

News & Views From St Mary's Church Ecclesfield



Church Magazine March

stmarysecclesfield.org.uk

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First Words

Meteorological Spring begins on Saturday 1st March, like most people I am always happy to see the end of Winter and the lengthening days of Spring.

We begin the month with the first **wedding** of the year on **Saturday 1st March at 4pm**.

On **Sunday 2nd March**, after the 10am Eucharist we have **baptisms** at **12noon**.

Saints Alive continues on **Monday 3rd March at 4pm** in Church. The **PCC** will meet at **7.30pm** that evening.

On **Shrove Tuesday, 4th March** at 10am at the Cathedral there is the annual **Bishop's Lecture**.

Ash Wednesday falls on the **5th March** - there will be a service of **Holy Communion** to mark the beginning of Lent at **7pm in Church**.

There are **funerals** in Church on **Thursday 6th March at 2pm** and on **Friday 7th March at 2.30pm**.

On **Saturday 8th March** the **Prayer Breakfast** is at **9am** and **Bereavement Cafe** is at **10.30am**.

Prayer and Praise is on **Sunday 9th March at 10am**.

The final session of **Saints Alive** will be on **Monday 10th March at 4pm** in Church.

On **Tuesday 11th March** there is a **quiet afternoon for Lent** at **St Mark's in Grenoside**. We start at **4pm** and will finish at about 7pm.

The **Lent Course** starts on **Monday 17th March at 3.30pm** in Church.

On **Thursday 20th March**, after the mid-week Communion I will be taking a service at **Nightingale Nursing Home**.

On **Monday 24th March at 2pm** the **Prayer Ministry Team** will meet in Church. This is followed by the **Lent Course** at **3.30pm**.

On **Tuesday 25th March** the **Ecclesfield Charities Trustees** will meet in Church at **4pm** and the **Ecclesfield Feoffees** will meet at **5.30pm**. And at **7pm** there is **Baptism Preparation** in Church.

On **Monday 31st March** the **Lent Course** is on at **3.30pm** in Church.

There is lots happening in March at St Mary's. Please pray for all of these events.

God bless,
Tim.

Lent 2025

The Ash Wednesday service to begin our Lenten journey is on Wednesday 5th March at 7pm.

There is a Quiet Afternoon at St Mark's on Tuesday 11th March beginning at 4pm and ending at 7pm.

The Lent Course is called "Do not be afraid... I have called you by name, you are mine."

It will be on Mondays at 3.30pm in Church, starting on Monday 17th March, and we will be looking at the prophecies in Isaiah 40 - 55.

If you are looking for a recommendation for some reading *Searched me out and known me: journeying Lent with the Psalms*, by Charlie Bell looks good.

----- ☞ ☝ -----

Kate Guest

Counselling & Psychotherapy

Counselling is a talking therapy where you can discuss your problems and emotions in a safe, confidential space.

Counselling can help improve your mental health, teach you better ways to handle stress and anxiety, and increase your self-awareness and emotional resilience.

Maybe you are suffering a sudden life crisis such as bereavement, job loss, or lack of direction, or that you feel that life is just getting on top of you, and you need someone to help with your thoughts and feelings.

Areas of counselling I deal with include abuse, anxiety, anger management, bereavement and loss, career support, work related stress, depression, low confidence and low self-esteem, loneliness, relationship problems, family problems, sex and sexuality and personal issues.

Counselling is not about judging; it is about giving someone the freedom to examine their own issues and so empower them to find their own resolution. Counselling can be a powerful way of examining ourselves and so bring about change within our lives.

I work with individuals and also provide couples and relationship counselling.

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Prayer for the Month

Psalm 51:1-13

**Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness;
according to the abundance of your compassion
blot out my offences.**

**Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin.**

**For I acknowledge my faults
and my sin is ever before me.**

**Against you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
So that you are justified in your sentence
and righteous in your judgement.**

**I have been wicked even from my birth,
a sinner when my mother conceived me.**

**Behold, you desire truth deep within me
and shall make me understand wisdom
in the depths of my heart.**

**Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean;
wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.**

**Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the bones you have broken may rejoice.**

**Turn your face from my sins
and blot out all my misdeeds.**

**Make me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**

**Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your holy spirit from me.**

**Give me again the joy of your salvation
and sustain me with your gracious spirit.**

Psalm 51 is one of the great penitential psalms. It is a cry for mercy that is said to originate with King David when challenged by the prophet Nathan for his adultery and plotting the death of the husband of Bathsheba. This Psalm forms part of the prayers of Ash Wednesday. What always strikes me in this prayer is that there is no attempt to make excuses, there is no evasion of responsibility, no extenuating circumstances are offered. It is a simple confession of guilt.

It was C.S. Lewis who wrote that too often, when we think we are confessing our sins to God, what we are in fact doing is offering Him excuses. If there are any excuses God already knows them, Lewis reminds us.

We can approach God asking simply for mercy because God is a God who forgives. We do not need to make excuses. Instead we simply and honestly confess to God, knowing that on the Cross Christ has already died for our sins. God is a God of mercy and forgiveness and of new life.

On Ash Wednesday we have the cross imposed on our foreheads as a sign of our repentance and also as a sign of the mercy of God upon which we depend.

The cross of Christ tells us that there is no sin, no mistake, that cannot be forgiven and healed. It tells us that no one is beyond the reach of God's mercy. And so, because of Christ, we can approach the throne of grace with confidence, not in our own righteousness but in God's great mercy and love.

May Christ be with you this Lent.
Amen.

Andrew Jones

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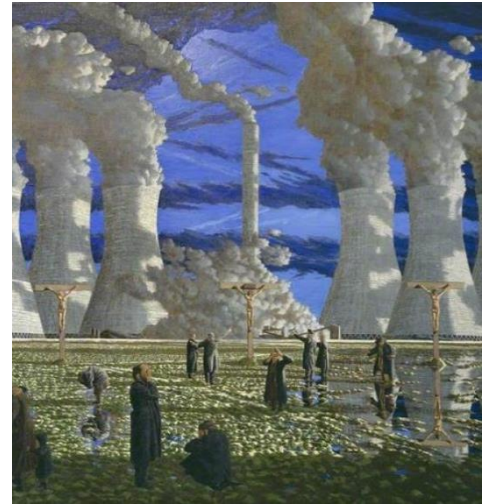
Alison Hancock –  0114 245 2780

God in The Arts

Editor: This year the Revd Michael Burgess surveys works of sacred art that can be found in various museums...you can see the image by googling the title of the painting and the artist.

'Menorah' by Roger Wagner

In the midst of the dreaming spires and Gothic splendour of Oxford stands the Ashmolean Museum. Its classic proportions are a contrast to the buildings around. Within, the addition of thirty new galleries has doubled the exhibition space, and the visitor to the museum will discover a wealth of beautiful and impressive works – Renaissance drawings, Eastern art and British paintings. The last category includes this month's work: 'Menorah' by Roger Wagner. It was painted in 1993 and at that time it was the largest contemporary painting acquired by the Ashmolean. It is now on loan to St Giles' Church at the northern end of the city.



Roger Wagner was born in 1957. He graduated from Oxford and now worships at the Romanesque church of Iffley. He works on a small scale with book illustrations, but also creates large canvases that juxtapose traditional religious images with contemporary symbols in a startling and arresting way. The background of 'Menorah' is Didcot Power Station, which can be seen from the windows of the Oxford-London train. The central chimney and the cooling towers around form the shape of the seven-branched candlestick of Judaism. In front of them are the three crosses of Calvary. Around the scene of crucifixion we can see a couple consoling each other in the foreground and isolated individuals wandering in the mud in grief and perplexity. They are dressed in Hasidic robes.

An earlier work of Roger Wagner's is 'The Burning Furnace' where angels are painted in the setting of a Victorian iron works. It is the same contrast of ancient and modern in this painting: the Good Friday of 2000 years ago and an industrial, bleak landscape of today. The artist is also contrasting the menorah of Judaism and the cross of Christianity – the suffering of the Holocaust and the suffering of the Saviour.

The menorah would burn in front of the Holy of Holies as a sign of God's invisible presence. In the book of Revelation, St John describes his vision of Jesus the Lamb in the midst of the same seven flaming torches, moving with grace and glory. Here in 'Menorah' the figure of Jesus is insignificant against the immense scale of industrial buildings spewing out pollution into the bright sky.

But it is that figure of Jesus on the Cross who draws us this month in Holy Week and draws us in this painting. The mourners around look like figures in a concentration camp: victims of man's inhumanity to man. The cooling towers are a vivid reminder of our violation and destruction of mother earth. And in the centre we see our crucified Lord. We hear Isaiah's song of the suffering servant that there is no sorrow like this sorrow. We also hear Jesus crying 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' And we can ponder this painting as we ask, Is it a sign of the absence of God, or, like the Menorah lit in the temple, a sign of the presence of God? There is human chemistry creating the destruction of life and earth as depicted by Roger Wagner. Can we proclaim a divine chemistry at work which will transform suffering and death into the new life of Easter in the power of the Resurrection?

5th March - Ash Wednesday, mourning our sins

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. But why 'Ash' Wednesday? The reason has to do with getting things right between you and God, and the tradition goes right back to the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites often sinned. When they finally came to their senses, and saw their evil ways as God saw them, they could do nothing but repent in sorrow. They mourned for the damage and evil they had done. As part of this repentance, they covered their heads with ashes. For the Israelites, putting ashes on your head, and even rending your clothes, was an outward sign of their heart-felt repentance and acknowledgement of sin. (See Genesis 18:27; 2 Samuel 13:19; Job 2:8, 30:19; Isaiah 58:5; Jeremiah 6:26; Jonah 3:6)

In the very early Christian Church, the yearly 'class' of penitents had ashes sprinkled over them at the beginning of Lent. They were turning to God for the first time, and mourning their sins. But soon many other Christians wanted to take part in the custom, and to do so at the very start of Lent. They heeded Joel's call to 'rend your hearts and not your garments' (Joel 2:12-19). Ash Wednesday became known as either the 'beginning of the fast' or 'the day of the ashes'.

The collect for today goes back to the Prayer Book, and it stresses the penitential character of the day. It encourages us with the reminder of the readiness of God to forgive us and to renew us.

The Bible readings for today are often Joel 2:1-2, 12-18, Matthew 6: 1-6, 16 - 21 and Paul's moving catalogue of suffering, "as having nothing and yet possessing everything." (2 Corinthians 5:20b - 6:10)

The actual custom of 'ashing' was abolished at the Reformation, though the old name for the day remained. Today, throughout the Church of England, receiving the mark of ashes on one's forehead is optional. Certainly, the mark of ashes on the forehead reminds people of their mortality: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return..." (Genesis 3:19)

The late medieval custom was to burn the branches used on Palm Sunday in the previous year in order to create the ashes for today.

The Collect for Ash Wednesday is:

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Crossword
Puzzle
Solution is
here**

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Reflecting Faith: The Meaning of Baptism

Editor: The Revd Dr Jo White considers the stones and mortar...

Last month we considered the overall 'look' of a church building and how that often reflects the way faith is celebrated inside.

One of the clearest visual symbols inside a church building relates to where the font, used for baptism, is placed.

We often think of Baptism as being uniquely Christian, but this is not the case. Most established religions have some form of rite to welcome a new person – regardless of their age – into their fellowship.

If you think of Jesus being baptised in the river Jordan by John, it is clear that this was something within the Jewish practice happening before 'Christianity' came into being.

When Paul writes to the Corinthians in his first letter, he compares the Christian rite with baptism 'into Moses in the sea'. This comes from him being a Hillelite rabbi who argued that as 'the Jews passed from slavery in Egypt through the Red Sea into Canaan, so the Gentile passed from heathenism through baptism into the "promised land" '.

Baptism was intended as a symbolic action of outward cleansing, meaning change, from not being part of the 'group' to being welcomed into it. It was accepted that the person's inside did not change! There was and still remains nothing magical about that (unfortunately).

In the Book of Acts there is an instance where one person chose to follow Christ, and the whole family was baptised.

The Early Church took baptism very seriously, and new believers had to spend a good length of time preparing for it. As the years passed, the babies of Christian believers came to be baptised shortly after birth.

This month

Have a think about your own Baptism. What value do you place on it? Do you feel it makes you part of the Christian Family, or was it so long ago that for you, it's become an irrelevance?

Flower Rota

If anyone can spare the time to fill a vacant week on the 2025 flower Rota, I would be very grateful. There are fifteen vacant weeks throughout the year and would appreciate any help to fill them.

Many thanks. Christine.



St James the Least of All

Editor: The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'...

On the perils of parking near church

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren.

I cannot be wholly sympathetic because your church car park is now inadequate, only having space for 100 cars. Your solution of advising members of the congregation to park in the adjoining supermarket car park may not have been wise. The maximum time people can stop there is 90 minutes, and as your services often reach that length, returning to find their cars clamped may not make you universally popular – although it may give your congregation the opportunity of practising Christian forgiveness.

Since the medieval architect who built St James the Least of All was not overly concerned with car parking, the only space we have is along the road by the church. Inevitably, it gets blocked, which causes us all immense satisfaction when those not attending church but intending to have a morning shopping, find themselves unable to get out of the village until Mattins is over.

I did once encourage people to walk to church across the fields, but after we had nearly lost the present Earl in that swampy bit near the brook, I decided the idea was best dropped.

For most, the inconvenience of parking only makes attending church more of a pleasurable challenge; we so enjoy having something to complain about. Major Hastings, however, who has complained endlessly about parking problems, made a point last Christmas by leaving his car in the middle of the vicarage lawn. I was so pleased he happened to park just where I had had a garden pond filled in only the previous week. He returned to find that the car had sunk up to the windscreen and needed a crane to remove it.

For weddings, a farmer allows us to use the field adjoining the church. While he rarely attends church on Sundays, he is always there the week before – I suspect praying for heavy rain, so he can make a fortune charging to tow out with his tractor those who have got stuck. Perhaps the greatest act of witness your church could perform would be to get everyone attending church to park on the ring road, bringing the entire town to a halt until your Sunday morning Service is over.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Beware of these contagious diseases in church

Double Auricular Clearance: A condition due to the simultaneous opening of both ear ducts, which allows sound to enter one ear and leave the other without any absorption thereof. Condition is acute during Bible reading and sermon.

Church Meeting Paralysis: This can strike suddenly, when a post in the church needs filling. A good dose of enthusiasm works wonders with this sad affliction.

Accelerated Vocal Response: A condition which causes the sufferer to try to sing faster than the organ.

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Prayers of the Bible:

By the Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle, formerly principal of the Nazarene Theological College, Manchester

Praying the Prayer of Forgiveness:

Numbers 12:13, 'O God, heal her, I pray.'

These six words are Moses' prayer for his sister Miriam. They tell us a lot about Moses and a lot about prayer.

For some time Miriam and her brother Aaron had been simmering with anger against Moses. They protested that he had married a Cushite woman (v.1), but the real cause of their animosity was jealousy. 'Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?' (v.2). Don't we have a ministry as well? Hasn't God also spoken through us? Why does everyone look to Moses? Why are we overlooked?

Jealousy is a powerful and deadly emotion. God had given ministries and honour to Miriam (Exod. 15:20,21) and Aaron had become the chief priest (Num. 3:1-3), but neither of them were satisfied with that. It looks as if Miriam fomented and took the lead in criticising Moses. Suddenly the Lord intervened (v.4). He called Moses, Aaron and Miriam together and defended His servant Moses. Moses is faithful in all my house! (v.7)

Whereas the Lord had often spoken to other prophets in dreams and visions, He speaks to Moses 'mouth to mouth' (v.8). How dare Aaron and Miriam question Moses whom the Lord called 'my servant' (v.8). Having so strongly defended Moses and rebuked his critics, the Lord departed and then the divine judgement fell. Suddenly Miriam, the leader of the conspiracy, was struck down with the dreaded leprosy.

Aaron immediately cried out to Moses, confessing his own and his sister's sin and foolishness (vv. 11,12). Then Moses demonstrated why the Lord honoured him so highly. He expressed no anger, no vindictiveness, no spirit of 'settling scores' against his brother and sister. In spite of their antagonism and jealousy, Moses loved them both and 'cried to the Lord' on behalf of Miriam.

He prayed one of the shortest prayers found in the Bible. 'O God, heal her, I pray' (v.13). He was grieved and full of compassion to see his sister so terribly afflicted. The prayer was prompted by the love that forgives, the love that overlooks what others have done to us, the love that wants God's best for them. And only God's grace can make us like that. The prayer is so short, so simple, so direct, so personal. 'O God, heal her, I pray.'

And God heard and answered. As a warning to others who might challenge Moses' authority, Miriam was quarantined for seven days, then fully healed and restored (vv.14, 15). How does this incident help us in our prayer life?

First, true prayer is born in compassion. The lips express the deep feelings of the heart.

Second, God will not hear our prayers if our hearts are not right with him and with one another. While we cherish resentments and grudges, our praying is powerless.

Third, while there are many times when prayer needs to be persistent, there are also times when it is a simple, deep cry from the heart.



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What's the Big Idea? - An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament: Psalms

Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham begins a new series which will run for the next year.

'The Psalms have a unique place in the Bible, because most of the Scripture speaks to us, while the Psalms speak for us' (Athanasius of Alexandria).

The Book of Psalms contains 150 prayers or songs of praise, the majority (73) attributed to David, although some were composed later. They were mostly composed for liturgical worship. There are songs of praise, in which people joyfully express praise for God's work of creation and sustaining (e.g. 135 & 136). In others, the psalmist recounts a desperate situation and gives thanks for God's answer to his prayers (e.g. 30 & 116).

There are a significant number of psalms of lament, both individual (e.g. 3-7; 22) and communal (e.g. 44), which begin with a cry for help. Some express deliverance from sin (51 & 130), or point to the certainty that the Lord has heard their prayer (7, but contrast 88). The theme of trust is central in many psalms (23, 62 & 91).

The 'royal psalms' (e.g. 20, 21 & 72) point to the promised Messiah, fulfilled in Jesus. There are also psalms teaching wisdom (e.g. 37, 49); 'torah' psalms, focussing on the law of the Lord (e.g. 1, 19 & 119), and psalms which celebrate the history of Israel and God's faithfulness (e.g. 78, 105 & 106).

The psalms can help us in our own prayers, by providing us with models to follow, as they express our own deepest feelings as we approach God: *'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul'* (Psalm 23:1-3).

Miscellaneous observations on daily life

A bank is a place that will lend you money if you can prove that you don't need it.

A healthy adult consumes each year one-and-one-half times his own weight in other people's patience.

A pun is the lowest form of humour - unless you thought of it yourself.

Based on my calculations, I can afford to retire five years after I die.

Birthday cake is the only food you can blow on and spit on, and still everybody rushes to get a piece.

Coffee: starter fluid for the morning impaired.

Hospitality: making your guests feel like they're at home, even if you wish they were.

I recently decided to sell my vacuum cleaner - all it was doing was gathering dust.

My dog will eat anything until you put a pill in it. Then he's Gordon Ramsey.

God in the Sciences

This series is written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

Science and a sense of the Transcendent

What is the difference between a cathedral and a physics lab? Are they not both saying: 'Hello'? - Annie Dillard

Scientists often speak of a reality beyond the objects they are studying, and for some this is encountered in powerful – if rare – episodes of wonder and awe. The Christian writer J.W. Sire quotes this line from Annie Dillard in his book *Echoes of a Voice*, which explores spiritual or ‘transcendent’ experiences.

In his analysis of these experiences Sire describes moments that are “emotional, intellectual, highly charged, usually sudden, unannounced, often odd, some weird, others glorious”, and places them on three different levels:

A material object that points beyond the material reality. For example, someone might develop a sense of what is good and evil, based on the actions of others.

Experience of “something personal...just behind the surface of what we are directly experiencing, often something with which one feels at peace or even at one, or, perhaps, as dangerous or threatening.”

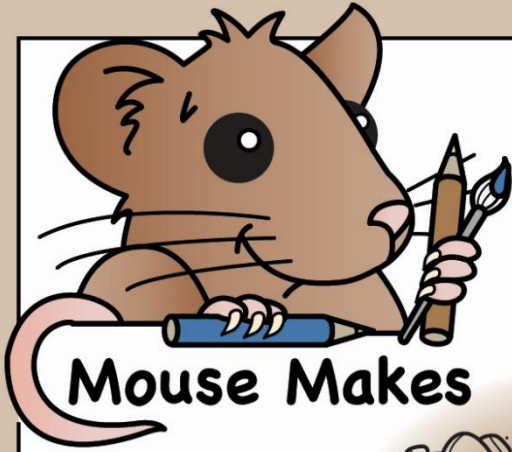
A felt presence that has a specific character or presence, e.g., holiness, or inspiring humility, fearful awe or wonder.

According to Sire, level 1-2 experiences are fairly common but level 3 is rare. He gives a wide range of examples, including scientists. Some of these people are religious or interested in spirituality, others are atheists. Some of their moments of transcendence carried a particular meaning, others simply sparked curiosity.

The famous geneticist Francis Collins described several significant moments when he was young: “being transported by the experience of looking through a telescope”, or “a Christmas Eve where the descant on a particularly beautiful Christmas carol...left me with a sense of unexpected awe and a longing for something I could not name”.

These experiences meant that when Collins was faced with the question of belief in God, “all [his] arguments seemed very thin”. Now, as a fully-fledged scientist and a believer in God, he is able to say that “for a scientist who occasionally is given the remarkable privilege of discovering something not previously known by man, there is a special kind of joy associated with such flashes of insight.”

Most of us are not scientists, but we may well have had experiences like this in different contexts. How can we, in our engagement with scientifically minded individuals, make connections through our shared experience of the transcendent? Can we listen as well as explain, finding some common points of connection?



THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised who led him into the wilderness?

 Luke 4:1



For how many days was Jesus tempted by the devil?

 Luke 4:2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into?

 Luke 4:3

Who did Jesus say you should ONLY worship and serve?

 Luke 4:8



READ
 the story in
Luke 4:1-13

Jesus said not to put the Lord your God to the...

 Luke 4:12



What happened after the temptation of Jesus?
 see Luke 4:14-15

JESUS • LED
 WILDERNESS
 DESERT
 TEMPTATIONS
 DAYS • DEVIL
 HUNGRY • SON
 STONE • ROCK
 KINGDOMS
 WORLD • GLORY
 WRITTEN
 SCRIPTURE
 WORSHIP • ONLY
 SERVE • LORD
 JERUSALEM
 HIGH • TEMPLE
 THROW • DOWN
 JUMP • ANGELS
 HANDS • HOLD
 LIFT • FOOT

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



Thought for the Month

Easter is late this year, it falls on Sunday 20th April; this means that Lent starts later than usual too. Ash Wednesday is on the 5th of March. People are already asking what am I going to give up for Lent - will it be chocolate or alcohol; perhaps I will give up buying books and CDs this year!

We associate Lent with fasting, with denying ourselves pleasures. Others combine it with a post-Christmas diet. Some, though, speak of 'taking something on' for Lent. It may be a daily act of kindness to a stranger, some spiritual reading or more time for prayer.

Whatever we do, we tend to associate Lent with ideas of self-discipline, denial and penitence. It does not immediately strike us as a 'happy season'! And yet, as I thought about Lent and my own preparations, I was taken with the idea of Lent as good news; Lent as a hopeful season.

What I mean by this is that what Lent says, with its fasting and its spiritual disciplines is that change is possible. I can change - we can change. We are not defined by our past. We are not imprisoned by choices or decisions we have made. The person that we used to be, the person that we are today, does not have to determine who we will be for ever.

This is what at heart Lent is all about. Making changes to the way we act and speak and live. Aiming to be a better person, trying to become more the person that we were made to be, the person that we are called to be. Past mistakes and failures can be forgiven and redeemed.

The key word for Lent is 'repent.' Sadly repentance has long been associated with feelings of guilt and shame, but what the word in the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament means is 'change of mind,' or better the 'transformation of the heart.'

And so, even though it is only a few days away, I do not know what I will be giving up or taking on for Lent this year. Instead I will spend time in prayer on Ash Wednesday, trying to discern what in my life needs to change. What past actions I need to ask forgiveness for, what habits I need to transform.

The question that I will be meditating on is what changes can I make to be more fully human, more the person that God made me to be, or as St Paul would put it, more Christlike?

I invite you to a prayerful and joyful and above all hopeful Lent this year.

God bless,
Tim

From the Registers

Baptisms (None to report)

May they know the love of God in their life and may all things of the Spirit live and grow in them

Marriages (None to report)

May each be to the other strength in need, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy

Funerals (March Funerals were noted in the February edition)

Grant them, O Lord, refreshment, light, and peace

4th March - Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day

Ever wonder why we eat pancakes just before Lent? The tradition dates back to Anglo-Saxon times, when Christians spent Lent in repentance and severe fasting.

So on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, the church bell would summon them to confession, where they would be 'shriven', or absolved from their sins, which gives us *Shrove* Tuesday. At home, they would then eat up their last eggs and fat, and making a pancake was the easiest way to do this. For the next 47 days, they pretty well starved themselves.

Pancakes feature in cookery books as far back as 1439, and today's pancake races are in remembrance of a panicked woman back in 1445 in Olney, Buckinghamshire. She was making pancakes when she heard the shriving bell calling her to confession. Afraid she'd be late, she ran to the church in a panic, still in her apron, and still holding the pan.

Flipping pancakes is also centuries old. A poem from Pasquil's Palin in 1619 runs: "And every man and maide doe take their turne, And tosse their Pancakes up for feare they burne."

Some people have noted that the ingredients of pancakes can be used to highlight four significant things about this time of year: eggs stand for creation, flour is the staff of life, while salt keeps things wholesome, and milk stands for purity.

Shrove Tuesday is always 47 days before Easter Sunday and falls between 3rd February and 9th March.

St. Mary's Ecclesfield Vacancy Church Wardens

We are pleased to announce that we are recruiting church wardens.

If you would like to take a keener role within our church, contributing to the vital spiritual, pastoral and mission work of St. Mary's, please speak with Tim.

We are looking to recruit 4 volunteer church wardens, who besides having important legal duties, will help with the smooth running of the church.

Key activities which will be shared amongst the wardens, include.

- Representing the laity
- Cooperating with and pastorally supporting our parish Clergy
- Welcoming the congregation and ensuring the smooth running of services
- Working collaboratively with the Treasurer and Finance committee, Fabric committee and other groups
- Raising issues, concerns and highlighting good work with the Bishop
- Legal duties such as maintenance of a church inventory, collection supervision, and formal reports to the PCC and APCM meetings
- Supporting safeguarding policies and procedures

To be considered for the role you must be over 21 years of age, baptised and on the parish electoral role, not disqualified by the Charities Commission and be willing to undergo DBS checks.

The election and start date are at the Annual General Meeting on Sunday 27th April. For more information please speak to Tim

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Help needed in the church garden

If you can, mow, weed, strim, sweep, pickup sticks, rake leaves or drive a sit on mower, we need you. If you can spare just one or two hours a week it would be a great help. Not only will the church look good, but you might even feel your spiritual and physical well-being improve and in our small way help the environment. We come to the churchyard every Tuesday and Friday afternoon (weather permitting) followed by a drinks and biscuits, sometimes even a cake.

Any help most welcome. Thank you. Pat Wood

Remembering Dave Allen

Editor: Tim Lenton considers the colourful life of a popular comedian.

Twenty years ago, on 10th March 2005, Irish comedian Dave Allen died – in his sleep, of sudden arrhythmic death syndrome.

Allen – real name David Tynan O'Mahony – was best known for his observational comedy, but provoked indignation – sometimes outrage – by highlighting religious and political hypocrisy.

O'Mahony was well connected: his father was managing editor of *The Irish Times*, and his mother and aunt were both well-known writers. But his father died when he was 12, and the family moved to England, where his agent eventually persuaded him to change his name “because no-one in the UK could pronounce O'Mahony correctly”. The comedian agreed because he thought a name starting with A would get him to the top of agents' lists.



Before that he had been educated at the Catholic University School in Dublin, where he developed a disrespect for the disciplinary methods of the Roman Catholic Church. Later this extended to the Church of England: he was known for mocking their exercise of power rather than their beliefs, but he was certainly a sceptic, calling himself “a practising atheist – thank God”.

Although Allen became well known in many parts of the world, including Australia, it wasn't always a smooth path: he worked at one time in a toy shop in Sheffield and as a door-to-door salesman of draught excluders. But although he was also an actor, he became best known for his stand-up (or rather sit-down) routines involving a stool, a cigarette and a glass.

He said he was always bothered by the misuse of power, and in his native Ireland he was particularly controversial, both among some southern Catholics and Paisleyite Protestants. It may not have helped that he ended his act with the words “Goodnight, thank you, and may your God go with you.”

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The Gardening Year – March

If you're going to grow in containers keep in mind the following before you start

- Have you utilised south facing walls to their fullest.
- Ensure you have plenty of space between containers.
- Are your containers robust enough to withstand high winds in exposed areas.
- Keep tender plants and your favourites closest to your house.

Check List before you get started on your pots, keep in mind the following.

1. Budget, do you have a budget in mind for gardening? You will need to take into account tools, seeds, containers, fertilisers and compost.
2. Space, how much space do you have to grow? Enough room for a couple of hanging baskets or ground space for containers and growbags.
3. Light, what are the light conditions for your plot? are there some areas that get at least 8 hours of sunlight each day? If you don't get much sunlight, you'll need to limit yourself to more shade tolerant crops.
4. Compost, or will you have to buy some? Compost can be quite expensive so add this to your budget. Is there room for a small compost heap on your plot.
5. Layout, how can you make the most of your small space? By growing together tall plants at the back you can leave room for smaller crops at the front.

March is the start of the growing season in your garden or allotment.

Vegetables early seed potatoes can be planted this month if the weather is fine. Plant the tubers 6 inches deep and 12 inches apart in rows 2 foot apart, there is no need to cover the rows with soil if you plant them deep enough. If you are short of space only grow earlies because main crop potatoes are in the ground longer and are susceptible to Potato blight in June and July. By this time your earlies will be out of the ground.

Main crop peas can be sown this month, soak the peas overnight in water and they will germinate quicker. Leek seeds can sown this month, also parsnip seed soak the seed overnight in water for better germination. Spring cabbage can also sown now, Brussel sprout seed can also sown in March. Onion sets can be planted this month in a prepared bed, push the sets into the ground and cover the sets with a little soil to stop birds from pulling them out of the ground. Towards the end of the month parsley seeds can be sown.

Colin Williams

Eat the Seasons – March

Vegetables - Cauliflower, Kale, Leeks, Purple Sprouting Broccoli, Salsify, Spinach, Spring Onions, Swede, Wild Nettles

Fruit - Bananas (Windward), Blood Oranges, Kiwi Fruit, Lemons, Oranges, Passion Fruit, Pineapple, Rhubarb

Meat - Beef, Hare, Pigeon

Fish - Cockles, Dab, Dover Sole, Gurnard, Hake, Langoustine, Lemon Sole, Lobster, Mussels, Oysters, Red Mullet, Salmon, Shrimp, Whitebait, Winkles

Visit - www.eattheseasons.co.uk

Editor's Humour & Philosophy Page

Links and some images in this magazine are clickable - enjoy

Girl – So tell me about your dreams. **Boy** - I want to be a billionaire like my dad. **Girl** – Oh, your dad is a billionaire? **Boy** – No, he wants to be a billionaire too...

In case you didn't know, Yoda's last name is "Layheehoo"

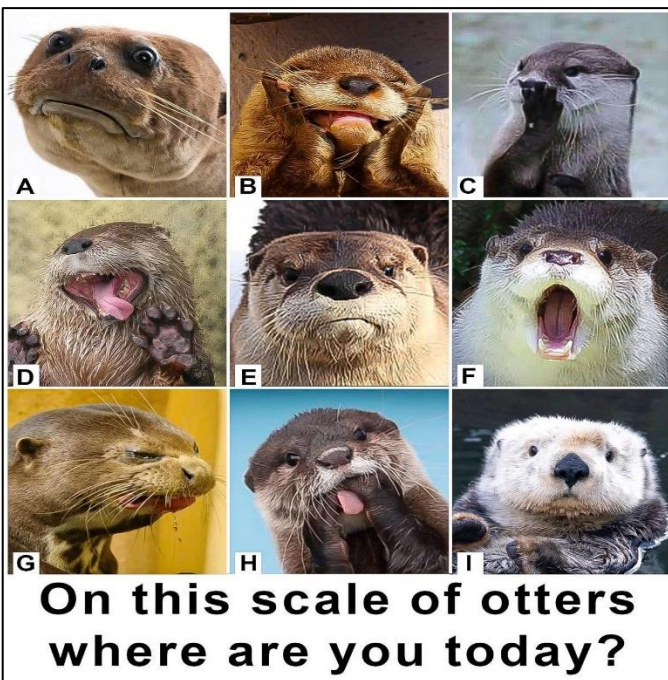
Two elderly ladies talking - Remember those wild parties we used to go to in the 60's? Remember them? I've still got the Tupperware.

No matter what yesterday was like... Birds always start the new day with a song.

I don't know the secret to happiness, but I have never been sad drinking wine and eating cheese.

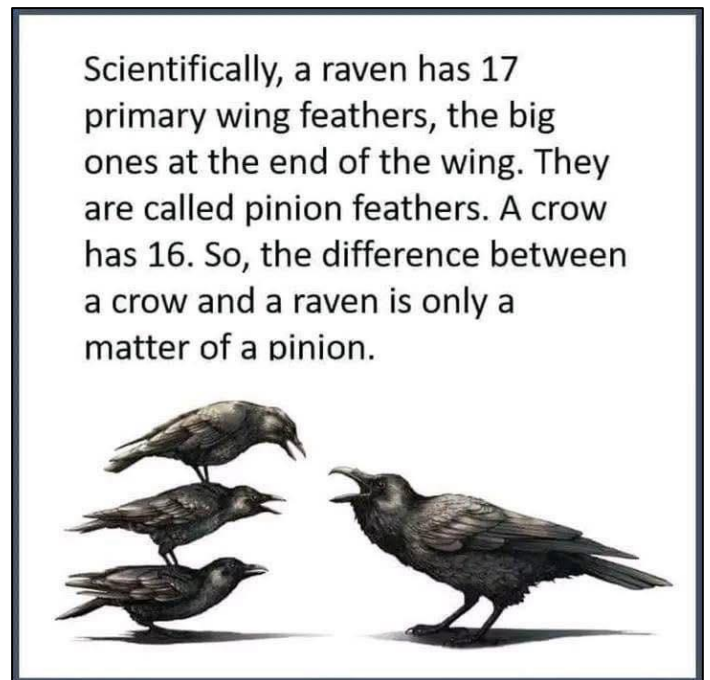
People who take naps are the real heroes. It takes courage to wake up twice in one day.

Apparently, this month there will be constant rayne, hayl, gails, drissle, thundre, litnin, hy tydes, tawnaydoes, and frissing colde. Just another really bad spell of weather.



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otter>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheese>



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crow>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marathon>



ERIC EYRE

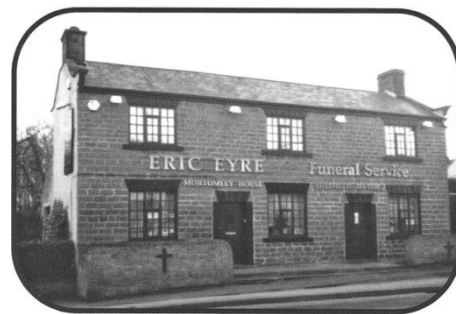
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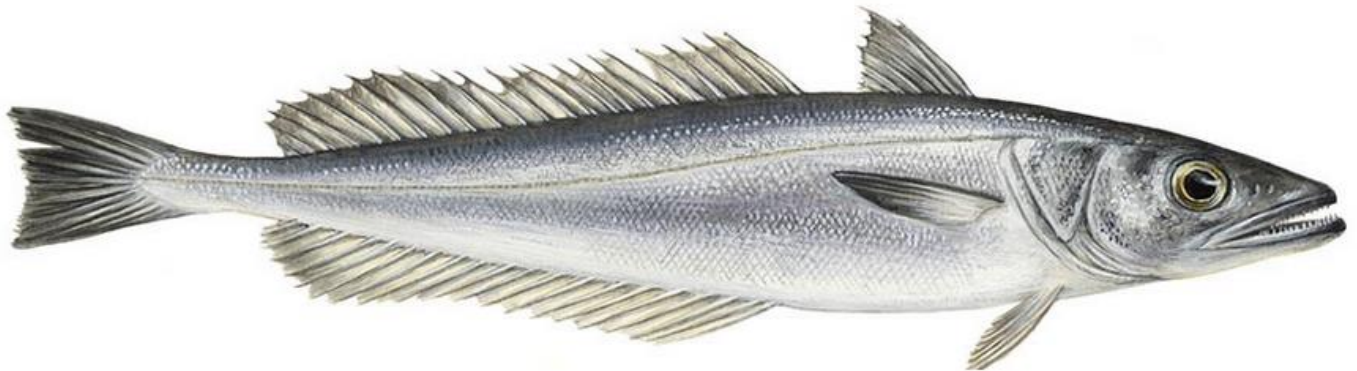


British Institute of Funeral Directors Eric Eyre National President
1989 - 1990



Time to Eat - Hake

What is hake? - Hake are members of the cod family and can be found at depths of over 1,000 metres. A total of 12 hake species are known in the family of Merlucciidae, and even though taste and texture can vary by species they all tend to have a milder taste, softer texture and smaller flake than cod.



A versatile alternative - In the kitchen, hake is often used as a versatile and less expensive alternative to cod. It's a good first step for those who have never strayed far from salmon, tuna and white fish staples. Like other white fish it can be fried, grilled, baked, braised, cooked in foil or used in soups and stews. However, because of its naturally soft flesh it deteriorates quickly and needs to be cooked at its freshest, especially if you prefer your hake to be meaty rather than mushy.

Nutrition - Naturally high in protein and low in fat, naturally low in saturated fat and high in omega-3. Hake is a good source of Vitamin B12, Potassium, Phosphorus, Iodine and Selenium

Like all fish, demand for hake varies in different parts of the world. It is very popular in China, South Africa, Ukraine and Lithuania as well as Spain, where it is consumed more than any other fish. It is Spain, though, that is the capital of the hake ('la merluza') world, where you will find it on menus as fillets and medallions. The prime cut is a steak taken from the plump middle of the fish where there is less bone.

There are scores of Iberian hake recipes, many of them involving garlic and paprika. Regional variations include Basque hake with a parsley-rich salsa verde, Galician hake on a braise of potatoes, garlic, tomato and onion and hake and apples cooked in Asturian cider. Nose-to-tail aficionados will approve of the fact that the Spanish enjoy hake chins as a delicacy, either fried with breadcrumbs or stewed in stock with paprika and clams. The Spanish even have a hake cake! The retro looking 'pudding de merluza' is a mash-up of hake, eggs, chopped pimiento, cream and tomato sauce. It is baked, cooled and then topped with mayonnaise.

Bonus hake fact

Hake is not only a fish, it is also a surname of English and Nordic origin. The name is thought to have derived from the Old Norse word haki. Hake, Haki or Haco was a famous Scandinavian sea-king in Norse mythology. The word haki is also connected to the word 'hook,' a name originally given to someone in the fishing industry.

Golden Beer Battered Hake & Chips

For the fish

50g plain flour
50g cornflour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp turmeric
75ml lager beer
75ml sparkling water
about 1 litre oil for frying – Rapeseed or Sunflower
400g fillet hake halved or two 200g fillets



For the chips

750g potatoes - Maris Piper or Desiree, peeled and sliced into thick chips
2 tbsp plain flour
2 tbsp Rapeseed or Sunflower

Method

Step 1 - Combine the flour, cornflour, baking powder and turmeric in a large bowl, season, then spoon 1 tbsp onto a plate and set aside. Gradually pour the beer and water into the bowl, stirring with a wooden spoon until you have a smooth, lump-free batter. Leave to rest for 30 mins while you prepare the chips.

Step 2 - Heat oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Boil a large pan of water, then add the chipped potatoes and boil for 2-3 mins until the outsides are just tender but not soft. drain well, then tip onto a large baking tray with the flour, oil and some salt. Gently toss together until all the potatoes are evenly coated and the flour is no longer dusty. Roast for 30 mins, turning occasionally, until the chips are golden and crisp.

Step 3 - To cook the fish, heat the 1 litre oil in a deep saucepan until a drop of batter sizzles and crisps up straight away. Pat the fish dry with kitchen paper, then toss it in the reserved turmeric flour mix. Shake off any excess, then dip into the batter. Carefully lower each fillet into the hot oil and fry for 6-8 mins – depending on the thickness of the fish – until golden and crisp. Using a large slotted spoon, lift out the fish, drain on kitchen paper, then sprinkle with salt. Serve with the hot chips and tomato sauce, with the option of mushy peas on the side.

Some Mediterranean Hake recipes:

Basque-style Hake with Garlic and Sauce Romesco

<https://www.msc.org/what-you-can-do/sustainable-fish-seafood-recipes/recipe/basque-style-hake-with-garlic-and-sauce-romesco>

Pan Fried Hake & Tuscan Beans

<https://www.msc.org/what-you-can-do/sustainable-fish-seafood-recipes/recipe/pan-fried-hake-tuscan-beans>

Spanish-style hake and chickpea stew recipe

<https://realfood.tesco.com/recipes/spanish-style-hake-and-chickpea-stew.html>

Crossword Puzzle

Clues Across

- 1 These letters come between Romans and Galatians (11)
- 9 'You will not — me to the grave' (Psalm 16:10) (7)
- 10 King of Moab to whom the Israelites were subject for 18 years (Judges 3:14) (5)
- 11 Town possessing mineral spring (3)
- 13 Mede (anag.) (4)
- 16 High-fidelity (abbrev.) (4)
- 17 He succeeded his father Rehoboam as king of Judah (1 Kings 14:31) (6)
- 18 A son of Simeon (Genesis 46:10) (4)
- 20 Controversial religious book of the 1970s, The — of God Incarnate (4)
- 21 'He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you — — and hear' (Acts 2:33) (3,3)
- 22 'You — me together in my mother's womb' (Psalm 139:13) (4)
- 23 Edit (anag.) (4)
- 25 'Who has believed our message and to whom has the — of the Lord been revealed?' (Isaiah 53:1) (3)
- 28 Abraham's brother (Genesis 22:23) (5)
- 29 'When Mordecai learned of — that had been — , he tore his clothes' (Esther 4:1) (3,4)
- 30 Sympathetic (Proverbs 11:16) (4-7)

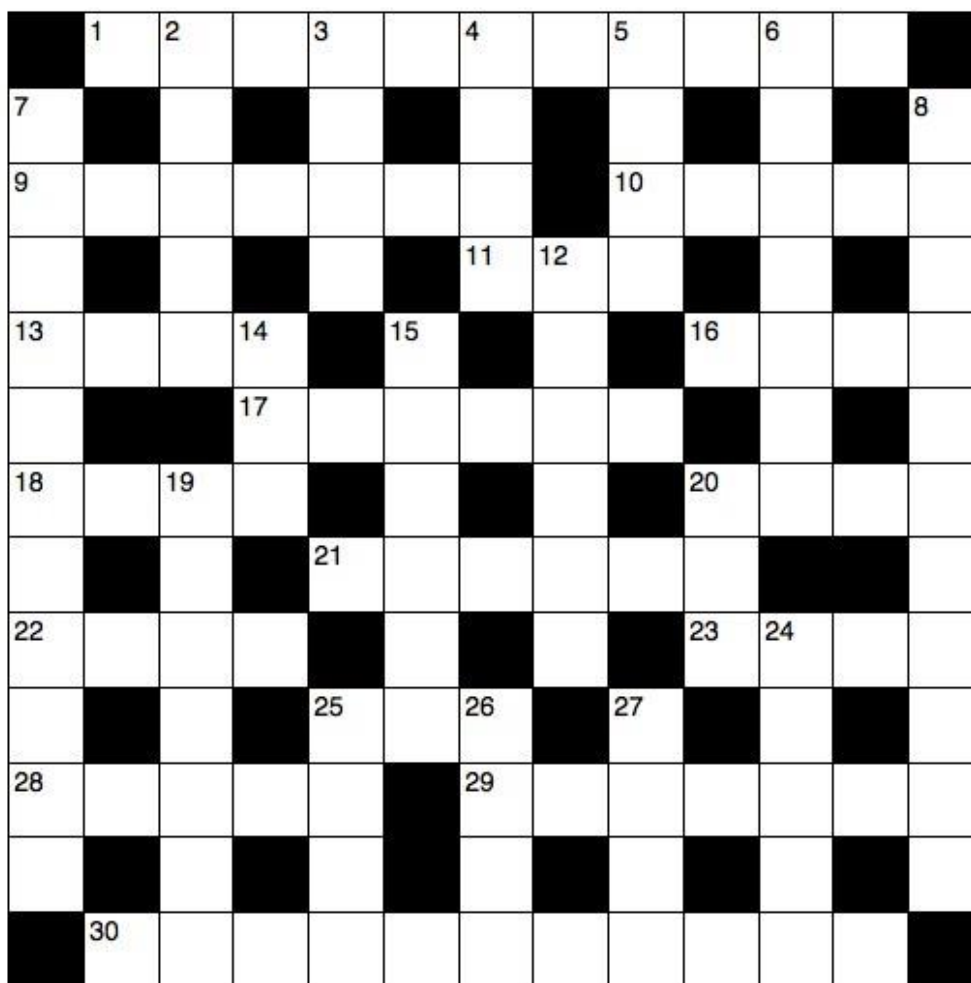
Clues Down

- 2 'That was why his parents said, "He is — —; ask him"' (John 9:23) (2,3)
- 3 Integrated Services Digital Network (1,1,1,1) 4
- 4 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his — of thousands' (1 Samuel 18:7) (4)
- 5 Concept (John 8:14) (4)
- 6 'Do we, then, — the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law' (Romans 3:31) (7)
- 7 Industrious (2 Timothy 2:6) (11)
- 8 'I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be — in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you (Ephesians 1:18) (11)
- 12 'Out of the same mouth come — and cursing' (James 3:10) (6)
- 14 This was how many of the Jewish leaders described Jesus (John 10:20) (3)
- 15 Vitality (Job 20:11) (6)
- 19 He urged David to kill Saul at Hakilah (1 Samuel 26:8) (7)
- 20 'So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul — with the church and taught great numbers of people' (Acts 11:26) (3)
- 24 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord — — ' (Deuteronomy 6:4) (2,3)
- 25 Parched (Matthew 12:43) (4)

26 'In the image of God he created him; — and female he created them' (Genesis 1:27) (4)

27 Disparagement (Psalm 15:3) (4)

Solution is on Page 7



Prayer for March 2025 - *By Daphne Kitching*

Dear Lord,

In this month when Lent begins, we remember the difficult journey Jesus made to the cross, to take upon Himself our sins and the sins of the whole world, to bring us the hope of eternal life by His resurrection.

Lord, we bring to You our own journeys through our daily lives.

We bring our disappointments, our bewilderment, our pain, as well as our happy times. We thank You that You are with us in and through all of it.

We thank you that the message of Christmas is the message of Lent and the message of every day – You, our God, are with us always, giving us hope and life, because of Jesus.

Thank You that He made that journey for us, and all we have to do is trust in Him. Help us to do that and to share His good news with others, especially those in distress.

We pray in His name. **Amen.**

Chapelton & District Probus Club



At our February meeting, we welcomed Mark Dawson who gave a comprehensive talk about the history of Henderson's Relish going back to 1881. From the early makeup of the relish, originally sold as flavoured vinegar, through a range of locations and owners to the present day, including almost going out of business on at least two occasions. What came as a surprise is how many different companies around the country were making something similar in the 19th Century called relish or salsa including in Yorkshire with Yorkshire Relish and Halifax Relish. Of all these concoctions, really only Lea and Perrins Worcester Sauce and Hendersons still remain.

The first trip booked for 2025 is a visit to Skipton and a 3 hour canal trip with full Yorkshire Ploughman's Lunch on 13th May. There are still some places available at a price of approximately £45 if anyone is interested in joining us – please contact our Secretary (details below). Future visits will be the Royal Armories Museum in Leeds, likely to be in September and also Jodrell Bank together with the AVRO Aviation Museum, likely to be in early 2026 after the museum has been re-furbished.

The March meeting is the Annual General Meeting and in April, we welcome back Paul Adey with part 1 of the history of the American Motor Industry..

Probus Club meets every month in the Community Centre in Grenoside. The club is about providing a relaxing social environment to welcome retired and semi-retired men including those still working but with time on their hands. You can visit a meeting as a guest or choose to become a member. Please make contact with the Secretary, Trevor Winslow (see below).

Meetings

12th March

AGM

Quiz

9th April

Paul Adey

American Motor Industry (part 1)

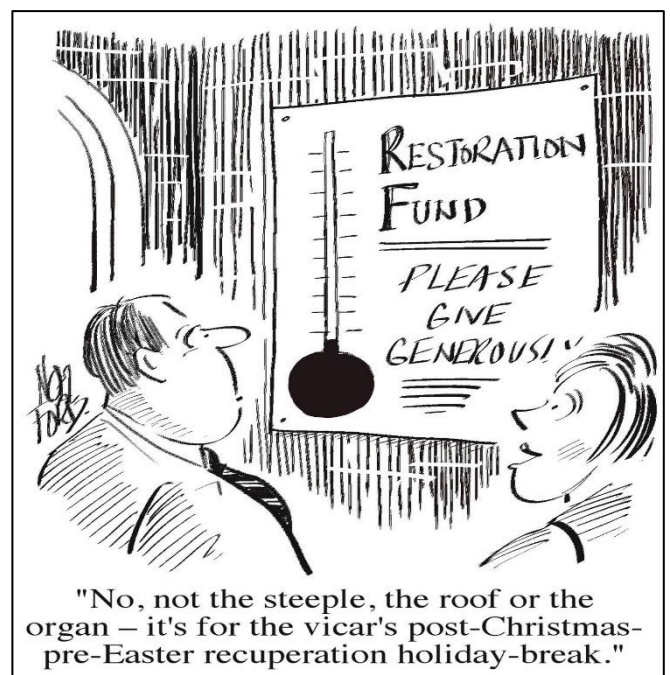
Contact details: e-Mail chapeltown.probus@gmail.com

Website <https://chapeltown-probus.org.uk/>

Andrew Robinson



*George saw his whole Parish
as a Mission Field*



"No, not the steeple, the roof or the organ – it's for the vicar's post-Christmas-pre-Easter recuperation holiday-break."

Desert Difficulties - *By Daphne Kitching* Luke 4:1-12, John 16:33

Life is difficult, sometimes.
No matter how faithful,
no matter how trusting,
no matter how hard we try,
life is difficult, sometimes.

Jesus understands.
He walked in the desert,
day after day after day.
Faithful and trusting, yes,
but hungry and weakened and vulnerable
and tempted.

Even for Jesus
life was difficult,
especially for Jesus,
knowing the end from the beginning.
But He overcame the desert.
He overcame death.

The world is full of trouble,
but He overcame the world.
Take heart!
Jesus can help.



“Be joyful, keep the faith, do the little things” *By Megan Carter*

He said “Be joyful, keep the faith
And do the little things”
Words spoken by a Celtic Saint
To common folk and kings.

The joy of the Lord is our strength
And faith in the goodness of God,
He has a path for us to walk
One He’s already trod.

All that He plans for us to do
May seem of little worth,
But they’re the very things He’ll use
To bring His love to earth.

The breastplate of St Patrick By Johann Freylinghausen, German Pietist (1670 – 1739)

I rise today with the power of God to guide me,
The might of God to uphold me,
The wisdom of God to teach me,
The eye of God to watch over me,

The ear of God to hear me,
The word of God to give me speech,
The hand of God to protect me,
The path of God to lie before me,

The shield of God to shelter me,
The host of God to defend me
Against the snares of the devil and the
temptations of the world,
Against every man who meditates injury to me,

Whether far or near.
Draw me into Yourself
Draw me completely into Yourself,
So that I might completely melt in Your love.

Lay upon me, stamp upon me,
So that my stubborn pride might be destroyed.
Embrace me, kiss me,
So that my spiritual ugliness may turn to beauty.

Lock me into Your chamber,
So that I might never stray from Your presence.



A prayer for Lent

We beseech you, O Lord, that as our bodies grow weaker for lack of food during the season of fasting, so our souls may grow stronger. May we learn to fight more valiantly against evil, and to strive more earnestly for righteousness. Thus, through abstaining from the fruits of the earth, may we bear more abundantly the fruits of Your spirit.

From the Gelasian Sacramentary (c. 500), the oldest official prayer book of the Western Church.

Contact Details for Local Groups

Ecclesfield Rainbows

Gatty Hall
Thursday 5.00 pm to 6.15 pm
Contact - Girl Guiding Website / To
Register Interest

Ecclesfield Brownies

Gatty Hall
Tuesday 6:15 pm to 7:45 pm
Leader - Mrs A. Kendall
Tel: 0114 246 8866

Ecclesfield Guides

Gatty Hall
Thursday 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Leader - Mrs C Topham
Tel: 0114 246 1289

Ecclesfield Priory Players

EPPIC Theatre
Monday 7:30 pm to 10:00 pm
Wednesday 7:30 pm to 10:00 pm
Secretary - Emma Addy
Theatre Tel No. 0114 240 2624

Ecclesfield Community Garden

Ecclesfield Park - Located between
Ladycroft bridge/stream and Bowling
greens. Open Wednesday + Saturday
10 am to 12 noon
Tel: Robert 0114 246 1095

Friends of Ecclesfield Library

Run by the community for the community.
Volunteer helpers always needed.
Tel: 0114 246 3651
email: ecclesfieldlib@gmail.com

Ecclesfield Cubs

Scout Hut (off Yew Lane)
Wednesday 4:45 pm to 6:15 pm
2nd Pack 6:30 pm to 8:0 pm
Leader - Mrs A Hancock
Tel: 0114 245 2780

Ecclesfield Beavers

Scout Hut (off Yew Lane)
Thursday - 5:45 - 7:00 pm
Contact Shane Porteous
shane@ecclesfieldscouts.org.uk

Ecclesfield Scouts

Scout Hut (off Yew Lane)
Thursday 7:15 pm to 9:00 pm
Leader - Bryony Hemming
25theecclesfieldscouts@gmail.com

The Grenoside Singers

Practice Monday in St Mark's
Church Hall at 7:30 pm
Secretary: Judith Gill Tel: 0782 411 2584
www.grenosidesingers.co.uk

Whitley Hall Cricket Club

Matches every Saturday and some
Sundays and weekdays.
Please make contact if you wish to play or
learn. Secretary: Joe Webster:
whitleyhall@yocspl.co.uk
Website:
whitleyhall.play-cricket.com

Chapelton and District PROBUS Club

Meets every 2nd Wednesday in the month
in Grenoside Community Centre
All retired and semi-retired gentlemen welcome
Contact the Secretary: Trevor Winslow
chapelton.probus@gmail.com
We are now face to face see
www.chapelton-probus.org.uk

If you would like your local group advertised, please contact:
Mrs P Blackburn ☎ 0114 246 8453



	E-mail:	Phone:
<u>Vicar:</u> Revd. Tim Gill	ttimgill@aol.com	257 0002
Church Office Tuesday 9:00am to 1:00 pm Thursday 9:00am to 12:00 pm	office.stmarys.ecclesfield@googlemail.com	245 0106
Website	https://stmarysecclesfield.org.uk/	
Groups:	Times and Days:	Phone:
Choir Practice in Church Contact: Lynda Pearce	7 pm on Friday Practice in Church	208 3500
Music Group Contact: Andrea Whittaker	7:30 pm Thursday Practice in Church	246 0746
Mother's Union in Gatty Hall Contact: Maureen Lambert	1.00 pm 1st Wednesday of the month	246 9690
Ecclesfield Ladies Group Contact: Anne Rostron	2.00 pm Thursday in Gatty Hall	245 5492
Bell Ringers Contact: Phil Hirst	7:30 pm Tuesday in Church Belfry	286 2766
Gatty Hall Bookings		0780 307 8223
For Baptisms or Weddings Enquiries please contact the Vicar		
Magazine e-mail:	stmarys.magazine.ecclesfield@gmail.com	

We thought you might find it helpful to know what the significant days and Sundays of each month are called

Date	Day	Colour
Sunday 2nd March	Last Sunday before Lent	Green
Wednesday 5th March	Ash Wednesday	Purple
Sunday 9th March	1st Sunday of Lent	Purple
Sunday 16th March	2nd Sunday of Lent	Purple
Sunday 23rd March	3rd Sunday of Lent	Purple
Sunday 30th March	4th Sunday of Lent - Mothering Sunday	Purple



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