for her, I realise that I haven't put pen to paper, and wonder if I have actually done anything interesting, or have spent the last month looking at the weather, before finally rejoicing when the rain stopped and the sun came out.

Then a couple of weeks ago I was chatting with Ian McCracken, who is heavily involved in the spire/roof fundraising group, as he was taking photographs to help illustrate the maintenance needs of a Grade 1 Listed medieval church. This led me to offer him pictures of some of the projects I'd been involved in over the years – and what a trip down memory lane it was.

The theft of copper from the main roof and porch back in 2011, the replacement of the ringing chamber floor, and the visit by a dendrochronologist who confirmed that these timbers dated from the early C15th





The 2½ years it took to gather funding and approval for the drop down screen, and even longer to deal with the revised lease arrangements for the electrical sub-station in the corner of the churchyard.

Then there was the kitchen disaster when the ceiling came down



The break-in when thieves wrecked Wendy's office, and then smashed the aumbry out of the wall – and the wonderful job the stonemason did in replacing the stonework, and the locksmiths who were able to repair the damaged safe after it was recovered.

The repairs done to the swing doors – another job



that took some time, but the skill and perseverance of the chap who did the work was amazing.





..... and the repair and restoration of the tower clock ....



I remember as the installation was finished, the hands were set at 12:00 – noon – and we all raced outside to watch as the mechanism automatically advanced them to the correct time – here at five past two.

Some great times and many frustrations, but thanks to so many people in our congregation who gave their time and in some cases the most generous donations, we have been able to keep our beautiful building functioning.

Now we must encourage the same commitment and enthusiasm necessary to raise the money needed to restore the spire (and hopefully have a little lot) left over to fix the Old Church chancel roof as well.



Which brings me on to February's gardening 'club'. A beautiful morning enabled us to get a lot of work done, and even an extra half hour or so, thanks to the thoughtful kindness of Janice Hollobone who came out of the MU's AGM to bring us coffee and cakes – thanks Janice – and as always huge appreciation to the hardworking souls who contributed to the bags of rubbish that you see below.



Later in the week I came across Brian Udell litter picking on the 'butterfly garden' outside the churchyard wall – another example of the community spirit we love in Old Coulsdon. What a difference compared to the person who emptied a can of white paint on the bus stop pavement outside Coulsdon Library, and the budding artist who trampled in it to write the word 'DANNY' on a clean area of path. Ralph suggested that it might have been someone advertising a well-known fish & chip shop locally – but I very much doubt that.





Finally to wind up this epistle, we had visitors at church yesterday. Mervyn Thomas, Founder President of Christian Solidarity Worldwide, and recently elected Chair of the UK FoRB (Freedom of Religion or Belief) Forum, who as guest preacher gave us a very stimulating and informative sermon on the persecution of Christian and other minorities around the world – a talk which elicited a well-earned round of applause.

Then as the songbirds at the front - Nicy, Enid and Jen – led us in the next song, there appeared three little Long Tailed Tits flitting about the windows. First in the big window above the altar and then clinging to the saddle bars of the windows on the SW aisle. Could they be incarnations of long gone friends attracted back to St John's by the music and happy atmosphere that has been created here, and which they remember still? I hope so and pray that the music goes on.

**Tony**

## THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



**Why not join Christians around the world on Friday 3 March at 10.30am at Coulsdon Methodist Church.** This is a service traditionally written by women but everyone is invited to pray for, and with, Taiwanese Christians who have prepared the service. The subject is '***I have heard about your faith***' so if they have heard of our faith, it would be good if we could support them on this one day in the year. Refreshments and fellowship with members of other local churches afterwards.

## The Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call

Each year, the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call raises funds for local community projects in Southwark and our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe and Jerusalem, as well as calling parishes to a time of prayer and contemplation.

In 2023, the theme is "mental health & well-being", and projects have been chosen that help with access to medical care both here and in our Link Diocese of Jerusalem. Access to food is a common theme too as worry about being able to feed the family leads to enormous stress, so we feature foodbanks here and nutritional gardens in our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe. Many too need support to deal with the pressures of life and we are asked also to support projects to facilitate well-being by developing strategies to cope with the stress and mental illness caused by our modern world.



Agricultural work takes place in nutritional garden



'The Man Shed' - Participants in action during a workshop for men with mental health issues in Kingston

Each week there will be a display at the back of the church giving more information, and you can find out more, and how to donate, on the Southwark Diocese website:

[www.southwark.anglican.org](http://www.southwark.anglican.org) As we spend time in prayer and contemplation this Lent, I hope that you will feel able to generously support the projects that have been chosen this year.

**PAUL**

**[If you would like to make a donation by cheque this can be sent directly to: The Hon. Treasurer, The Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call, c/o Trinity House, 4 Chapel Court, Borough High Street, London. SE1 1HW Cheques should be made payable to 'The Bishop of Southwark's Lent Fund'. (Charity no. 1075122)]**

## IT'S UP TO EACH ONE OF US!

We are not on track to meet Carbon Emission Reduction targets and the gap is worrying, but what can each one of us do to play our part in carbon emission reduction, in order to protect our world?

The Climate Gap Report lists prime actions for individuals:-

- Reduce meat consumption by 20% (this includes pet food)
- Reduce dairy consumption
- Reduce food wastage
- Insulate our homes
- Ensure our heating is efficient
- Choose electric cars
- Reduce air and road travel and use public transport
- Increase repair and buying second-hand and
- Choose sustainable brands

It is well worth pondering what changes we can each make in order to make a real difference and cherish God's world.

**Eco Group**







## **OBERAMMERGAU – THE PASSION PLAY –** *PART 1 (Hazel Minter)*

Oberammergau is in the district of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, in Bavaria, Southern Germany. The small town on the Ammer River, is known for its woodcarvers and woodcarvings, and of course The Passion Play, which owes its origins to events in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.



© GNTB / Francesco Carovillano

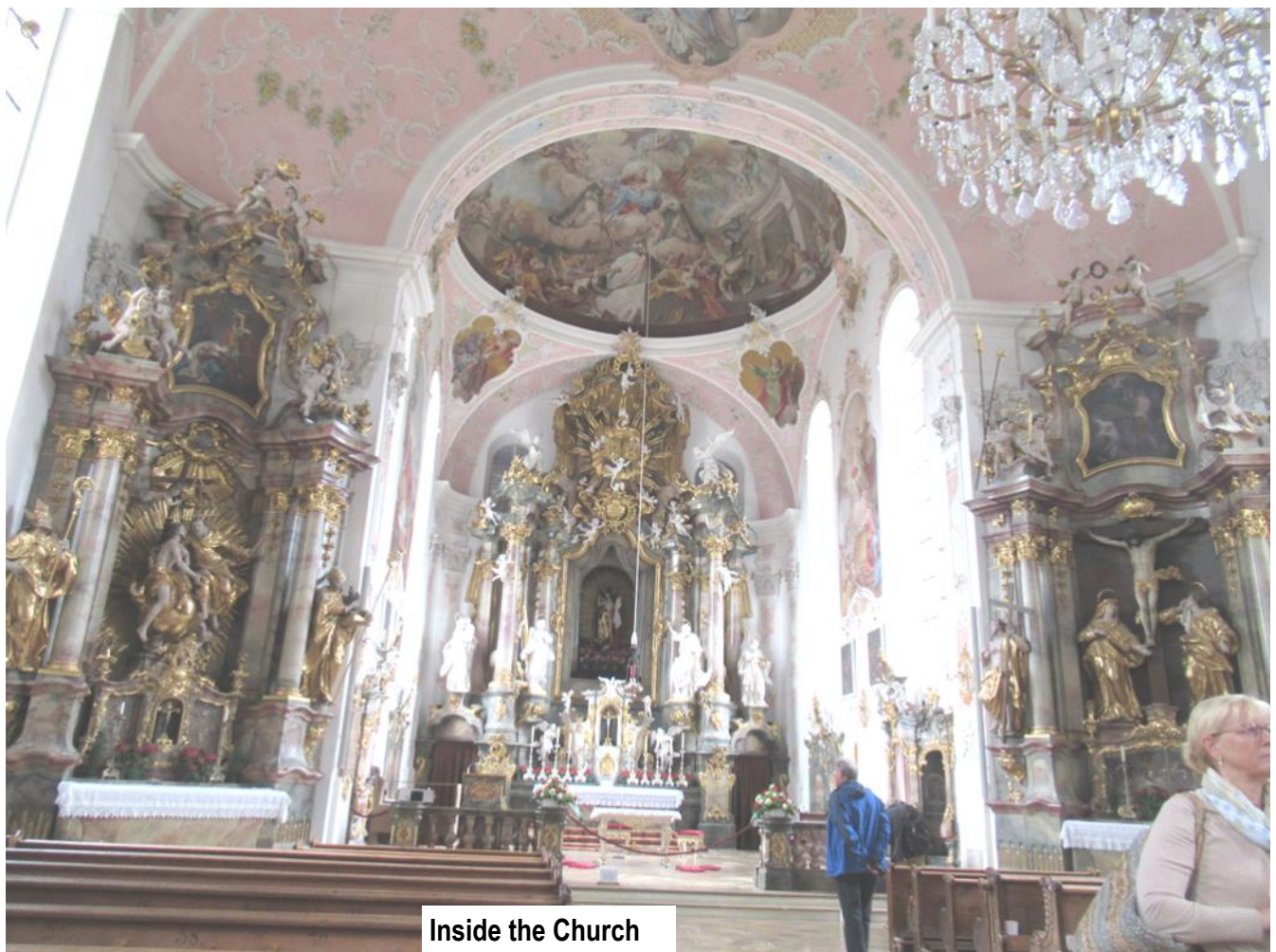
In 1633, the bubonic plague raged in many parts of Europe and did not spare the residents of Oberammergau. The villagers prayed to God and promised to perform the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ every ten years if no one was



to die of the plague anymore. The adult death rate slowly subsided and the villagers believed they had been spared and kept their part of the vow when the play was first performed in 1634. The promise has been kept to this day. The play is now performed in years ending with a zero, as well as in 1934 which was the 300th anniversary and 1984 which was the 350th anniversary (though the 1920 performance was postponed to 1922 due to post war economic conditions, and the 1940 performance was cancelled due to the onset of the Second World War in 1939).

It struck me as strange that in 1920 the play was postponed by 2 years due to the aftermath of the First World War and then 100 years later the 2020 play was also postponed by 2 years due to a different kind of War – the Covid Pandemic!

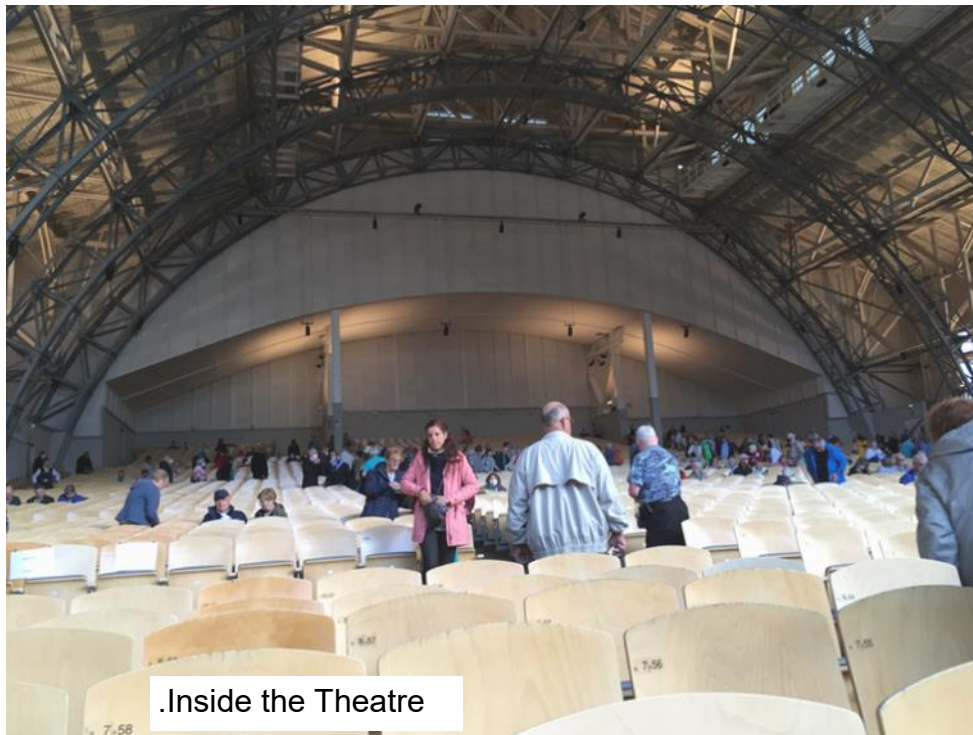
In view of the history of the play it seemed a poignant time to go as we came out of the 'plague' of the Covid Pandemic, so a friend and I booked to go in July 2022. This would be my third visit: I last went in 2000 and 2010.



The play was originally performed in Oberammergau's parish church which eventually proved to be far too small for performances of the Passion Play, so it was decided to hold the Play in the graveyard of the church, before the graves of the villagers who had died in the plague. We visited the church which is very ornate inside.

Over the years there were many temporary wooden stages built, but in 1890 a new, purpose-built theatre was built and, apart from some of the scenes on the

side of the stage, it would have looked much as it does today. It was ready in time for the 1900 performance, with the six-arched hall capable of holding over 4000 spectators. The Passion Play Theatre is now a listed building.



Our tour guide arranged for those that wanted to, to go into Oberammergau the day before the play, to visit the theatre, something I had not done before. 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. The per-

formers must be born in Oberammergau or have lived in the village for 20 years, (*although children are excluded 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.

The Passion Play takes about 4 years of preparation, one aspect of which is the **'Hair and Beard Decree'** on Ash Wednesday, of the year of the play.

The Decree has also become a kind of starting signal heralding the Passion Play season: From that day, the villagers officially become members of the Passion Play cast, the decree now applies equally to both sexes. "*It is prohibited to cut off head and facial hair until after the final performance.*" The only exception being the actors cast in the roles of Romans: they get to wear their hair short and to shave regularly. But the extras on stage are expected to look as historical and long-haired as possible. The sheer number of participants makes it impossible to use wigs or false beards.

I understand that at the end of the 2022 season, it will be possible for the first time to donate the carefully cultivated hair to make wigs for children with leukaemia. With 2000 people involved, there should be quite a heap of material to work with.

This year the façade of the Oberammergau Museum was hidden behind a new blue cube. A few weeks before the Passion Play premiere the 1910 building itself becomes an art object within public space, visible from afar. **"(IM)MATERIAL - Fabric, Body, Passion"** is the name of the building and room installation for the Passion Play 2022. The panels that make up the interim façade are covered with the blue costumes worn by the people of Jerusalem during the Passion



Plays of 2000 and 2010.

Many hands have unravelled them and glued them together to form a mosaic of fabric. The blue “wall of fabric” extends inside the museum building over all three storeys, creating a disconcerting inner world where the space and its objects are distorted and alienated and an outer world where everything is as normal.



Museum—'blue wall' of costume fabric.

The artist Klaus Vogt collected the long hair that the participants cut off after the Passion Plays in 2000, 2010 and the postponement of the Passion Play 2020. He felted a one-kilometre-long cord from them, as a symbol of how people can work together in harmony, 'pulling on the same strand' so to speak, to realise a vision and achieve a common goal. This cord now leads through the exhibition as a visible guide in all rooms...*'we are connected'*.

*To be continued...Part 2 in April Magazine*



You are invited to  
the 'Painting for Pleasure' group's  
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## NEWS from PURLEY FOOD HUB

### 'High winter demand puts food stocks under pressure

Fish/meat paste and peanut butter top the list of items most needed in March.

**Because of high demand since before Christmas, our stocks of nearly 20 of the 45 food and toiletry items we give to clients are currently severely depleted.**



Our most needed list for March has 10 of these items, including **jars of fish or meat paste and peanut butter, breakfast cereals (500g size) and jars of honey and jam.** Also listed are packets of **dried potato** and **savoury biscuits**, as well as **children's desserts (jellies, puddings & Angel Delight), packets of dried custard** needing only water and tins of **rice pudding.** The non-food items we especially need this month are **unisex deodorant** and **toilet rolls.**

With huge thanks to so many individual and family supporters and churches, schools, businesses and community organisations, we have now provided food for 295,000 meals to hard-pressed clients and their families since we opened 10 years ago in 2013. **An enormous thank-you to everyone!**

***And thank you to all at St. John's who filled the wooden box in the church porch since Christmas with a wonderful selection of goods which Sylvia & Graham were able to take to the Hub in February. Delighted to say it is already filling up again and if you could help by donating something they may be able to make another trip to the Hub soon. (Ed)***

**STOP PRESS! Good News: By popular demand our Christmas Tree Festival will be back this year!**

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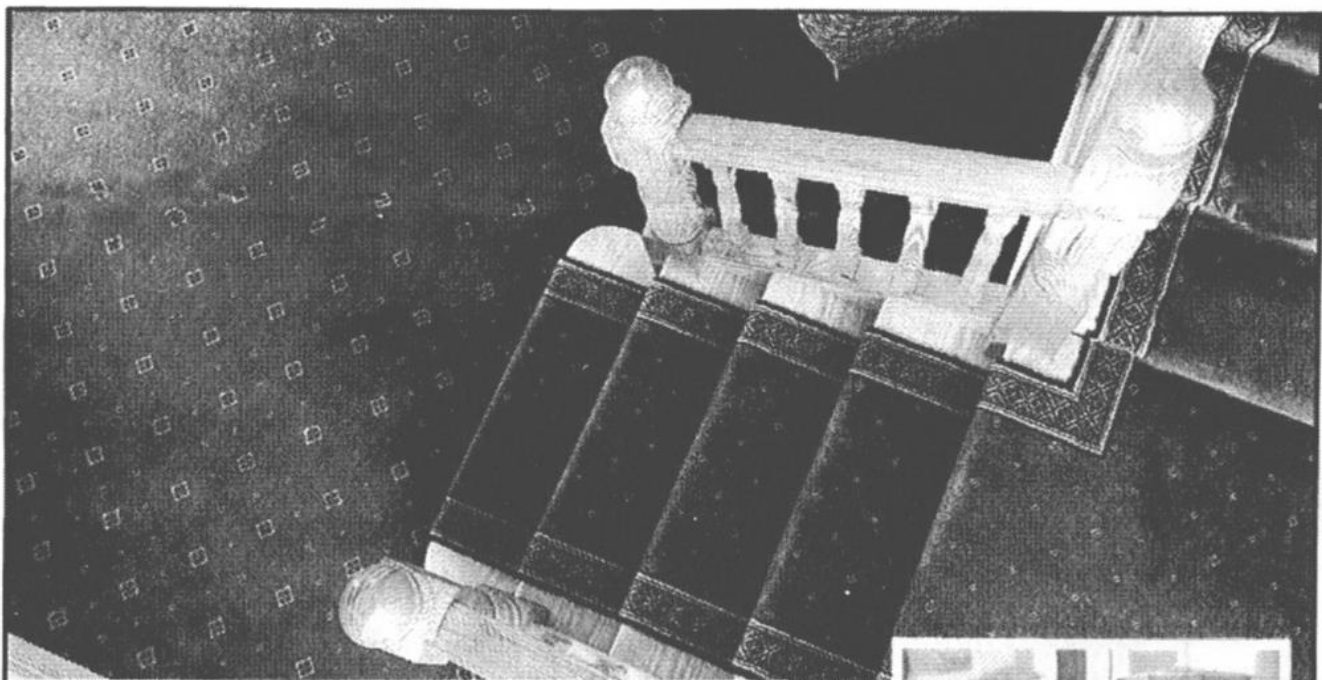
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