



# St Helen's Church Magazine

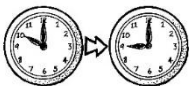
## April 2024



Details of all our services and activities are in the magazine.



Everyone is welcome



Don't forget clocks go back on the 30<sup>th</sup> March

Please give a donation towards the cost of producing this magazine.

**Rev. Stephen Monk - Rector of St. Helen's**



10 Normanhurst Park, Darley Dale, Matlock DE4 3BQ Tel. 734257  
Email: rev.stephenmonk@btinternet.com

**Churchwardens**

**Steve Walker**



01629 55863

**Chris Long**



01629 735778

**Joint Parochial Church Committee Members for St Helen's**

Penny Dakin (Secretary)	
David Wills (Treasurer)	davidr.wills@icloud.com
Freda Brill (Safeguarding)	733360
Chris Townsend	56622
Ann Bradley (Verger)	735776
Roger Young (Deanery Synod)	<a href="mailto:mrrby54@gmail.com">mrrby54@gmail.com</a>
Susan Young (Deanery Synod)	

**Church Social Committee**

Roz Woodley	733033	Penny Dakin	
Sandra Brown		Janet Rickinson	
Stephen Monk	734257	Chris Townsend	56622

**Please feel free to contact any member of the PCC or Social Committee if you have a question or suggestion.**

**All enquiries and more information on all services and events:**

**[www.sthelensdarleydale.org.uk](http://www.sthelensdarleydale.org.uk)**

## **A Thought on the evening of life?**

We've just been through, in England, another appeal for the legalisation of assisted dying for those with terminal illness. This argument is painful for all involved. Those pro assisted dying feel the church is heartless, out of touch and even cruel. But it's not only 'religious' people who are against assisted dying. Many none religious people feel that this is a slippery slope. There's talk of the immense pressure on the person who is sick, on their family, on the NHS which is creaking under the weight of numbers, and also some of the misuse of money and staffing. Then there's the doctors or medical professionals who will have to take part in this 'medical' act. This is not a black and white issue and it's certainly not about the righteous and the sinners! This is part of our human brokenness. From early days Christians have believed that all human life is sacred from conception to death. This sacredness is not connected to the intelligence we have, the job and the money people have. It's not about what we can 'do' but it's about who we are.

Sadly, human nature teaches us much about ourselves through the experiences we go through – good and bad. As a Christian I've worked in two Hospices. This is a very recent movement that treats the whole person. We are not simply one element we are made up of mind, heart, soul and body. In the 'Loneliest journey' people have at the end of their lives there needs to be a balance and a respect and reverence by medical professionals. People can leave behind their directives on what treatment they want or don't want.

In 2019 my mum died after an extensive period of lung cancer and quite a few secondary cancers. I have to say the Marie Curie Nurses and the MacMillan Nurses helped my mum have a death which wasn't elongated by extreme medical measures and yet she was kept pretty much pain free and aware so she could speak to us. She wasn't overly anxious nor fractious. The nurses also cared for us as a family and also with my father's particular needs (Dad's bed bound after a terrible stroke).

I feel that as a Christian we are called to treat people not simply as a condition or an illness, nor even as an infirmity. No, we need to let people have their say over treatment and plans for their death. There is a huge

difference between an assisted dying and the withdrawal of aggressive forms of medical care. As a community and a society shouldn't we all be working together to serve the most vulnerable of our community? Where possible shouldn't we give people space to tell their stories and share their wisdom, while making sure people are pain free and comfortable?

We live in a world where there is death every day on the tv. Where our young people play 'battles' on computer and game stations. Yet, we've never been so separated from those who are dying. They are shipped off to hospitals, hospices, homes etc. People feel unable to journey together at home. I come from the generation where people whispered about death, money and sex. And so, we have a few generations who are unable to cope with death, dying and grief. This means we keep all these emotions inside, locked away from others. Maybe we need to talk more about death so that we can then go on living our lives to the fullest. Remember the old advert, "It's good to talk"? Maybe we need to both talk about our fears and also listen to other people when they share their fears.

I've heard many doctors' comment – no one should die in pain. But is that fully true? Don't we have more to do to make this a reality? As Christians we believe in life before death as well as after it. We need to be there for people in the last chapters of their lives, so that they don't see their ending as a terrible heavy burden on everyone, but as a time of love, grace and tears of love and sorrow. Palliative care is an amazing, relatively new field in medicine, yet when it works it's a great blessing. My fear is that in the world today in 2024, only 14% of the whole world can get palliative care. Instead of trying to be more merciful than God maybe we should work together so that people can feel valued and loved right until the end.

### **Another thought**

Firstly, a very Big thank you for your kindness and the amazing gifts I had for my birthday. You were all so very kind and generous.

After Easter we're reminded of the giftedness of God. God loves all people so much that He allowed His Son to experience the challenges, joys and pains of our human story. But God went further. God allowed Jesus to lose everything. To suffer so much to pay the price of our sinfulness and to know what it was like to live and die as a human. So, post Easter please know that the church has taught the following from pretty much the very start:

1. You are loved by God
2. You are precious in God's eyes
3. You are not perfect but God sees perfection in you
4. When we confess our sins God quickly forgives us
5. The Church (the People of God) must act with love, faithfulness and compassion
6. Your voice is very important to the life of the Church
7. Remember to pray every day (not just on Sundays)
8. One of the greatest Christian gifts is True Humility

Please think about these points and remember you are so very important to God.

Happy Easter and God bless you and your loved ones.

Yours

**Stephen Monk**

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### **Saturday Morning prayer group**

On the **Second Saturday** of the month, we have a very informal prayer group meeting at **St Helen's Church, 9.30am until 10.00am** (Then there's our Coffee and Cake morning - only the best cakes). This is for everyone, so please try to support.

Just because we meet at St Helen's please know it's for all of our five parishes. If you have something you'd like us to pray about please drop me an email with the name of the person, or their initials or a situation. But most of all please know we are praying for you and your loved ones each month. You may wonder why we pray for our young and elderly;

our healthy and sick etc. Well, it's simply because you are important to God and so you are important to us.

### **APCM 2024**

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting for the churches of St. John Winster, St. Mary South Darley and St. Helen Darley will take place on **Sunday 14th April at St. John's Church Winster at approximately 11 a.m. after the 10 a.m. morning service.**

Everyone is very welcome to attend but, to comply with church rules, only those on the Electoral Roll of the churches can speak and vote. I hope that as many people as possible will support this meeting and I look forward to seeing you there. The Annual Report will be in churches for Sunday 7th April as long as the photocopier is behaving itself! Please take one to read but bring it to the meeting with you as we will not have spares for everyone.

With my thanks to all who have helped to prepare for this,

**Penny Dakin**

### **BIG BREW 2024**

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> March communion service, Rev Stephen spoke movingly of the



**Transform Trade** programme to support community owned shops in Bangladesh. Each shop is funded equally by Transform Trade and a group of thirty women in the village. While our brothers and sisters at St Joseph's organised a Big Brew cake sale event on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, we were invited to

make donations.

I am pleased to say that on 26<sup>th</sup> March I transferred £290 from St Helen's to Transform Trade towards the programme. I understand that St Mary's and St John's have also collected money. Many thanks to everyone for their generosity, and, if you feel you have missed out, please pass contributions to me in church, or leave in an envelope in the vestry for my attention. **David Wills**

Do you know all the butterflies you see around church and in your garden?

Want to be sure or know more – and how to encourage them? Come along to find out more at our:



**Butterfly Identification session  
Saturday 13th April 2024**

St Helen's Church, Darley Dale

**11am until 1pm**

Booking Essential

Hot drinks provided (and cake!)

For tickets and further details: [christownsend2@sky.com](mailto:christownsend2@sky.com)

## St Helen's April Diary

**Open Door Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2.00 – 3.00pm**



**Thursday Coffee Social – every Thursday 12noon to 2.00pm**

**In St Helen's Church Hall** - a space and time to relax and enjoy good company. Everyone is welcome

Light refreshments available. Soup will be available on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> April but from then on please bring your own packed lunch.

**N.b. We are not meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> April**

## **Chill and Chat with Coffee Toddler Group**

**in St Helen's Church Hall**

**Thursdays 8.45 to 11am term time only**



Coffee bar open for tea, coffee, toast and biscuits throughout the morning. Children's snack followed by singing and story time at 10.15. No charge but donations to cover the costs welcome

**if you are able.**

*The church is also open for quiet reflection and prayer*

## **Prayer Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> April 9.30 – 10.00am in church**

You can pray as you feel led or prepare something in advance. You don't need to pray aloud at all, other than an Amen at the end of a prayer. Don't forget there's coffee/tea and cake in the hall afterwards! See below.....

## **Coffee Morning – 13<sup>th</sup> April in the Church Hall**

**All donations will be for Helen's Trust**

Helen's Trust is a nonprofit organization located in Derbyshire, England in the United Kingdom. It aims to enable people with any terminal illness to have the choice to stay in their own home.



Home-made scones and cakes and a time to relax with friends. Take time out from Saturday chores and come and join us! Bring a friend or neighbour!

**If you are a baker, a cake contribution would be great!**

**We will be joined by folk attending the Butterfly Identification session.**

**We do hope you will join in with that too!**

## Monday Lunchers

Salt 8<sup>th</sup> April and Pepper 15<sup>th</sup> April

11.45 am for 12noon at the Whitworth Terrace Café

For more information contact Kath on 01629 732805



**Ecumenical Holy Communion Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April**

**11.00am at Darley Methodist Church**

Come if you can for a time of worship and fellowship with our Methodist brothers and sisters.

## Home Groups and Worship Group



**Thursday Ecumenical Home Group  
(meets fortnightly)**

For more details contact Margaret on 735778. New people welcome.

**Thursday Group** led by Diana Wills

In winter we meet on Zoom (2x30minute sessions), term time only. We are studying Ephesians using Tom Wright's study guide.

For details and a Zoom access link, contact Diana on [dwills@doctors.org.uk](mailto:dwills@doctors.org.uk)

**The Worship Group** meets most Wednesdays 6.00pm in church, as arranged. Contact Dea Ayling or Stephen and Jayne Walker for more information and if you are interested in joining.



## Looking ahead

**Do come and join us for afternoon tea in aid of**



**At Meadow Cottage, Snitterton, Matlock DE4 2JG  
On Saturdays May 11th and 18th and Sundays May 12th and  
19th From 2pm to 4pm**

Tea, coffee, soft drinks, scones and cakes  
All welcome, come and enjoy spending time  
with friends.



Voluntary donations to Christian Aid.  
NB the road to Snitterton is closed  
from the South Darley end.



To drive come via Sainsburys.

For further information text Diana on 07526 168354

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### **The next All Age Community Service**

Looking after God's World in Darley Dale  
Sunday 12th May 11.00 -11.45am  
An informal Service for all the family.  
Everyone welcome!

## May to June

# Forward in Faith with the Book of Ephesians

## Bible Study

Why study the Bible? Jesus speaks to us, all of us if we but listen to His word. Since Covid, our churches have been trying to get back on track, helping many other parishes who didn't have a priest, and finally we've been trying to get many things up and running again.



But it's been a little bit like walking through treacle. It doesn't matter how long we've been a Christian or if you've not yet taken the plunge. In May we have a **6-week Bible Study**.

The Book I've chosen is the letter from **St. Paul to the Ephesians**. This was a letter for all the churches in the area of Ephesus. It's one of those letters in the Bible which very obviously speaks to us today. It's a bit like when we go for a walk up on the Hills over Matlock Bath or walking around Stanton Moor you can look down on the valley below. It's a wonderful view. The letter to the Ephesians is just the same. It looks down on the important elements of our faith and our identity as Children of God. Everyone is very welcome to all the Bible Studies - I think these are so very important that we're cancelling many of the Church groups so we can all attend.

Instead of it being a lecture or only a prayer group we are having different people leading each week, it's informal and relaxed, but we remember Jesus speaks to us through the Bible. The reason being that it keeps the course fresh and different.

**The Meetings are for 6 weeks and they are from:**

**13<sup>th</sup> May Monday Night Zoom 7pm - until 8pm**

**(The access code is available from Miss Chris Townsend:**

**christownsend2@sky.com)**

**And on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May either at 1pm for one hour or at 7pm for one hour. This is in St Helen's Church Hall (simply just turn up and join us).**

I cannot express enough that everyone is very welcome to join us. It doesn't matter if you know every book of the Bible or equally, even if you have never picked up a Bible. This is for seekers, searchers, sinners and saints! Please come along and join us.

God bless.

**Stephen**



“Your word is a lamp  
for my feet,  
a light for my path”  
Psalm 119:105

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**2 Timothy 3.16-17**

The primary purpose of reading the Bible is not to know the Bible but to know God. — **James Merritt**

“If you are ignorant of God’s Word, you will always be ignorant of God’s will.” – **Billy Graham**

“The Bible is meant to be bread for daily use, not cake for special occasions.”

## Growing our faith - articles to feed and inform us

*Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham considers what Easter has given us*

### **The Treasure of Easter!**

It's amazing what treasure can be unearthed with metal detectors! In this season of Easter, let's rediscover the greatest unburied treasure of the Resurrection.

The Apostle Peter reminds us that God *'has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.'* (1 Peter 1: 3,4). What does he say about this treasure?

On the one hand, it is the *reason for hope*. Peter was writing to Christians in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) who faced persecution under the Emperor Nero. In an uncertain world we know that Jesus suffered, but by His resurrection has secured eternal life for us. This inheritance not only guarantees life now, but also for eternity, as it *'is kept in heaven for you'* (4). Do we share this confidence? D.L. Moody, the 19th Century American evangelist, spoke of the time when people would read his obituary: *'Don't believe a word of it! At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now'*.

On the other hand, this treasure is a *source of joy*. This unburied treasure fills us *'with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.'* (8,9). We face all kinds of trials in our lives, but God uses them to refine our faith and character, *'These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.'* (7).

We reflect this treasure by developing the Jesus' character and becoming more holy, obedient and loving.

*'Christmas is the promise, and Easter is the proof'!*

*Editor: With the better weather coming, you might like this challenge...*

## **Don't be afraid of clouds**



Have you ever sat and watched the clouds drift by? Some of them are vast, towering up and up into the sky.

There can be clouds of discouragement and suffering in our lives as well, circumstances that temporarily blot out the sunlight of God's love for us. You may have such a cloud hanging over your life right now. You may be in a hospital bed, or suffering discouragement, fear, despair or bereavement.

Have you ever noticed that sometimes, when you board a plane, the sky is like a thick grey ceiling? It looks impenetrable. But the plane does not hesitate - it climbs steadily onward and upward straight into the cloud. And what happens? Nothing! The cloud cannot block your progress, it must give way before you.

The simple truth is, you may not be able to see through clouds, but you *can go through them*. The plane uses navigational aids for guidance, and we have the Holy Spirit to guide us through the darkest times. And finally, we emerge through the cloudbank, and there before us is a sun-drenched sky of blue and golden glory, far above the dismal and disappointing things far below.

Whatever cloud is hanging over you at present, whether suffering, discouragement, fear, there IS something you can do about it NOW. Pray – pour out your heart to the Lord about it. He has promised that His grace will be sufficient for anything that we encounter in this life.

And – look up. Look towards heaven, *think beyond* those clouds, and remember His promise that the sufferings we may be undergoing *here* are nothing compared to the glory that God has prepared for us *there*.

*The Bible assures us: ‘The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O Lord Almighty, blessed is the man that trusts in you.’ Psalm 84: 11-12*

**St Helen’s March Gallery**



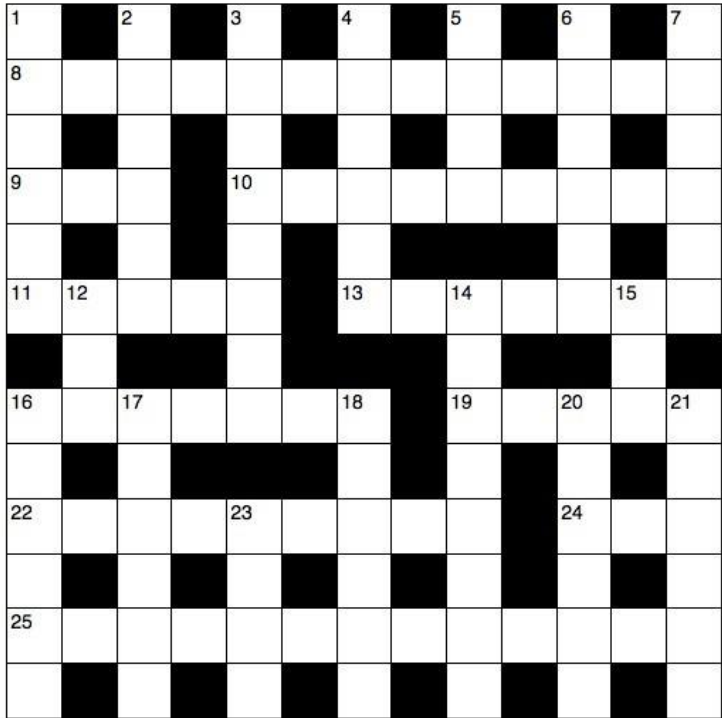
← Monday Lunchers

Thursday Coffee Social Club ↓



Malcolm Pyatt leading an evening Celtic Communion

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**ACROSS**

8 'He poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the — ' (Isaiah 53:12) (13)

9 'When they had sung a hymn, they went — to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30) (3)

10 Comes between Galatians and Philippians (9)

11 'Your heart will — and swell with joy' (Isaiah 60:5) (5)

13 Muslim holy month (7)

16 Ten ears (anag.) (7)

19 Under (poetic abbrev.) (5)

22 How Abram described himself to God when he complained that his inheritance would pass to a servant (Genesis 15:2) (9)

24 'Go to the — , you sluggard' (Proverbs 6:6) (3)

25 Debar from receiving Communion (13)

**DOWN**

1 My — for His Highest (Oswald Chambers' best-known book) (6)

- 2 Festival of the resurrection (6)  
 3 'His sons will prepare for war and — a great army' (Daniel 11:10) (8)  
 4 'Let not the — string his bow' (Jeremiah 51:3) (6)  
 5 Name of the River Thames in and around Oxford (4)  
 6 'From then on Judas watched for an opportunity — — him over'  
 (Matthew 26:16) (2,4)  
 7 'But Christ is faithful — — — over God's house' (Hebrews 3:6) (2,1,3)  
 12 Long-handled implement used to till the soil (Isaiah 7:25) (3)  
 14 Order to which monks and nuns devote themselves (8)  
 15 Appropriate (Proverbs 15:23) (3)  
 16 I, uncle (anag.) (6)  
 17 'They gave him — — of broiled fish' (Luke 24:42) (1,5)  
 18 'Weren't there three men that we — — and threw into the fire?'  
 (Daniel 3:24) (4,2)  
 20 Mountain where Noah's ark came to rest (Genesis 8:4) (6)  
 21 'Don't you know that friendship with the world is — towards God?'  
 (James 4:4) (6)  
 23 Prominent architectural feature of large cathedrals such as St Paul's  
 (4)

### Answers on Page 24

#### The Bible version used in our crosswords is the NIV.

Crosswords reproduced by kind permission of BRF and John Capon, originally published in Three Down, Nine Across, by John Capon (£6.99 BRF).

### Good likeness

Some children were asked: "What do you think of Jesus?"

"Jesus," said one little boy, "is the best photograph God ever had taken."

### Our God

Our God is able – (Daniel 3:17) able to save (Hebrews 7:25)

able to help (Hebrews 2:18) able to provide (2 Corinthians 9:8)

able to do far more than we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20)

## The lighter side of church life.....



*(Well, we do have the sofas.....CT)*

## Smile Lines

### Heaven

Seen in a parish magazine: "We shall be meeting on Wednesday, when the subject will be 'Heaven - how do we get there?' Transport by bus is available at 6.45pm opposite the King's Arms.

## **Choir**

Seen in a parish magazine: 'Next Sunday the choir will give a recital, after which the church will be closed for repairs.'

## **Those typos in the church news sheet...**

*(None in our magazine of course! C T)*

The church's AGM will be hell on 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

*(Don't let this put you off coming to ours! It definitely won't be! C T)*

While the pastor is on holiday, massages can be given to the church secretary.

*(So, if Penny's feeling stressed this might be the solution? C T)*

More sinners wanted for the choir.

*(Or the Worship Group? C T)*

## **Long prayer**

A friend took her small daughter to church. The vicar's prayer had gone on for several minutes when suddenly a small voice piped up: "Has he forgotten how to say Amen?"

## **The 5<sup>th</sup> commandment**

In reply to a question in Sunday school, one little boy said that the fifth commandment is: 'Humour thy father and thy mother.'

## **Why Did the Chicken Cross the Road? (Theological Version)**

*Billy Graham:* The chicken was surrendering all.

*Rick Warren:* The chicken was purpose driven.

*John Wesley:* The chicken's heart was strangely warmed.

*John Piper:* God decreed the event to maximize his glory. OR . . . it was an act of Christian hedonism. The chicken realized that his greatest joy would only be found on the other side.

*C.S. Lewis:* If a chicken finds itself with a desire that nothing on this side can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that it was created for the other side.

*N.T. Wright:* This act of the chicken, which would be unthinkable in British barnyards, reeks of that American individualism that is destructive to community.

*Pluralist:* The chicken took one of many equally valid roads.

*Universalist:* All chickens cross the road.

*Tim LaHaye:* The chicken didn't want to be left behind.

*Emergent:* For this chicken, it's not the destination that's important. It's the journey itself.

*(If you want to find out what some of these theological approaches are about, try Google or ask Stephen!)*

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Churches Together in  
Matlock & Darley Dale  
Good Friday  
Service in the Park

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12 noon 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
Park Head  
Hall Leys Park  
Matlock

Please join us at a short  
open air service to mark  
Good Friday  
[www.ctim.info](http://www.ctim.info)



## In the news

*Editor: Things are happening very rapidly in the Israel-Gaza war, but this story is the most up to date one that we have. It was dated 13<sup>th</sup> February. Parts of it may still be applicable.*

### **House of Bishops makes call for immediate ceasefire in Gaza and release of hostages**

*The House of Bishops has recently made the following statement: “With the onset of Israel’s ground offensive into Rafah, we call for an immediate ceasefire. The relentless bombardment of Gaza and its huge cost in civilian lives and civilian infrastructure must stop. The manner in which this war is being prosecuted cannot be morally justified.*

*“We urge Israel to adhere to the ICJ order and to ensure that Palestinians have access to food, water, healthcare, and safety, that have long been denied to them. We welcome the Foreign Secretary’s recent call for an immediate pause in the fighting and would also welcome further representation to the Government of Israel about the way that it is exercising its right to self-defence and to affirm adherence to international law.*

*“We continue to advocate for the release of the remaining hostages and an end to the missile attacks on Israel by Hamas. All sides must begin to imagine a future beyond this conflict: for a just peace for Israelis and Palestinians. This war can’t result in the consolidation of a system of occupation that has for too long denied Palestinians their rights and freedoms.*

*“In praying for all those in Israel and Palestine living in the midst of war and the fear of war, we pray particularly for the Palestinian Christian communities, that they may know strength and the presence of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.*

*“As we consider the impact of the current conflict in the Middle East on community relations here in the UK, we again condemn all antisemitic and anti-Muslim sentiment. We are horrified by the growing threats and abuses of Jews on university campuses, in our neighbourhoods, and online. We appeal to our communities to be safe for all people whatever their nationality, ethnicity or religion. For our own part, we commit to working alongside our fellow faith leaders for the common good, despite and with our differences.”*

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## **World Autism Acceptance Week, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Autism is on the rise. Or at least, the recognition of it is. According to the website psychcentral.com, there was a 787% exponential increase in the number of people who were diagnosed with autism between 1998 and 2018 in the UK.

The National Autistic Society says that in the UK, more than one in every 100 people are now on the autism spectrum. It reckons that around 700,000 adults and children in the UK suffer with the condition to some degree.

All of which means that you probably know of someone who has autism, to some degree. And you may know that, as it says on the NHS website:

*Autistic people may act in a different way to other people, ... and find it hard to understand how other people think or feel. They may find things like bright lights or loud noises overwhelming, stressful, or uncomfortable. They may get anxious or upset about unfamiliar situations and social events and take longer to understand information.*

To help people with autism, you may wish to support this ‘acceptance week’, by going to the National Autistic Society’s website, <https://www.autism.org.uk> and taking part in some way in their fundraising campaign.

# Looking at You

## Prayer Walking in our community

Prayer walking is just what it sounds. You pray as you walk.

What is the point? Think of it as stepping out as God's children, to intercede for those who are living in your community. Be intentional about praying for God's blessings on what you see and feel.

Simply praying: "Your Kingdom come, your will be done..." is an excellent start.

Prayer walking is NOT about being seen to be praying, you are not doing it to 'show off'. It is about seeing your neighbourhood with compassion, and then praying for God's mercy and blessing to be upon it.

So, as you go along, you can pray quietly, or in silence. If you do want to pray out loud, take a friend along, so that it will seem merely as if you are chatting. In fact, when you do a prayer walk, it is best not to do it alone. Always try and go with someone else. After all, Jesus sent His disciples out in pairs.

On your prayer walk, try and be aware of what God is saying to you as you move around the community. As the former Archbishop of York, Lord Sentamu, once advised: "If any Bible verses pop into your head or if you have any pictures, visions or words of knowledge, turn these into prayer."

At the end of the prayer walk, share with others what you prayed for, and heard from God. Write any impressions down, so you can keep track of how you have prayed for your area.

Again, to quote Lord Sentamu, "If you feel that God has highlighted specific needs or challenges, think about how to take action. Could you or the church be part of God's solution practically, as well as prayerfully?"

## Appreciating Johann Sebastian Bach

Three hundred years ago, on 7th April 1724, the German composer Johann Sebastian Bach's *St John Passion* was performed for the first time, at a church in Leipzig.

It was put on as part of Good Friday Vespers at St Nicholas Church, having been transferred from St Thomas at the last moment by the music council. Bach, who had just turned 39, agreed to the move, while pointing out that the booklet had already been printed, there was no room immediately available for the musicians, and the harpsichord needed some repair. These problems were overcome.

Bach was already highly regarded, but primarily as a harpsichordist and organ expert. Later seen as one of the best composers of all time – renowned for such works as the *Brandenburg Concertos* and his *Mass in B Minor* – he was one of a large family of north German musicians. He is widely praised as a great synthesiser of styles and traditions.

The *St John Passion*, written during his first year as director of church music in Leipzig, was designed to be used as part of a church service. It follows John 18 and 19 in the Luther Bible, but the writer of the libretto is not known. A possible earlier Passion, written in Weimar, is lost. Nowadays the *St John Passion* is heard mainly in the 1739–1749 version, which was never performed in Bach's lifetime, though he made many revisions to the original before his death.

### Crossword Solutions

ACROSS: 8, Transgressors. 9, Out. 10, Ephesians. 11, Throb. 13, Ramadan. 16, Nearest. 19, Neath. 22, Childless. 24, Ant. 25, Excommunicate.

DOWN: 1, Utmost. 2, Easter. 3, Assemble. 4, Archer. 5, Isis. 6, To hand. 7, As a son. 12, Hoe. 14, Monastic. 15, Apt. 16, Nuclei. 17, A piece. 18, Tied up. 20, Ararat. 21, Hatred. 23, Dome.

*Editor: Paul Hardingham considers foolishness and wisdom...*

## **Called to be Fools!**



April Fool's Day is the traditional way to begin this month. In medieval times the fool (or jester) was not just there for amusement. He had an influential role in the court, because he could speak the truth in ways others couldn't. As Christians we are also called to be fools; Paul described himself as a *'fool for Christ'* (1 Corinthians 4:10). In what ways is this an appropriate description of a Christian? In his letter Paul expands on this theme.

### *A foolish message:*

*'For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.'* (1 Cor 1:18). The heart of the Gospel does not focus on clever ideas, but on the Cross of Jesus Christ. This message of foolishness and weakness is both God's wisdom and power for our lives.

### *A foolish community:*

*'But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.'* (1:27). The church in Corinth consisted of slaves, rather than the rich and successful. God calls the weak and vulnerable to follow Him, in order to shame those who think they don't need God.

### *A foolish ministry:*

*'My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.'* (2:4,5). Paul's ministry didn't rest on human wisdom, but on the power of the Holy Spirit. For us, this power is often displayed when we are at our weakest.

*'A fool thinks himself to be wise, but a wise man knows himself to be a fool.'*  
(William Shakespeare).

## Ed's Endings

On Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March, I had a fairly busy morning as the Printer Engineer was coming at 9.00am to sort it out, and being the Printer Person in church I needed to be around to see how things were going. In addition, I was meeting Helen Boocock to discuss maintenance of the Peace Garden. She helps with this and in fact, puts more hours in than I do (my great thanks to her for this).

I was managing to scoot between Simon the Engineer in the vestry and Helen in the Peace Garden, including making them a cup of coffee and tea, when one of the ladies who attend the Chair-based Exercise Session came rushing up to tell me that men had arrived to cut down the tree. It was very hectic for 10 minutes or so but fortunately after a hasty phone call, Steve Walker came to deal with them.



The tree they have cut down is the big fir (the one on the left in the photo) which was behind the Ancient Yew. The diocesan tree person (not sure of the exact title) had said it needed to go for the health and benefit of the Ancient Yew.

I wouldn't be surprised if a few bemoaned its loss. Nor would I be surprised if there were a few complaints. We don't like change. Trees are such awesome things and not to be chopped down without considerable consideration.

It made me think, though, how easy it is to get used to a certain way of doing things and perhaps even let it become big in our lives and block out something more precious and necessary. This could be something we like or do at church or it could be something in our personal lives – a personality trait or characteristic, for example. Well, we respond or think, it's the way I'm made or the way God has made me! We are given the fruit of the Spirit to grow the qualities God wants in us and to make us

the best we can be. We are in him a new creation and we have the mind of Christ

It could be a hobby or leisure interest or even a job that is the 'fir tree' blocking our lives. We can agree theoretically that we should love the Lord our God with all our, heart, soul and strength, and our neighbours as ourselves, of course, but when it comes to the crunch, they take the back burner.

Spring is the time to take stock in the garden, to weed and prune and take out if something has overgrown its space. Maybe our lives need some spring attention. I know mine does! I'm sharing this because the garden of my heart and soul needs major attention!

And with the weeding and cutting comes the feeding, the mulch, compost and bonemeal of our spiritual walk– worship, prayer and bible study. The easiest and yet the hardest things to do at the same time.

So, I am adding my encouragement to you to come to the Ephesians sessions and the Prayer meeting, which is always followed by the Coffee Morning! Feed the soul, then feed the body!

Blessings all

**Chris**



Items for the next magazine to be with me by: **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April**  
[christownsend2@sky.com](mailto:christownsend2@sky.com) Thank you!

## United Benefice Services in April 24

### St Helen's:

- Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Holy Communion  
2.00pm Open Door
- Friday 12<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Ecumenical H C **Darley Methodist Church**
- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> 8.00am Holy Communion BCP  
**10.00am United Benefice Service and APCM @ St John's**
- Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 11.00am Holy Communion  
6.00pm Evening Service tbc
- Friday 26<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Holy Communion
- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> 11.00am New Beginnings (10.30 Café in the hall)

### St Mary's:

- Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Holy Communion
- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> **10.00am United Benefice Service and APCM @ St John's**
- Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 10.00am Holy Communion
- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Morning Prayer

### St John's:

- Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> No service
- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> 10.00am United Benefice Service and APCM
- Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 10.00am Holy Communion @ St Mary's
- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> 4.00pm Service

### Monday Evening Zoom Services: 7.00-7.30pm

Details and access invitation: [christownsend2@sky.com](mailto:christownsend2@sky.com)

**All enquiries and more information on all services and events:**

[www.sthelensdarleydale.org.uk](http://www.sthelensdarleydale.org.uk)