

Easter

april 2021

Lock Down  
just turned  
one

**grapevine**

**50p**

the magazine of st mary's church rushden  
& st peter's newton bromswold

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## grapevine subscriptions

**One year's subscription £5**

**Postal subscription: £10**

**Large Print Editions** are available in church or may be pre-ordered.

**All monies to**  
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# grapevine april 2021

**This edition is full of Hope:** Hope for an, at least, partial release from the Covid restrictions, as well as the Hope that lives in the bigger, wider promise of the resurrection [4]. The Bishop [19] adds his own interpretation to the message and expresses Hope that we, the congregations and parishioners, along with friends of the churches, will be kind to our spiritual leaders and truly appreciate how they have just kept going for over a year now. They've coped with new technology - not always straightforward or reliable - and a constant need to re-think and re-craft their job descriptions in the face of unremitting challenge. I agree Steve and Phil, our Readers and retired Clergy, all deserve our appreciation and some extra rest, along with all the other background volunteers who've made sure we still have churches and a church life to go back to!

*Jude Curtis, Editor*



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*Items for the  
May grapevine  
should be sent by  
Sunday 11 April*

Preferably by email to:  
[missjudecurtis@btinternet.com](mailto:missjudecurtis@btinternet.com)

## From Steve . . .

**"The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!"**

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. *John 20.1*



Happy Easter!

Now, if ever, we as Jesus's followers need to be reminded of the reality of his resurrection — and challenged to live out our lives in its power. Now, as we see the natural world coming alive again with the evidence of spring; now, as we begin to feel less at risk because of the vaccine; now, as the restrictions under which we have been living begin slowly to lift; and (not least) now, as we begin to meet together for worship after three long months [see page 30-31].

The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation upon which the whole of our faith rests. In the words of Paul, "... if Christ has not been raised ... your faith is futile..." (1 Corinthians 15.14-19) Without the resurrection, Jesus becomes just another clever rabbi with pretensions to be the messiah whose ministry ended in failure and tragedy. "But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead" (1 Cor 15.20) and as his followers we are challenged to live in the power of his resurrection!

We are called to be people of active hope. Hope almost always involves a call to action. We believe not only that Christ is risen, but also, if we trust in Him, that one day we too will be raised to new, glorious and eternal life at the renewal of all creation. Our hope in Jesus is active — because of his resurrection.

In last month's magazine Phil quoted a line from a sonnet by CS Lewis, which suggests that while despair may appear to provide

“repose” and “safety”, this is a lie. Rest and safety only come to us with the hope we have in Christ, ultimately fulfilled when he brings in the New Creation. In the meantime, that hope calls us to active service of God.

Where despair often leads to inactivity — that feeling “Why bother?” — the hope given to us by the resurrection of Jesus makes us alert and attentive in our obedience to God and our service to others. This obedience and service require effort: mental, moral and often physical.

Despair causes us to withdraw, to look after our own interests, to shrink from putting ourselves in any hazard or insecurity. Hope lives dangerously, the resurrection giving us courage to take risks for God. Hope risks even failure and disappointment, knowing both our future and the future of the world is safe in the new creation of which Jesus’s resurrection is the “first fruits”.

There is an old cynical saw that goes, “he who expects little shall not be disappointed.” As people of the resurrection, we cannot adopt that attitude, but rather must follow that of the Father of our Lord Jesus, the God who is love, which “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” (1 Corinthians 13.7) Faith in the resurrection of Jesus and the hope resulting from it, will lead us into all sorts of Spirit-empowered activity, not least sharing that faith and hope with others, even as our service to others causes people to wonder what motivates our actions. “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” (1 Peter 3.15)

As we move into the Easter season and (slowly) out of lockdown, may the Holy Spirit increasingly enable us to live as Easter People—people of the resurrection.

Hoping to see you in church sometime soon.

Every blessing,

Steve

## We're all connected!



Nothing in life is wholly good or wholly bad, and my personal Covid experience so far is no exception.

With hindsight some government decisions could have been thought through better, and the odd opportunity has been lost through hesitation. On the other hand we have done better, scientifically, than anyone was dreaming of a year ago. Remember what it was like back then? A viable, tested vaccine was little more than a gleam in a virologist's eye. We felt, at best, silly, covering up our nose and mouth, or at worst, breathless and panicky, anonymous, and probably quite scared.

Despite that, and never wanting to forget the numbingly high number of actual human beings represented in the latest fatality figures, in many cases we've done a lot more than just survive. We've been challenged rather than overwhelmed. We've uncovered skills we didn't know we had: particularly in unfamiliar areas. For me the hardest to acquire were ways to express love and kindness and sympathy without hugging - so many people when I asked a while back what they were missing most said, "Hugs" immediately.

Since Christmas what has been resonating most strongly with me is discovering how interconnected we are, and always have been if we bothered to look. Not just with other human beings but the whole, complex natural [and unnatural] world. I know I promised Roy Benning no more four-syllable words but some of these are just too good. It all started with a book - no change there then - Merlin Sheldrake's *Entangled Life*. A very, very welcome Christmas present. It's written by a mycologist [mushroom expert] with encyclopaedic knowledge and genuine vision - although I struggled to believe that Merlin Sheldrake was his given name.

He describes the interconnectedness of the 'Wood Wide Web' - or as Pippin puts it in *The Lord of the Rings*: "The trees are talking to each other . . ." - with scientific evidence of bartering and gifting of trace elements and nutrients between trees, plants, and the unclassifiable lichens - a confluence of two living beings: plant and mycorrhizal material, yet capable of passing around messages and materials faster than a racing car. You just have to accept that we are now at a level where such impulses are actually recordable. You also have to grasp that the big Field Mushrooms you see out on The Black Path are nothing more than fruiting spore parts of something hectares bigger.

It echoes parts of Nan Shepherd's claims back in the '40s when she wrote her short but significant eco-memoir, *The Living Mountain*. There she talks about the brain not just being present in the skull but in muscle and bone memory too. Sheldrake too says, "... Even within the body of brain-dependent animals, the flexible networks that underpin complex behaviour need not be limited to a small region inside the head". Looked at this way, we may have tended to credit human beings with more brain power than they really warrant. The wood-wide system of mycorrhizal activity has astonishing size and complexity; is capable of give and take, or 'use now - pay later' gambits. It seems to be working together in much the same way as an ideal human society does . . . Hold that thought!

At the same time I was reading Rachel Mann's first novel - not a happy experience. One expression though shrieked out of its persistently sordid gloom: 'Dialectical Materialism'. That activated memory cells all the way back to Manchester in 1968, and the poet Adrian Mitchell fund-raising for the cadre of IS to which I belonged, in a faintly seedy room above an inner city pub. 'IS' in those days stood for International Socialism not Islamic State I hasten to add. The novel places it, indeed, as a leitmotif of Manchester's dual universities, but in 1997 some thirty years later. DM was old school in 1968: I can't believe it was still going strong so late in the day.

That aside, the concept is fascinating. It was never used by Marx but by a commentator/follower called Plekhanov. Dialectical in this instance means 'debate' or 'exchange'. Materialism refers to the whole social and physical world. Marx refers obliquely to a definition of man's place in it: some think an extension of Aristotle's [hurrah!] belief that man is a *zoon politikon* ['zoon' not Zoom!] - ie a political animal] - not merely a social animal, but an animal which can develop into an individual **only** in society. Can't help but feel this feeds directly into our mutual interdependence with all living things down to the last shred of mycorrhizal matter.

For me it's personal. I would never have developed into such a 'proper' functioning individual without joining the Church back in 2000. I knew this, but I've rarely found it so neatly expressed. As I was already beginning to accept before reading this, all Socialism's best ideas came out of Christianity.

Jude Curtis, Editor

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Sheldrake, Merlin, *Entangled Life* (London: Penguin/Bodley Head, 2020)  
Nan Shepherd, *The Living Mountain* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2011) [1977]  
Mycorrhizal is pronounced MyKaryzal and is a composite of mycelium and rooted [as in rhizome] matter.

# St Mary's News

## Services In Church and On Line

*Our usual Schedules have been resurrected for Easter and beyond: full details can once again be found on pp 30-31*

## St Mary's Church Office

While the times continue to unfold messages for the Church Office team may be left via email-

stmaryschurchoffice@btinternet.com,

or on the office phone [01933 412235]

as these are checked every few days.

Notices will be put on the church website and requests for posters will be fulfilled and put up in the porch and Church Hall.

## The Children's Society

**John's new quiz 'OH' is now on sale** price £1 and can be obtained from

**Pam Bailey [313195] or Joy Holloway [318415].**

## Jean Tombling's Walker

... is **Free to a Good Home** and barely used. Contact

Bob or Marion

Bates on 01933

358005



## Recycling

Keeping up your good intentions around recycling hasn't been that easy during lockdown so it's good to

know that Marion Hollis has [almost] a **One Stop Shop at 54, Avenue Rd.**

You can deposit anything on the following list 'round the back'.

- **Milk Bottle Tops** - Air Ambulance
- **Dud biros and felt tip pens** - Brain Tumour Research
- **Postcards** - MAF, a Christian Mission Organisation
- **Flattened crisp packets** - Rushden & District Lions Club
- **Squashed cans** - Air Ambulance
- Postage Stamps - Cancer Charity

## Thank you!

I would like to say thank you for the lovely gift of the book, *5 Minutes of Peace*, given to me on the occasion of my **ninetieth birthday**. I will look forward to reading it every day.

Sheila Rodwell

## Flower Rota

**April 2021**

### ***Behind the Communion Table***

- 4 Easter
- 11 Rita Nutter, arranged by Ellen Inwood
- 18 Mary Hadley
- 25 Ellen Inwood & Julie West

### ***Memorial Chapel***

- 4 Easter
  - 25 Mrs Julie West
- If anyone wishes to give flowers in memory of loved ones please contact me, Brenda Dixon, 358982*



## Summary of Meeting of the St Mary's Parochial Church Council 2 March 2021

**Finance report:** Over 2020, there was a deficit of £10,385, however a deficit of £10k had been budgeted for. The giving throughout the year had been encouraging despite lost income from open plate and hall lettings. £12,300 was given to our Mission Partners, overseas and UK missions and £9,241 to special appeals. The Parish Share was paid in full. ***Thank you to all who have given faithfully through this difficult year.***

**Children and Families Ministry:** Helen continues a full range of ministries on Facebook:

*Bumps & Babes*—Mondays 10.00am (with plans to open smaller groups in April as allowed)

*Bible Bedtime Stories*—Fridays 6.00pm

*Buggy Buddies*—organised walks for two adults and children under 5 (a chance to meet new people, chat and get in some fresh air). So far six adults are meeting regularly with hopes this will grow.

*Alpha Youth* has been made available, fantastic content worth sharing.

A new Facebook support network group has been set up for parents and guardians. A private group where ideas and activities can be shared and support offered, it has 16 members and growing.

A new Churches Together hub has been set up called *Kingdom Come in Rushden* to support children's and families workers and volunteers in Rushden, to outreach to more families and offer ideas and training.

*Easter Holiday Club* planning is underway - most likely online, however, Helen hopes to incorporate some outside activities at the church to which children and their families can come to (story trail, and flower planting pots) This is planned for the 12-14 April, on Facebook and YouTube. Activity packs will also be distributed with crafts, storytelling materials, QR codes to online activities and (of course) choccies. I have also planned some Easter resources and videos for School assemblies.

### **Church Fabric:**

The boiler had been successfully repaired and paid for.

The Faculty for the South Door had been resubmitted for the March meeting of the DAC and a small side window had been added.

New cameras to enable live streaming of services have been installed. with higher spec will enable live stream on line when services are back in church.

**Lockdown & Future Plans:** We are following guidelines and planning to reopen in April for live services. Normally we would hold a joint service for Easter, however separate services enable social distancing more successfully (see page 30-31 for services). We are looking towards the autumn for an event to celebrate being together again – *watch this space!*

# St Mary's News cont . . .

## Annual Vestry & Annual Parochial Church Meeting:

St Mary's APCM (which did not take place in 2020 due to Covid-19) will take place on **Tuesday, 18 May 2021** at 7.30pm in the church building, as long as we are allowed to do so. Notices will be displayed in church from Easter, when we return to worship in our church building. The Electoral Roll will be displayed. Electoral Roll Application forms and Nomination forms for Deanery Synod Representatives, PCC members and Church Wardens will be available at the back of church. We will be adhering to whatever restrictions are current at the time of the APCM.

## Thank you!

We recently sent a cheque for £513 to Brian and Val Hodgkin on the occasion of their retirement: this is their response:

*Dear Rob and Marion,  
Thank you for the cheque that came yesterday. We were so blessed by it. Please convey our sincere thanks to everyone at St Mary's.*

*We have some ideas of ways we could use it. It will definitely not get lost in regular "support" type income :-)*

*The first few days of retirement have gone well. It is really good not*

*to have anyone's deadlines hovering over us.*

*Hope you and Marion are staying well. Val, and for Brian.*

## Progress Report



Auntie Madge update - looking pretty strong.



*"It's not quite as bad as it looks – they're only withholding payment until we publish our expenses."*

# Newton News

**Newton Church will reopen on Easter Sunday 4 April 2021** with a Communion Service at 11.00am. *We look forward to welcoming you back.*

## Flower Rota - April

- 4 Helen Lines
- 18 Rosemary Coulson
- 25 Wedding

## Annual Vestry & Annual Parochial Church Meeting

St Peter's APCM (which did not take place in 2020 due to Covid-19) will take place on **Wednesday 19 May 2021** at 7.30 in the church building. Notices will be displayed in church from Easter, when we return to worship there. The Electoral Roll will be displayed. Electoral Roll Application forms and Nomination forms for Deanery Synod Representatives, PCC members and Church Wardens will be available at the back of church. We will be adhering to whatever restrictions are current at the time of the APCM.

## Thy Kingdom Come

This is a new initiative from **CPO [Christian Publishing & Outreach]** which can be found at [cpo.org.uk](http://cpo.org.uk) and is designed to encourage us all to pray, in whatever way we want,

and with whoever we want, for others to come to know Jesus Christ.

It is a global prayer movement which the Archbishop of Canterbury invited people around the world to join. The wave of prayer **runs for ten days between the Christian festivals of Ascension and Pentecost - May 13-23 2021.**



## The Swan at Newton

It is with great sadness that Denis Sullivan is retiring as landlord of *The Swan* and we send him best wishes for the future.

Thank you, Denis, for all the support you have given to the Church and to the local community, which has included many Quiz Nights, Harvest Sales and Carol Singing.  
*Helen Lines*

*The Back Page* shows Newton churchyard in Spring-mode with daffodils and *anemone blanda*.

# Food for thought and prayer ...



## A prayer for Patience



### Men's breakfast prayer [but it works for us all!]

A while back I read a story of a visiting pastor who attended a men's breakfast in the middle of a rural farming area of the country. The group had asked an older farmer decked out in bib overalls to say grace for the morning breakfast.

"Lord, I hate buttermilk", the farmer began. The pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer and wonder where he was going. The farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard". Now the pastor was growing concerned. Without missing a beat the farmer continued, "and Lord you know I don't much care for raw white flour".

The pastor once again opened an eye to glance around the room and saw that he wasn't the only one to feel uncomfortable.

Then the farmer added, "But Lord, when you mix them all together I do love warm, fresh biscuits. So Lord, when things come up that we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you are saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits. Amen".

Within that prayer there is great wisdom for all when it comes to complicated situations like we are experiencing in the world today.

Stay strong my friends because our life is being mixed with lots of things that we don't care for.

Relax and wait until the mixing is done . . .

[With thanks to Don Merrifield]

# Daily Bible Readings for April 2021

*I hope you will have an opportunity to read and reflect on the passages in the Gospel accounts of Jesus final struggle, crucifixion and victorious resurrection. From Easter Monday, we will begin to look at how Jesus's mission to restore the blessings of God's Kingdom to all the nations of the earth was continued by his disciples and the early church, empowered by the Spirit of the resurrected Jesus.*

*It was far from smooth sailing, but guarded and guided by the Spirit, Jesus's followers quickly began to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.*

**Maundy Thursday**

1 April

John 13.1-17

**Good Friday**

2 April

John 18.1–19.37

Saturday

3 April

John 19.38-end



**Easter Sunday**

Monday

4 April

John 20.1-18

Tuesday

5 April

Acts 2.14, 22-32

Wednesday

6 April

Acts 2.36-41

Thursday

7 April

Acts 3.1-10

Friday

8 April

Acts 3.11-end

Saturday

9 April

Acts 4.1-12

Sunday

10 April

Acts 4.13-21

**Sunday**

11 April

Acts 4.32-35

Monday

12 April

Acts 4.23-31

Tuesday

13 April

Acts 4.32-end

Wednesday

14 April

Acts 5.17-26

Thursday

15 April

Acts 5.27-33

Friday

16 April

Acts 5.34-end

Saturday

17 April

Acts 6.1-7

**'We must obey  
God rather than  
human beings!'**

**Acts 5.29**

**Sunday**

18 April

Acts 3.12-19

Monday

19 April

Acts 6.8-15

Tuesday

20 April

Acts 7.51– 8.1a

Wednesday

21 April

Acts 8.1b-8

Thursday

22 April

Acts 8.26-end

Friday

23 April

Acts 9.1-19

Saturday

24 April

Acts 9.20-end



**Sunday**

25 April

Acts 4.5-12

Monday

26 April

Acts 11.1-18

Tuesday

27 April

Acts 11.19-end

Wednesday

28 April

Acts 12.25–13.12

Thursday

29 April

Acts 13.13-25

Friday

30 April

Acts 13.26-33

# So what else is happening . . . ?

## 2021 Lent Study

**Bishop Donald's Lent Talks** have continued through to Easter and are a brilliant handling of the **Letter to the Hebrews** which I have found personally revelatory. It's not too late to catch up! Just go to **[peterborough-diocese.org.uk](https://peterborough-diocese.org.uk)** and take a look around for 'Bishop's Talks'. I take back anything I may have said in the past about the Bishop not having a natural stage presence! *Ed*

## Syria - Two women: ten years on

It seems so long ago since we had news of Syria: it's now ten years since the popular uprising against Assad. This clip of two Syrian women reflecting on how their lives have changed gives some insight. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-56338326> [*with thanks to Rev Rachel Hawkins who spotted it first*]

## A note about Midshires Covert

As far as this land is concerned, overnight camping [one group at a time] should be available from **Monday 12 April**. You will need to book via me, Andrew Presland [[andrew.presland.harborough58@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.presland.harborough58@gmail.com)] and there is the hope of holding a few limited gatherings later in the Spring/Summer as rules permit – eg A Bluebell Walk. Details to follow in later grapevines.

## Local Elections

Preparations for local elections in May are underway and **East Northamptonshire** residents are being urged to make note of important deadlines. **On Thursday 6 May 2021 a poll will be held to elect Councillors for the new North Northamptonshire Council (NNC).**

The new unitary authority will replace Corby, East Northants, Kettering and Wellingborough Borough Councils and Northamptonshire County Council on Thursday 1 April.

Although voting in local elections is important, it can take place only if enough local people come forward as candidates in the first place, whether representing a political party or as an independent. **Anyone wanting to stand in the NNC election will be able to submit their nomination paper from Friday, 26 March, with the deadline being 4.00pm on Thursday, 8 April**

More details are available at: <https://futurenorthantsnorth.org/north-northamptonshire-citizens-urged-to-prepare-now-for-may-elections/>



## So what else is happening . . . ?



### Lent Lunches 2021

Rushden & Higham Ferrers Council of Churches continue their online meetings on **Maundy Thursday [April 1]** and **Good Friday [April 2]**.

**Access details** can be found at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81084450699pwd=Tm5DT0lFbllXMVpSUG1MVWtoQVdpZz09>

Meeting ID: 810 8445 0699

Passcode: 495190

*Andrew Presland*

### Looking ahead, the Peterborough DEF Annual General Meeting

will be open to all, and taking place from 7.30pm on **Monday 19 April on Zoom**.

Following the AGM, **Rev Andrew Symes of Anglican Mainstream** (and formerly of this Diocese) will be giving a talk and answering questions. The Zoom link and paperwork will be available from Andrew Presland -

[[andrew.presland.harborough58@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.presland.harborough58@gmail.com)]

### Have you seen the Destination Nene Valley February Newsletter?

For tourism and business/job creation opportunities, and news on Chester Farm, near Irchester, opening for visitors this Summer. <https://spark.adobe.com/page/EvaLzHvDqwoRv/>

### How To Spot A Scam Email

- The sender's email address looks suspicious. Roll your mouse pointer over the sender's name to check it. If it **doesn't match** the website address of the organisation it says it's from it could be a sign of a scam.
- The email **doesn't use your name** - it says something like 'Dear Customer' instead.
- There's a **sense of urgency**, asking you to act immediately.
- There's a prominent website link that may look at first glance like a proper address but has **one letter missing or is spelt wrong**.
- There's a **request for personal information**.
- **Poor grammar and spelling mistakes**.
- **The entire text of the email is contained within an image** rather than the usual text format and the image contains an embedded hyperlink to a bogus site. Again, roll the mouse pointer over the link to reveal its true destination - **But don't click it!**

# Book Reviews



## **Barbara Brown Taylor, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*,**

Canterbury Press, 2014

‘Darkness’ gets a bad press and we often expend energy trying to avoid or eliminate it. But in this book, the writer [Professor of Religion and an ordained Priest in the Episcopal Church] offers a beautifully positive view of darkness.

This is a book based both on her research and her own experiences from childhood to the present day living on a remote farm, where she relies on the moon for night-time tasks.

She challenges us to travel with her, physically, emotionally and literally into dark places and see how the darkness need not be feared and avoided but is actually a place where we can grow as people and grow in our faith.

If we only talk of Jesus as the ‘Light of the world’ who shatters the darkness, we will miss out: our Lord also said, ‘*Blessed are the poor in Spirit*’ and ‘*Blessed are they who mourn*’. Taylor rejects the view that associates all that is good with light, and darkness with all that is evil. Does not God work at night as well? ‘Solar Christianity’ is shallow Christianity.

Through darkness we find courage and can understand the world in new ways. There are times we need to let darkness do its work.

A book for Covid-19 times.

**Martin Tanner**

## **Ruth Valerio, *Saying Yes to Life***

London: SPCK, 2020

As we start the task of “building back better” there are many issues that will compete for our attention. How should we prioritise our choices and how should we as Christians identify the action that should be taken to heal the wounds in our community life that the pandemic has revealed?

If it is true - as has been suggested by speakers in the media and emphasised by David Attenborough’s recent documentaries - that the issues of climate change and the sustainability of the earth’s ecology pose an urgent problem whose magnitude far outweighs that of the pandemic then we will need the sort of informed thinking that this book provides to help us address the issues.

Dr Ruth Valerio is an environmentalist and theologian working for Tearfund. She was asked



to write this book by Archbishop Welby who reminds us in his Introduction that Psalm 34 says 'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it', and notes that... 'Christians have not always given God's creation the reverence it deserves'.

In her introductory chapter Ruth Valerio echoes the Archbishop's assertion. She notes that every Sunday Christians affirm their belief that God created the heavens and the earth and yet 'for too long the theology and practice of caring for people and planet have been sidelined in the Christian faith'.

The main vehicle for the author's message to the reader is based on Chapter 1 of Genesis and she begins with its first two verses. 'In the beginning God created the heaven and earth.' Belief in this statement is the foundation on which the rest of the book rests. There then follows six chapters corresponding to the six days of creation.

Her conclusion is based on the first three verses of Genesis Chapter 2 - the day of rest - and she uses this to offer examples of church organisations that are responding to ecological challenges in ways that offer hope in the face of the daunting tasks we all face. This book is insightful and challenging

but it shows us how we can make a significant difference to the ecological and environmental issues that we *must* engage with as faithful stewards of God's creation.

**Tony Smith**

*"Where there are cooks  
there is hope . . ."*  
[TV Advert for Lurpak, 2021]

*... and a nice easy read*

**Amor Towles, *A Gentleman in Moscow***, Windmill Books, 2017

This could [in retrospect] have been yet another take on lockdown but somehow transcends it.

The central character - a 'gentleman' of the old Russian regime - returns to Moscow and his suite at the Hotel Metropol in 1922 and finds himself pretty quickly under house arrest. It is a 'lockdown' that continues into the mid 'Fifties. How he spends the time is a triumph of will and invention over constraint and bureaucratic idiocy.

This is not an adventure story. The cast is tight: the palette very small, but it's a joy to read and beautifully written. *Ed*

## Wildlife on our doorstep . . .

As bird watchers (and occasionally ‘twitchers’), as well as photographers, we have known for many years how important and interesting the Nene Valley is, but this has been hammered home during the ‘stay local’ restrictions of lockdown, and we have realised how fortunate we are to have so many brilliant places to visit within easy reach of home.

Each year we aim to see as many different bird species as possible in the UK. During lockdown, even though we have more time due to our other activities ceasing, we have become frustrated at being unable to travel to see species not found locally (eg ring necked parakeets at Abington Park, Northampton). Having said that, however, we have been pleasantly surprised to note that just two months into 2021, and prior to the Spring migrants arriving, we have already spotted 81 simply by “staying local”, although the Church peregrine continues to elude us!

These range widely from the robins, sparrows and blackbirds in the garden, Jude’s corvids (which pop up everywhere!), waders, which are normally found on the coast, at

Stanwick Lakes or Summer Leys, over-wintering waterfowl and three species of egret, to the rarities which appear on the “Bird Alert” – the European glossy ibis at Islip and the North American ring-necked duck (why? - the ring is on its bill!) and smart Scandinavian smew found on Skew Bridge Lake in Rushden.

On our recent rambles we have also seen otter, fox and muntjac deer. During the summer, when birds become less conspicuous, we move on to butterflies and dragonflies. Again, many different species can be found although identifying the latter certainly tests our skills.

We also consider ourselves lucky to belong to an excellent, friendly and supportive local RSPB Group. If you are interested in joining us check out their website – Mid Nene Local Group.

Fresh air, exercise, friendship and education – let us enjoy and celebrate it all!

*Anne & Alan  
Savage*



## Christ is Risen – Are We?

**S**o we enter our second Easter under covid restrictions. Some of our churches will be open for worship, and others won't. That is a tricky balancing act, and the decision has to be made by each Parochial Church Council, bearing in mind a number of factors.

If your church isn't open, please don't blame the vicar or PCC: they are doing their best in a very difficult situation. If it is open, but you don't feel safe going, find a way to join in corporate Easter worship from your home. If it is open, but with no congregational singing, no kiss or hug or handshake of peace, no communion wine, no coffee afterwards: be grateful that you can be together.

Whether your church building is open or closed at Easter, Jesus is alive, his people the church are alive, and our resurrection hope remains sure and certain.

Over the coming months, as lockdown is released (possibly in fits and starts, very gradually, frustratingly slowly), let's all resolve to know and experience and live out the new life which Jesus brings. How can you and your church be newly alive for your neighbours and your

community? What new things should your local church be doing, and how can you contribute to those?

Many of our churches have been a huge blessing to their local communities during the dark days of covid. How can they change gear and bring blessing as we come out of the restrictions? Start discussing that in your church and with your friends!

Many of our clergy and church workers have been working incredibly hard without a proper break. Will your church make sure that the vicar, and others who have given so much, get a really good break this summer or autumn? Why not use online resources for worship to give the vicar a full uninterrupted month off this summer?

Let's really show that we love each other, and our communities, and our spiritual leaders. That could be a sign of the risen life of Jesus among us.

With best wishes  
+Donald



+ Donald

## Meet the Congregation – Barbara Coxon

Barbara is a member of both the Thursday 10.30 and Sunday 11.15 congregations, and was born in Stafford in October 1946. Her mother, Rene, was a coil winder at English Electric and her father, Tom, was a local baker, specialising in cakes and cake decoration. Her brother, Colin, was born almost exactly twelve months later. One ‘special’ memory is of him pinching her dolls’ pram, and her mum and dad having to buy her another!

When Barbara was five she started at Flash Ley Infants School, moving on to St John’s CofE Junior School and from there to Riverway Girls School in Stafford. There she enjoyed Domestic Science, and loved being a member of the school choir.

Leaving school just after her fifteenth birthday, Barbara started work as a shorthand typist for F H Burgess, Agricultural Merchants, then moved to Staffordshire County Council Weights and Measures Department - now known as Trading Standards - where she was secretary to the Chief Inspector. Moving to the Manchester area in 1976 she joined the Cooperative Bank’s head office, moving to their Training Centre at Stanford Hall in Derbyshire in 1982.

Not surprisingly Barbara met husband, Peter, over a Cooperative Bank counter in 1964, where he was a cashier and her girlfriend worked. Barbara was there ‘paying in’ as part of her job. They became engaged in 1969 and married at St Mary’s Church, Stafford in March 1970 - this was the church where her father had been a choirboy and where both mother and father were christened, confirmed and married. It felt like carrying on a family tradition.

Barbara left the bank in 1988 and they moved to Rushden because of Peter’s job. Once *both* had retired, however, they were ‘persuaded’ to join the British Red Cross in Sharnbrook in 1990, after completing a First Aid course. They went on to teach First Aid and undertook assessment on commercial training courses whilst completing many first aid duties at public events.

In recognition of that service history Barbara attended not one, but three, Garden Parties at Buckingham Palace! She was chosen by Bedford Red Cross to meet the Duke of Edinburgh when the organisation was granted a



new Royal Charter by the Queen at the Commonwealth Institute in London.

They *finally* retired from the Red Cross only after thirty years of service and met many interesting people along the way.

Peter and Barbara run a Home Group together and are on the church Dusting Rota. Barbara also helps with the Thursday 'Tea and Chat' sessions in the Church Hall.

Roving Reporter

## Those questions

### Biggest Influence

My Dad, who sadly died suddenly when I was 17, but I have wonderful memories of him, and especially his cake-making!!

### Hobbies

Bobbin lacemaking: which I took up when we moved to Rushden as Bedfordshire is famous for its lacemaking. I also enjoy gardening - mainly vegetables as you can eat them!!

### Guests to dinner?

The Duke of Edinburgh: who I have met twice - a very interesting person to talk to and equally interested in what you do. Very funny person too. And also Neil Diamond my favourite singer.

### What would you serve?

A typical roast dinner, followed by Apple Crumble and custard.

### Favourite Place?

The island of Rhodes

### Proudest Moment?

Meeting the Duke of Edinburgh

### Special Treat?

Theatre with special friends

### Favourite Bible verse ?

"... And now these three remain: Faith, Hope and Love. But the greatest of these is Love"  
*1 Corinthians 13.13*

## Last Minute

### Apologies ...

for overdoing it in the March grapevine. Not only was there a Corvid perched on Richard Ormston's shoulder but another in the Lent cartoon on p29. As in life, Corvids are hard to get away from! Ed



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# Looking Back at Parish Magazines

50 years ago

April 1971

## Parochial Church Council

The metal guards covering the outside of the East Windows ... are in a bad state and are to be replaced. Similar guards on the inside of the louvres of the bell chamber have been installed to keep the pigeons out. The cost of the latter (the guards, not the pigeons!) is to be met by the Urban Council ...

Permission was given to the Cub Scouts to use the Rectory Paddock for weekend camps and similar activities.

## The Men's Fellowship

The lack of postal services and telephone coin boxes being jammed, added a touch of novelty to the process of contacting speakers but at least we are covered to the end of June which complete the present session.

25 years ago

April 1996

## Editorial

Bertrand Russell was known as a mathematician, essayist, philosopher and socialite. As a mathematician no one could fault his statement that, "Death is the ultimate statistic. One out of one dies."

## Marching Again This May For Jesus

The second Global March for Jesus planned for 25 May will unite more than 12 million Christians worldwide in prayer on the theme, "A World to Win Together".

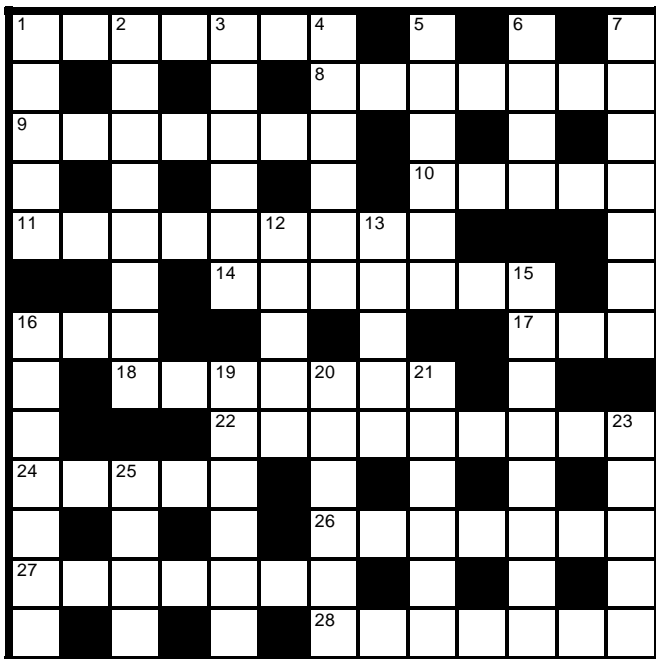
"We wanted to highlight the way that God is calling the whole church to work together to carry the gospel to the whole world in this generation," explains Roger Forster of Ichthus Christian Fellowship.



# Crossword No 377

## ACROSS

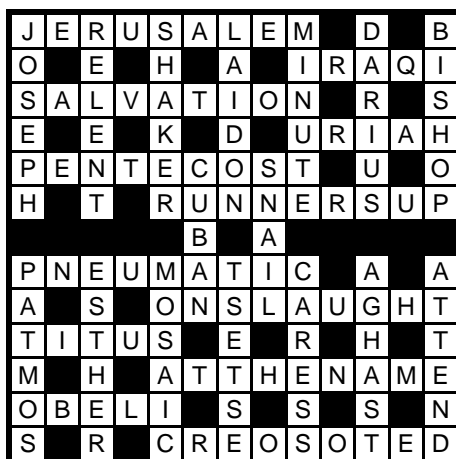
- 1 City near the Dead Sea (7)  
 8 Of the Ark-builder (7)  
 9 Samson's mistress (7)  
 10 Head of a monastery (5)  
 11 Round boiled sweet (9)  
 14 Jewish language (7)  
 16 Dove's call (3)  
 17 Utilise (3)  
 18 Neurons (anag.) (7)  
 22 Artificial grass (9)  
 24 Father of Mesha (1 Chronicles 2:42) (5)  
 26 '--- Father, strong to save', (hymn) (7)  
 27 Ancient region in central Asia Minor (7)  
 28 Large church (7)



## DOWN

- 1 -- Iscariot (5)  
 2 Denomination (8)  
 3 Leaf-stalk (6)  
 4 In abeyance (2,4)  
 5 Garlic sausage (6)  
 6 Jezebel's husband (4)  
 7 Sink a ship (7)  
 12 Devout (5)  
 13 Mammary gland (5)  
 15 French Calvinist (8)  
 16 'The Windy City' (7)  
 19 OT vineyard owner (6)  
 20 Rivulet (6)  
 21 Enlist (4,2)  
 23 Rifle (anag.) (5)  
 25 Soothe (4)

## Solution to Crossword No 376





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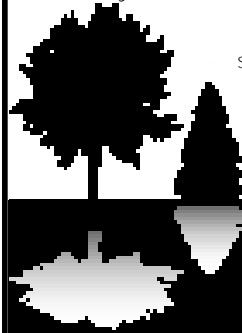
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# Belfry Gossip

The country continues in a state of lockdown but there appears to be light at the end of the tunnel as restrictions are beginning to be eased. It is hopeful that once again it will soon be possible to ring some of the bells for Sunday services, but we do not expect this to be until later in May at the earliest.

The Peterborough Guild has recently held its Management Committee meeting (virtually via Zoom), which co-ordinates all Guild activities, scrutinises accounts and prepares items for inclusion in the Annual Report, as well as getting much feedback from the ten branches which make up the Guild. Brenda and Simon are both on this committee.

One thing to come out of this meeting was - in readiness to returning to ringing - a series of online workshops, to help either refresh memories after the long break or an opportunity to understand the theory that underpins different parts of ringing. The meeting also debated the timing of Guild events for 2021 and have suggested having the AGM via Zoom again in June, the Spring meeting and 6 bell contest in August, and the Summer Festival and 8 bell contest in September. Obviously the in-person events may have to be changed, according to circumstances at the time.

We are still maintaining contact with a virtual practice on Zoom and Ringing Room.

*Tintinnabulum*



# Mission Matters - Why Langham ?

**Wonderful news!** Across Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as in Eastern Europe, China, Russia and the Middle East, God's Spirit is moving! Many people are coming to faith in Jesus and many churches are being planted. Today, the majority of Christians live outside the United States and Western Europe. Many of these believers, though, lack the biblical leadership, teaching and resources needed to help them grow in their faith. In fact, it is estimated that, worldwide, around 80% of pastors have little, if any, biblical training. Consequently, Christians may be left vulnerable to false teaching, and may not fully understand that some of their traditional cultural beliefs, such as sorcery and initiation rites, are wrong in God's eyes, and harmful.

Some years ago, John Stott saw for himself the obstacles to healthy church growth which existed around the world. God led him to found the Langham ministry as a means of addressing the needs he had discerned.

Today, Langham Partnership is a multinational, multi-denominational fellowship. Its members work, by invitation, alongside the church in more than seventy countries, offering Christian teaching, training and resources. Its focus is on God's word, as it is convinced that, "The application of the Bible, through the Holy Spirit, brings transformation and grows His kingdom in both numbers and depth".

All this answers the question: Why Langham? It also explains the reason for our supporting Langham at St Mary's.

In a future article we shall take a closer look at the three aspects of Langham's ministry - equipping scholars, training pastors, and developing literature.

*Sue Eagles* on behalf of the Mission Committee:

Sue Eagles, Josie Smith, Sue Prior, Edna Wadsworth and Martin Compton



Go online to: [langham.org](http://langham.org)

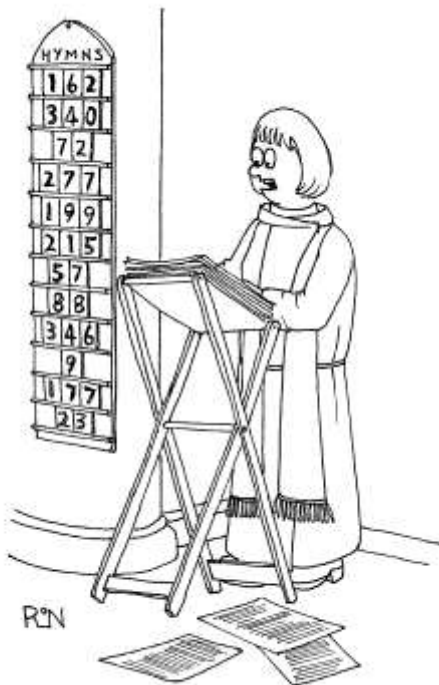


‘My times are in  
your hands’

Psalm 31.15

But it might not be too long  
now to a sociable coffee. . .

Please note the Church  
being open between 10.00-  
12noon each day will stop  
after Easter



*The need for a loo became more pressing*

## On Line Services - April 2021

**For those who wish to worship in this way services will continue on line as before.** To access these go to our website: [smaryschurchrushden.org](http://smaryschurchrushden.org) which displays both the **Facebook** and **YouTube** links.

**Sundays:** 4, 11, 18, 25 - 10.00am - *Morning Worship*

**Thursdays:** 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 - 10.30am - *Thought for Thursday*

**Helen Smedley's work with children and families also continues with**

Monday 10.00am: **Bumps&Babes**

Monday 10:20am: **Toddleractivities**

Friday 6.00pm: **Bible Bedtime Stories**

Sunday 5.00pm: **Sunday Club**



**Buggy Buddies** is also available to parents and guardians with children under 5: a socially distanced walkabout and natter. Slots can be booked for this with Helen on 07495 304974

# Services in Church - April 2021

**St Mary's**  
Rushden

**St Peter's**  
Newton Bromswold

## Thursday 1 April - Maundy Thursday

10.30am Holy Communion

## Friday 2 April - Good Friday

9.30am All Age Service

2.00pm Meditation

## Sunday 4 April - Easter Day

8.00am Holy Communion [BCP]

9.30am Holy Communion

11.00am Holy Communion

11.15am Holy Communion

## Sunday 11 April - Second Sunday of Easter

9.30am All Age Service

11.15am Morning Prayer

11.00am Family Service

## Sunday 18 April - Third Sunday of Easter

9.30am All Age Service

11.15am Holy Communion

11.00am Morning Prayer

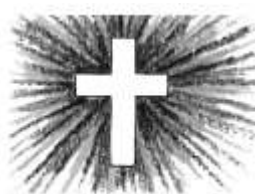
## Sunday 25 April - Fourth Sunday of Easter

9.30am All Age Service

11.15am Morning Prayer

11.00am Holy Communion

*Midweek Service in St Mary's Church*  
Thursdays 10.30am Holy Communion [BCP]



— The Back Page —



Christ  
is  
Risen!

