



Easter Newsletter

Welcome... to the Easter Newsletter

This special Easter edition of the newsletter is out a week early to include a guide to all our Holy Week services and special events. The events of Easter are the heart of the Christian faith: it is in and through Jesus' death and resurrection that the world is changed and we see the depth of God's love. Our church services follow Jesus' journey through that most amazing week - the celebration of the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the intimacy and mystery of the Last Supper, the watch in the garden, betrayal, arrest and trial. The services then take us through the desolation, agony and loneliness of the Cross, then the long silence of Easter Saturday. As the sun rises on Easter Sunday, we celebrate Jesus' bursting from the tomb, the stone is rolled away and the resurrected Jesus appears to the women first, then to Peter, John and the others. The news spreads that Jesus is alive, God has raised him from the dead - he is the Messiah and that the world is changed for ever.

These are events which we follow across Holy Week and details are below.

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Easter Services

Palm Sunday

On this day we look back to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey: the crowd line the streets, waving palm branches and shouting out in praise. They voice the hope that Jesus was the one to fulfill all that they had prayed and waited for.

In both our morning worship services on Palm Sunday (at Prestbury and Adlington) we follow a donkey (not the same one!), wave branches and celebrate that Jesus is King.

At **Prestbury**, we gather at 10.00am at Prestbury Church of England Primary School and will process to St Peter's where the Service will continue at 10.30am.

At **Adlington**, we gather at St John's at 11.00am and process through the grounds.



Also on Palm Sunday our **Exploring the Bible Service** at 4.30pm (at St Peter's) will focus on the first great act of liberation, as God rescued his people from slavery in Egypt. This service is followed by refreshments and our short discussion in St Peter's Rooms. All welcome.

Holy Wednesday

There are some scholars who think that Jesus and the disciples gathered to share the last supper together on the Wednesday night. As we Journey with Jesus from the upper room out to the Garden to pray, the arrest, trial and bringing before Pilate the freeing of Barabbas and all that happens it makes a lot of sense. But the shape of our worship in Holy Week remembers those events on Thursday night and Friday morning. We use this Wednesday night to read the whole of a Gospel.

Reading Mark's Gospel 7.00pm St Peter's Rooms

All are welcome to share in reading, or just to listen.

Maundy Thursday

The members of the Ministry Team travel to Chester Cathedral for the Chrism Eucharist. This Service contains the blessing of the oils used in Baptism and for Anointing & the renewal of ministerial vows. *In the oil we remember that Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to pray - a place where olives were harvested and crushed to make olive oil.*

7.30pm Holy Communion We remember the last supper and Jesus and the institution of Holy Communion. Like on the evening we remember the mood changes from celebration to stillness for the watch as we wait and pray silently in Church as the disciples waited and prayed in the garden.

Good Friday

On that first Good Friday, *Jesus was handed over to be crucified a brutal, humiliating, agonising form of execution.* In recollection of this, our worship has a more sombre theme, reflecting on both the sacrifice involved and the enormity of God's love.

Good Friday at St Peter's 10.00am Family Service

Worship for all ages as we journey through Good Friday with activities, readings, hymns and worship songs.

12noon Meditation on the Cross

A reflective service of worship as we journey in readings, hymns and anthems to the Cross.

Good Friday at St John's, Adlington 11.00am Good Friday Reflection

Worship focused on Jesus, the Cross and what that means for us.

Easter Eve, Saturday

Easter Eve is a time of waiting and preparation. It is a when we remember the disciples, scared and hiding, wondering if they would be next to die. We remember Jesus lying dead in the tomb and with him the disciples hopes and dreams from Palm Sunday, lying dashed and broken.

Church lies quiet on this day in anticipation of what is to come.

ALSO, Don't forget the clocks go forward tonight!

Easter Sunday

On that first Easter morning, the women came to the tomb, the stone was rolled away and the tomb was found empty. Death was defeated, God's love had triumphed, Jesus was risen, the world was changed forever.

Our Easter celebrations all draw on different aspects of that first Easter: followers gathering early, a lighting of an Easter fire, sharing breakfast, bringing back the alleluias, celebrating Holy Communion, hunting chocolate eggs and singing songs and hymns of joy and praise.

Easter Sunday at St Peter's 6.00am Dawn Service and Easter Fire

The lighting of the Easter fire is followed by the first communion of Easter and the Easter breakfast.

9.30am Family Service

A celebration of Jesus' Resurrection for all ages including an Easter Egg hunt.

11.00am Holy Communion

The Choir lead us in favourite Easter hymns and anthems as we share Holy Communion together.

At St John's 11.00am All Age Holy Communion

This will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus with song, drama, worship and not forgetting, chocolate eggs.



Church News

Coffee Morning

Norman and Sue Jones are hosting a coffee morning on Saturday 13 April from 10am -12noon

Norman was the Interim Vicar at Christ Church, Bangkok from 2019-2022 and the church there has supported, for about 30 years, a school called *The Noh Bo Academy* and 3 nurseries on the Thai/ Myanmar border, for Children of the Karen community. Many Karen left Myanmar to seek asylum in Thailand over the years during troubled times. The school is much in need of renovations in the dormitories, kitchens and classrooms so this fundraiser will greatly help that cause as well as with the Christian refugees served by Christ Church. Your support would be greatly welcomed.

Tickets are on sale now from Sue Jones at 10.30am Sunday services or from the Parish Office (Monday - Friday 9am - 12noon) or you can pay on the door. Admission is £3 per person to include coffee/tea and cake. There will be a cake stall, a bric-a-brac stall and a raffle. Donations of cakes, bric-a-brac and raffle prizes are welcome.

Money Matters

We held our annual meeting on Sunday 17 March after the morning service, where I presented our 2023 report and accounts.

St Peter's has benefited enormously from a large one-off bequest in 2023 which removed the financial uncertainties we were facing at the time. However, our projection of day to day receipts and payments shows a deficit in 2024 of £12000 and we are actively working to close this gap. We will be re-negotiating our energy deal in April, and with lower energy costs now being reported in the media, we are hopeful that a decent saving may be possible.

As we strive to balance our books by looking closely at all costs, it would be a great help if we could find more people willing to donate to St Peter's. If you are able to donate and you pay income tax, gift aid will significantly increase the value of your donation. Donations can now be made through our website, through our contactless machine in church or by contacting Pauline Rhoades (Recorder) in the Parish Office.

Steve Saunders, Treasurer



Church Family Lunch

The next bring and share lunch will be on Sunday 5 May after morning worship. Do put the date in the diary, all are welcome and watch out for more details.

Mothers' Union

Monday 8 April 2.00pm

Sue Jones: "Ashore but still Adrift"

Sue will talk about her and her husband's ministry among Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Hong Kong and Thailand with mainly Vietnamese, Pakistani and Iranian displaced people. This promises to be a fascinating chance to tap into Sue's deep and broad first-hand experience. Everyone is very welcome to come to our Mothers' Union meetings, membership is not required. Refreshments will be served.

We welcome donations for Upton Food Pantry – particularly of sanitary products please.

Delivery of our donations for Styal Prison

We have delivered our Mothers' Union donations of journalling books, new undies and Easter chocolate to Louise, the Anglican Chaplain at Styal Prison. Louise has written: *"A big thank you for donations of journals, underwear, chocolate to share with our women on Easter Sunday, and most of all for all your encouragement and prayers. Our women have so little self worth, they can't imagine that a stranger they have never met is thinking of and praying for them."*

Our visit to the prison was fascinating and also moving in many ways. Please continue to pray for the women who are in the prison, but also those, who as they are released, face returning to outside life with insufficient support and so are in immediate danger of re-offending. We will not be collecting underwear or journals for a while, but other collections for the Chaplaincy at Styal will happen in due course. Watch this space...

From swaddling bands to grave clothes

At Christmas time, our Mothers' Union members, and others, wrote prayers on the linen strips we had prepared as swaddling bands for the Christ child. Prayers for the world and prayers for ourselves. These prayers were offered to God at Christmas. The individual bands have been sewn together to now represent the grave clothes of the crucified Christ. This folded piece of cloth will be placed at the foot of our large wooden cross on Easter Sunday.

Luke 24:12 'But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.'

Hope in North East Cheshire

Late last month I attended (*with about 80 others*) the Mayor of Macclesfield's annual breakfast prayer meeting on behalf of St Peter's and the Social Justice Hub. We heard brief presentations from 5 of the 20 or so community action groups affiliated to **Hope in NE Cheshire**. These included Cre8, Streetwise, Silklife Foodbank and the Macclesfield Community Kitchen. They were all in their way inspiring. They all fill a vital gap in the needs of many people in the area where official support so often fails them. Some focus on offering practical and accessible goods and services to enable people simply to survive, whilst others provide more personal support through safe places and a sympathetic ear and to running group activities which can move them into a new and more positive frame of mind and improve their overall sense of well-being and worth.

The one that caught my imagination in particular was **Just Drop-in**. In common with all the other groups, this service is provided by volunteers giving of their time and talents and is firmly based in the principles of Jesus' ministry to those who, for whatever reason, found or find themselves vulnerable, damaged, marginalised or all at sea in this complex and frightening world – to bring to them hope in the knowledge that He loves them.

It concentrates on the myriad issues that can undermine and sometimes destroy the mental health of the younger age-group from 12-25 by offering regular one-to-one and group support through hands on support in a safe environment. These include a simple drop-in space for advice on practical life-issues, which includes what I might classify as a kind of "triage" assessment to identify the nature and scale of the challenges being faced and refer the individual to one or more of the specific peer-groups that it facilitates. It complements rather than substitutes for the often hard-pressed and overburdened "official" societal support in this vital area of life and is often the first step to recovery.

Individual support in an open and non-judgmental way is provided through counselling or longer-term mentoring for a range of concerns and confusions that assail young people today and damage their mental health. These range from the navigation of the byzantine benefits system and personal financial management to more complex gender related and family and

behavioural issues and challenges. The aim is often in due course to move these individuals on to join an appropriate group within **Just drop-in** where they can meet others facing similar challenges and enjoy activities and events which lift their spirits and sense of self-worth. All these groups focus on fellowship and identifying and encouraging practical positive activities and opportunities which are proven to move people out of the sense of hopelessness and anxiety that in many cases has brought them there in the first place.

I found it very heartening to know that such wonderfully professional and dedicated organisations are present in the midst of our community here. **Just Drop-in** and its affiliated groups within the **Hope** umbrella represent yet another shining example of the how Christian people can, should and do respond to the challenge set by Jesus to His disciples to minister to all people, whatever their starting point and circumstances, and build His Kingdom here.
Steve Hill

News From St John's Adlington

The new-look St John's Coffee Shop is opening soon, (Saturday 30 March) all the same amazing (and locally famous) coffees and cakes but now served from the new kitchen! Then open every Saturday from 10.30am to 4.30pm- come on over and enjoy!



Worship Services for April St Peter's Church, Sunday Services

Date	8.30am	9.30am	10.30am	4.30pm
Sunday 7th	Holy Communion		Holy Communion	Sung Evensong
Sunday 14th	Holy Communion		Family Worship	Choral Evensong
Sunday 21st	Holy Communion	Breakfast Church	Holy Communion	Choral Communion
Sunday 28th	Holy Communion		Holy Communion with Baptism	Exploring the Bible

Mission Congregation Services

	Sunday 7th	Sunday 14th	Sunday 21st	Sunday 28th
St John's Church Adlington 11.00am		Morning Worship		Holy Communion
Church of the Resurrection, Upton Priory 10.00am	Holy Communion		Holy Communion	

St Peter's Mid-Week Worship

Day	Time	Service	Church
Monday	9.00am	Morning Prayer	St Peter's Rooms
Tuesday	9.00am	Morning Prayer (on Zoom)	Zoom Code 503 346 024 Passcode 793684
Wednesday	10.00am	Morning Prayer	Upton Priory
Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion <i>(with refreshments afterwards)</i>	St Peter's
Thursday	9.00am	School Community Worship	Church School
Thursday	9.30am	Morning Prayer	St John's
2nd & 4th Thursdays	10.15am	Pram Service <i>(in term time)</i>	St Peter's & Rooms

Diary for March

The Parish Office is open Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 12noon

Wednesdays: Bell ringers 8.00pm
Thursdays: Holy Dusters 11.30am
Fridays: Choir Practice 7.45pm in St Peter's

Litter Pickers: first Saturday of the month 10.30am meeting at the front of church - an hour keeping the village tidy, followed by refreshments in St Peter's Rooms at 11.45am.

Prayer Resources

O Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of the living God,
set your passion, cross and death
between your judgement and our souls,
now and in the hour of our death.
Grant mercy and grace to the living,
rest to the departed,
to your Church peace and concord
and to us sinners forgiveness,
and everlasting life and glory;
for, with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
you are alive and reign,
God, now and for ever.
All Amen.

Remember, Lord, what you have wrought in us
and not what we deserve,
and as you have called us to your service
make us worthy of our calling
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All Amen.

Those who are sick

David Jenkins
Mavis Lewis
Rosemary Birch
Rodney Thornley

Those whose ashes are being interred

Sheila Chapman
Patricia Hogg
May Ortiz-Valez

Those who have died

Susan Green

Community News Prestbury Choral Society

Prestbury Choral Society is in good voice for their forthcoming concert, *Elijah*, by Felix Mendelssohn, a powerful oratorio that captures the dramatic life of the biblical prophet Elijah, with its vivid storytelling through music, its expressive solo arias and powerful choral movements leaving a lasting impact on audiences and performers alike.

Saturday 20 April 7.30pm at St Bartholomew's Church, Wilmslow SK9 1AW.

Admission £12.00 including a glass of wine or a soft drink.

Book tickets in advance by telephone on 07775 586416, via the website www.prestburychoral.uk or pay at the door.

Situation Vacant Church admin support - Macclesfield Churches

The role could suit someone looking for something within school hours (*recognising it's not term-time only though*).

Wanted: Church Admin support for Revd Martin Stephens and churches in Macclesfield: 20 hrs/week, £15/hr; full details from Revd Martin Stephens: <https://maccteam.org.uk>