



Sunday 12th April - Easter Sunday

Welcome!

Dear friends of Christ Church,

Welcome to this week's bulletin. We hope that you are finding it useful in keeping you in contact with our community in Christ Church in this most difficult time. We welcome contributions from anyone who has a message to give, be it serious or maybe a little humorous. We all need to be able to smile in the face of challenge.

This bulletin will be emailed out to those on our email list. As always, material for inclusion should be emailed by Tuesday evenings to Jude Bishop at notices@christchurchbath.org

Please forward this bulletin to anyone to whom you think it would be of interest. We will print a few paper copies and post them to those who are not on email.

We're still following government guidelines by not showing on-line services from inside church and hopefully you are managing to join in from your living room. A reminder of how you can do this is [here](#), and for the moment we will do that from the tiny chapel Colin and Lore have created at home. To make it more of a Christ Church community we would love you to send photos of yourself and these can put up in the chapel as a visible sign that we are all worshipping together. They can come by email to Lore, lore.chumbley@me.com or by post to Christ Church.

Also, do please email or post or text prayer requests and we will try to include them week by week. But be aware that the service will be online and so be careful of the confidentiality of friends and loved ones

The April Link is up on the website now and you can find it and past copies [here](#). Any articles for next month should be emailed to Alex at alexs@christchurchbath.org.

Thoughts from the priest-in-charge



The picture shows one of the apple trees in the orchard at the Community of the Resurrection in Yorkshire. I took it early one April morning when some of the leaves were so new, they were shining. Today we remember and will pray for the community of brothers. Some of you met brother Marc who had planned to be with us for Holy Week, but circumstances did not allow it. The apple blossom is not only beautiful and scented, it also bears the promise of apples. To mediaeval theologians the apple tree was a symbol of the resurrection. The bare cross on which Christ hung is transformed through the miracle of the resurrection into a tree of beauty, joy and fruitfulness.

In the last few weeks, I have heard several Christians say, 'Easter will be late this year, but it will come.' They meant, I think, that we should hold back our Easter celebrations until people are no longer sickening and dying of coronavirus, and we no longer need to stay in seclusion away from each other.

No! **This** is the time to rejoice.

The resurrection came at the darkest moment of history into the blackest of political situations at a time when our spiritual ancestors, the first Christians, were in despair at the death of Our Lord and their own complicity in it. That was the context into which the glory of the resurrection shone. The disciples heard of it as they hid in an upper room with the doors locked for fear of enemies. Since then, since the triumph of eternal life over death and of God's power over our sin and failure, we who are people of faith are also

resurrection people. We have all of us been re-made through baptism, and nothing, neither disease nor isolation nor death itself can separate us from the love of Christ. So even as we live with the pain and distress of those who suffer, and our own difficulties and losses, we rejoice in the triumph over death which the resurrection demonstrates.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed, Alleluia!
Happy Easter!!**

Today's Easter Day service

10am

Jeremiah 31: 1-6

Psalm 118: 14-24

Acts 10: 34-43

John 20: 1-18

Next week

There will be an online Eucharist at 11am on Thursday

The readings will be:

Acts 3: 11-end

Psalm 8

Luke 24: 35-48

Pilgrim Group will be meeting online at 7.30pm on Thursday 16th to study the Gospel of Mark. All welcome.

Next Sunday, 19th April, the readings will be

Exodus 14: 10-end, 15: 20,21

Psalm 16

Acts 2: 14a, 22-32

John 20: 19-end

Let us also keep the gesture going on Thursdays, applauding the NHS, teachers, carers and those who are keeping our society functioning. We are all from different places of Bath and the surrounding area, but we report back to each other that the applause is getting louder. Let's put lit candles in our windows at 7 pm on Sundays as a sign of Jesus, the Light of the World.

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' (*John 1:5*)

East End Re-ordering Time and Talents Challenge is still alive and kicking

As there are still quite a few weeks before we get any change in our current situation, we'd still like to encourage you all to use the opportunity of having time on your hands and to take your mind off the current situation. We're not cancelling the Time and Talents challenge and in fact it continues through Lent and extends to the end of October to raise the remaining funds for the East end re-organisation. If you have time to craft or embroider or knit or paint or do beautiful calligraphy or bake or use any of the almost infinite talents that Christ Church folk have, then this is the place to advertise your talents. Delivery will have to wait until government restrictions are limited.

We have a report this week that one of our congregation has knitted Easter chicks and sold them with cream eggs inside. How enterprising and a big thank you.



Our Charity of the month during April is Open Doors, a charity focusing on the needs of persecuted Christians around the world, supplying Bibles, training clergy and giving practical help where needed. Their website address for online donations is www.opendoorsuk.com

If you don't have internet access their address is PO Box 6, Witney, Oxon, OX29 6WG, and their phone number (if in use) is 01993 460015

Social action in Bath and Sustainable Food Partnership

As you have probably heard by now, the **Compassionate Community Hub** is now operational across the whole of B&NES, with large numbers of volunteers who are being asked to provide support to people in need in their local areas.

If anyone needs support with buying food or medicines, and there is no local group that they can turn to, then they should send an email with the subject "Support" to compassion@3sq.org.uk and the team will pick up your query within 24 hours.

Alternatively, telephone the **Banes Covid/Compassionate Community helpline 0300 247 0050**.

People wanting to register as a volunteer with Compassionate Community Hub should complete the form via this link: <http://bit.ly/communityvolunteersignup>.

3SG & the Sustainable Food Partnership have produced a list of local providers offering food to people across Bath and north east Somerset. You can find a comprehensive list [here](#).



Bath 24/7 Prayer

There has never been a need to unite together in pray for our city, nation, our world like now. Cover BATH in prayer 24 hours a day **FOR 50 DAYS FROM EASTER TO PENTECOST**. Sign up for a slot for virtual 24-7 prayer by clicking below there will be bit.ly/50DOP.

Watch and Pray *by a member of the congregation*

I've always had a basic problem with getting close to and understanding the actions of Christ's disciples. How did it happen that they dropped everything and followed Christ? I'm missing something here, because rather like the rich young man (although I'm not male and certainly not rich!) who asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life, like him I go away with sorrow when I think of giving away **everything** and following Christ. Yet I would like to give that level of commitment. I have gone through the experience of a dear friend announcing that she was going to marry Christ, becoming a nun, giving away all her things and entering the convent with literally the clothes on her back. And she has, to my knowledge, never regretted her decision and seems content and fulfilled, more fulfilled than I will ever be, I think.

But the disciples... It didn't apparently take a great deal of persuasion for them to turn from their lives to date, their work and their homes and become itinerants following one man, full of charisma, who invited them to travel with Him.

What was it about this Christ that meant they had to go, they had to be with Him? They had to talk about Him, preach about Him, die for Him as martyrs?

With the gift of time that this lockdown has brought me, I thought I would try to do something constructive and different. I've always meant to read the exercises put together by Saint Ignatius of Loyola, another rich young man who after a near death experience in battle and a long convalescence, decided to become a disciple of Christ. One of the exercises (I didn't think I could do them all, so I chose one that appealed to my imagination) concerns the miracles of Christ.

The person who is going through this time of deep thought, meditation, concentration, is advised to imagine themselves with Christ when he performs some of His miracles. Where was it happening? What was the scenery like? Were there other people there? What were they like? Young? Old? Well-dressed? What was the weather like? Was the place dusty? Did it smell? What were the sounds? The tastes? The reactions of the people directly involved and those who were merely bystanders? The imagination runs on the text.

This appeals to me no end! I don't have to pray, just imagine. I can do that. Will I meet the disciples? Will I feel closer to Christ? (I daren't imagine I might meet Him.)

So here I go. Given the times we're in I'll start with Jesus's fourth miracle and Peter. It's short, a good one to start with. Peter's mother in law is sick with a fever, Jesus goes into Peter's House, touches her hand and the fever leaves her and she gets up and prepares supper for them. Miraculous, or not? Peter and his

wife are really pleased that Mother's fever, her virus, has left her. They are overjoyed that by the touch of a hand, their mother is better. If you've ever had a fever, or nursed somebody with one, you know that fevers "break" and the person who has had it, more or less instantly, feels better. Maybe not well enough to produce a gourmet supper, but better. Peter is relieved that his faith in this new master, mentor, teacher, was not wrong. Now Peter knows that Jesus is at least a healer. They must all have slept well that night and woken with a great feeling of optimism and excitement? What's really going on here? Who is this man really? Could He be.....? And it's a perfect day, not a cloud in the sky, to go on the lake.

Nothing can go wrong! I know what I'm doing! I don't need to ask for help! How often I have done that, pushing situations, people to the edge, because I know better! Just like the disciples, who are fishermen, experts in the wind and the waves. Yes? Not this time.

The clouds gather, the wind rises, the boat tosses, the waves crash over the boat. The boat starts to fill with water. Did the disciples/fishermen think their time had come, that they were going to drown? Did they feel the panic, the dread? They are wet, cold, unable to think, react. I can recall that fear from just one incident in my life, the dry mouth, the shortened breathing, the inability to scream....

But they had Jesus with them and they woke Him up and asked Him to save them. Here's a shift in the relationship! They now believe that He has the power to heal and save....they believe. They marvel that the winds and waves obey him. They are wondering who he is, **really**.

We are on the road to Jerusalem. We have seen many miracles, many miracles. We have heard stories which seem to have a point to them, but I'm not sure what that point really is. But I can't turn away, I can't leave now, this may be the beginning of the freedom that generations have prayed for and looked for. This may be the leader, pray God it is the leader we need to free us, to restore the Temple. This may be him.

I have become a Peter. I am a disciple, my future is mapped out! This leader whom I begin to know, I begin to believe, is the Holy One of God. We are on the road to Jerusalem. A hard road, a dusty road, a road full of dread. Will our arrival be a triumphal entry through one of the Gates? Will legions of angels greet us? Can I possibly think of freedom from the dreaded oppressors? First we must celebrate the Passover.

I cannot be certain of anything else except that I will never leave Jesus, as some of the followers have already done. I will never speak against Him, never betray Him....God forbid. What else could I do? He's asking if I would leave Him. The words cut me...how could he even think that? Of me?

"Lord to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

I'm hoping He will turn and smile...be reassured that I am telling the truth. He responds with what seems to be a riddle. (So many of the things He says seem to be riddles, puzzles, meanings within meanings.)

"Watch and pray so that you will not enter into temptation, for the spirit is willing, but the body is weak".

Another riddle....just walk...just walk. Still a long way to Jerusalem....

Watch, what? Just pray. Pray what? Just walk, a bitter road to Jerusalem.

Finally, as you clap on Thursday nights, say this prayer:

Prayer for the sick

Merciful God,
we entrust to your tender care
those who are ill or in pain,
knowing that whenever danger threatens
your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe.
Comfort and heal them,
and restore them to health and strength;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.