



KINGSDOWN MESSENGER

Lord Jesus Christ,
you are
the Light of the nations
and you bring light
to our darkness.
So shine in our hearts,
that all our actions,
words and attitudes
at all times will reflect
lives filled with the praise
of your glory.

February - March 2022

STOP PRESS

We have just heard that Revd. David Holland has died. David was the Minister at Kingsdown from Sept 1992 to 1997.

The only details we have of the funeral arrangements so far are:

Trinity Church (URC/Methodist)
Cheam Road
Sutton
Surrey
SM1 1DZ

17th February 2022 at 1.30pm.

If more information becomes available, we will put a note on the website
www.Kingsdownmethodist.org.uk

Ed. 27th January 2022



Kingsdown Methodist Church



February

- 6 Feb 10.30 Local Arrangement
- 13 Feb 10.30 Rev Susan Male, Holy Communion
- 20 Feb 10.30 Rev Susan Male, Family/Parade Service
- 27 Feb 10.30 Mr David Street, Morning Service

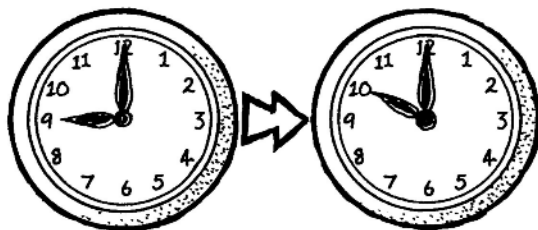
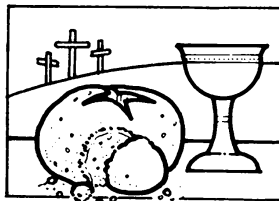


March details not available at time of going to press. Ed

We really appreciated all the Christmas cards we received from the church family and hope you may have read the letter acknowledging Kingsdown's donation to 'All We Can' on the notice board in the foyer.

Pam and Alan

- 15 Apr Good Friday
- 17 Apr Easter Sunday
- 18 Apr Easter Monday



Clocks GO FORWARD Sunday 27th March

The KINGSDOWN MESSENGER

Copy deadline for the Apr - May 2022 issue is Friday 25 Mar 2022

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E-mail: Messenger@questa.co.uk



Hello Everyone!



We are now in “Ordinary Time”! Exciting!

After Easter one year I commented to an Anglican Priest friend that it was good to see the church decorated green. His response was “yes ... and then it will go on being green for ages and ages and ages and then it will get really boring!”

I must have got him on a bad day ... but green is the colour that is used to signify “ordinary time” in the Anglican Church. It is the colour of hope and new life. “Ordinary time”, compared to Lent, Advent, Easter and Christmas may seem less exciting at first glance but it is actually far from that. Why should non conformists even care when we do not tend to use liturgical colours I hear you ask! The answer is – we do use the lectionary that goes with them. Each week a preacher will look to see what the set readings are. He or she does not HAVE to use them but many do – although more particularly in those times that are not called “ordinary” than those which are.

So we know what Christmas and Easter are, we even know what Lent and Advent are, but what is “ordinary time”?

“Ordinary time” is the period in which we learn about Jesus – his life, his healing, his ministry, his socialising, his disciples. We remind ourselves of the way he lived his earthly life, of what he taught us about his Father, and about ourselves, and we come anew to stories we have heard many times, because we are never in the same place as we were last time we heard them.

It might be called “Ordinary Time” but what we hear about is actually far from ordinary. We are encouraged to interact with what we read and to ask ourselves what the passage we read is saying to us about our life, and God’s impact upon it right now.

This is in fact partially what we do as a section on zoom every Friday morning at 11am. People are encouraged to look at the reading, even to prepare with a commentary if they like and have time, and then to share something of what it is saying to them ... and possibly to others as they read it this time. The other thing we do at those online meetings is to pray ... to bring daily life, and current concerns for those in our

churches, families and friendship groups to god for his loving care and response.

A passage that has had meaning for me recently is this one from Mark 3: The Man with a Withered Hand

Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come forward." Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

All that Jesus wants to do is to restore wholeness and completeness. This is as much for us today as it was for those who witnessed it. Life can be difficult and distressing (as well as easy and joyful). It would be surprising if any of us went through life, even over a very short period, without being knocked by it ... our health, or our self-worth is damaged and a part of what we are withers.

We lose confidence. Jesus stops everything else that is expected of him and tells us to stretch out the withered hand ... and he heals it. Is there something you need to bring to Jesus now – after the pandemic, after just life in general, which you need to stretch out before Him, show Him, and ask him to mend, to make whole? If there is ... read this passage, reflect on it, and take to heart the opportunity it offers you still – today.

Whether there is, or not, also ask yourself whose withered hand ... or hands ... God is calling you to heal at this point in theirs and your life.

And think about the hardened heart How hard is your own? Is there anything it needs softening towards?

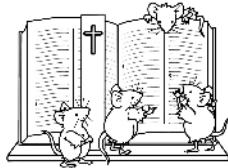
That is the content of "Ordinary" time. A time to know that we are loved, and to grow in love and action ourselves.



Make this season of "ordinary time" (which ends on March 2 with Ash Wednesday) a time of extraordinary focus on the person of Jesus, and on what he might want to say to you today.

With Blessings and Prayers

Sue



Family News

Received from the Rev Peter Catford, who many will remember from his time as Minister at Kingsdown.

"Thank you for keeping us in touch over the last year. We wish you a very peaceful Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Our move to Oldham was not as smooth as we had hoped, but we are in now and closer to Elizabeth and the children which is a joy (they are in Blackburn - where Rebecca is job hunting).

Suva is enjoying town centre work in Oldham and I am getting used to the commute to Huddersfield Circuit - 25 churches 11 staff and nine graveyards!!

With much love and we pray you are able to keep safe and well

God bless Peter and Suva

Peter is now Superintendent of the Huddersfield Circuit as well as Minister for Outlane and Almondbury and Suva is in the new Oldham Circuit ministering at the Zion Church and Salt Cellar Resource Centre.

Your prayers are asked for Ray Church who is currently in hospital with an infection as yet undiagnosed. Hopefully he will quickly receive treatment and then be able to rejoin his family.

More Family News

Anna Church writes about her grandchild in the US.

Ikaria Falvey: Ikaria lives in Novato, California. In her last year at school she applied for entry into West Point - the American Army Military Academy for Officers. It turned out that there were nine thousand girls trying for three hundred places.

In December 2019, when she was on a visit to London, she heard that she had been successful: the application process is very rigorous mentally and physically, and you have to be nominated by a congressman, so she did amazingly well. She does not come from a military background so that makes it all the more of an achievement. She now has four years training at West Point; then she has to give five years to the army. West Point is in New York State on the Hudson River and is a town within a town.

She was Cadet Falvey in the first year, and is now Corporal in her second year. We are all extremely proud of her, that she wants to serve her country - which is a great honour.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ .

From Christine Clarke
Hello Everyone,

Sadly Mike passed away on the 10th January, after months of struggling with ill health; obviously our thoughts and prayers are with Nicola and the boys - Adam and Alistair - at a very difficult time.

I am writing at Nicola's request to send you the funeral details and ask that you share them with anyone else in your circle who knew Mike.

The funeral service will be on Friday, 11th February 2022 at 2.00pm
South West Middlesex Crematorium, Hounslow Road, Feltham.

<https://lodge.afuneralnotice.com/n/db8e6a56>

(Mike was the son of Geoff Clark long time member at Kingsdown Ed.)

Received from the Rev Roger Dunlop who many will also remember from his time at Kingsdown.

We trust that you have been able to make the most of a challenging year and have kept well.

Sadly Catherine's mother, Wendy, died in November aged 91yrs, but we give thanks for her long and fulfilling life. Only two years ago she was able to publish her book, 'Midwife of Borneo: the true story of a Geordie pioneer'; this describes her time running a clinic in the jungle in Borneo.

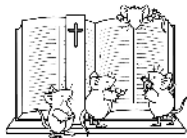
In the Summer we said farewell to Ruislip Manor and Ruislip churches, grateful for the nine years in that Circuit, including the years at Northwood. We miss the friendships there but have been warmly welcomed in the Telford Circuit and by Admaston, Horsehay, Leegomery and Wellington churches.

Catherine has been able to continue working for the Home Office given increased acceptance of hybrid working patterns. There have been two good island holidays – Madeira and Orkney - and we have completed five more long distance walks.

May you know Christ's peace and joy this Advent, Christmas & New Year. With love,



Roger & Catherine Dunlop



So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2 Corinthians 4:15

Dear Lord God,

February can be a difficult, cold month, and this year there is much to be concerned about, with the pandemic still affecting our lives in so many ways. But thank you, Lord, that February can also be a month of wonderful signs of hope.

Help us, when we look down, to see the snowdrops – sometimes known as Candlemas Bells – and other bulbs pushing through the dark earth, showing the promise of Spring and brighter days ahead.

And then, help us to look up, to see the light of Jesus, Your revelation to all the world, in that baby who grew and died and rose again to offer salvation, hope and life to all who put their trust in Him.

Thank you, Father, for Jesus and that, because of Him, nothing – no pandemic, no circumstance – can ever separate us from You.

Thank you for Your Holy Spirit, living in all who trust in You, giving us strength for each new day of this and every month.

In Jesus name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

He Prayeth Well

*He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast,
He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.*

By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

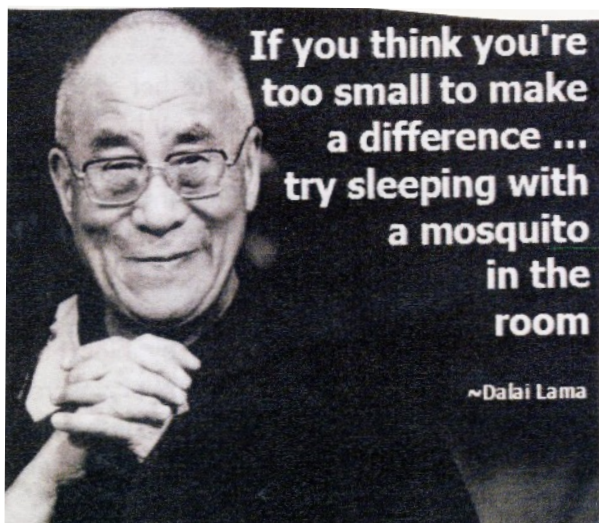
Kingsdown Nativity - December 2021



We hope that you all enjoyed our nativity play. They wrote it and organised all the music. It was not traditional but we felt that it was full of fun and laughter. I was so proud of all the children; they worked so hard and it was not easy getting everyone together for practices.

We hope to maybe do something else later in the year.

Anna



Boy's Brigade Newsletter



10th Ealing Boys' Brigade finished 2021 in fine style in mid-December, sharing pizza and chocolates among the lads on our final meeting, before the latest series of Covid restrictions came into play.

We took a three-week break over Christmas, and then returned on the first Friday of 2022, fit, well and raring to go. The Boys came back in good numbers, although they all pointed out that it was jolly cold out in the sports arena, even though they were leaping about with footballs, basketballs and hockey sticks!

Here's a rundown of how the individual sections are doing:

Anchor Boys (ages 5-8): we've taken on two new Boys over the last few weeks but we still have room for more new recruits at this age to join in with the fun and games. It's really just a laugh a minute with these chaps!

Junior Section (ages 9-11): the lads were disappointed to hear that the Junior Drill competition planned for March had been cancelled (for obvious reasons), as it would have given them a chance to capture the trophy for the sixth time on the bounce. Nevertheless, they continue to look super-smart when practising, and they are uber-competitive in the sports activities too, while always taking time to smile when things don't always go according to plan.

Company Section (ages 12-14): the newly promoted Boys have settled in well, and are getting used to the more disciplined activities in this group. They do look super-smart in their uniforms, and are also working hard at learning their new instruments, All in all, they've made a great start to the year.

Senior Section (ages 15-18): I've said it before (and I'm sure I'll say it again), but the Seniors are an incredible bunch of young men to know and to work and play with. It's wonderful to observe years of potential coming to fruition, listening to their friendly banter each week, and seeing them achieve great things every Friday. Most of these lads are now working towards the top two BB awards -- the President's Badge and the Queen's Badge.

Staff (young men and not so young men): the five registered BB staff (Tony, David, Mark, Matt and Dan) probably have more fun than the lads, to be honest, and they are also joined by a number of Old Boys who are always

happy to come along and give something back to their Company by refereeing a game of football or hockey.

It really is quite a legacy that 10th Ealing have built up over the years, courtesy of our predecessors, and we do feel each Friday that we are building an awesome generation of men for the coming decade.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of Kingsdown's mission and for your constant prayers and good wishes.

Tony Plews
Captain



Did you know...



Our work in Africa includes strengthening peace-building in South Sudan, promoting resilient farming in Kenya and challenging inequality in Sierra Leone. We are also working with women to increase their access to green and sustainable energy in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Malawi.

In Asia, our programmes include promoting women's rights in Afghanistan, justice and peace building in Myanmar and ensuring people can access the services they need in Bangladesh.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, we help promote gender justice in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Guatemala, peace-building in Colombia, and support marginalised communities to adapt their livelihoods to climate change in Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti.

Our work in the Middle East includes defending people's rights in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, protecting women at risk of violence in Iraq and providing humanitarian assistance to refugees in Lebanon.

Charities that are within the Methodist Church - all need your help in these difficult times.



Action for Children
www.actionforchildren.org.uk



Methodist relief and development

All We Can
www.allwecan.org.uk



Methodist Homes
www.mha.org.uk



Methodist Ministers' Housing Society

Methodist Ministers Housing Society
<https://mmhs.org.uk/>

**2021 became the year of new things.
Which may mean more new things lie
ahead!**



All We Can is part of a group of charities together exploring ways to make our work with partners and communities more locally rooted. The sector term for this is 'locally-led-development'.

I love Leo Tolstoy's Three Hermits parable, written in 1885. It says something about the value of encountering new approaches. It goes like this:

A Bishop visited three hermits living on a remote island.

He finds them to be ignorant of how to pray properly. So, he teaches them the Lord's Prayer.

On his return journey, he glances over his shoulder to see them walking - running - on water, after his boat.

We have forgotten your teaching, man of God. Teach us again!', they plead.

The Bishop, humbled, asks how they pray. What they say is simple: There are three of us, and three of you, God. Have mercy on us'.

The Bishop replies that their prayers will reach God just fine. He's now listened to how they pray and has seen they share the same ambition. They don't needn't his wording.

I suspect Tolstoy's point was around loyalty to what we know becoming a barrier to embracing what we don't yet know - and what we all miss out on when this happens.

For All We Can, our Partnership model asks the question before giving an answer. It advocates listening before advising. And seeking to learn from partners and communities before offering any insights and principles.

Locally-led development says working in true partnership brings the best results.

At the start of this year, may any uncertainty ahead, and any hesitance at new ways of doing things, lead us to discover the beauty in what is new to us.

And, as All We Can continues to partner with communities around the world, we do so humbly, seeking to discover more about what effective locally-led-development looks like, in 2022.

Steve Adams - Director of Public Engagement

Circuit 'Examen' Sessions

Our Circuit's 'Examen' sessions on Zoom led by Deacon Theresa Simons-Sam are continuing on the last Monday of each month. The dates for the next few months are:

28th February, 28th March and 25th April.

Sessions begin at 7.30pm and finish by about 8.45pm.

If you would like more information or would like to join the Examen sessions, please contact Deacon Theresa Simons-Sam at simons.samt@gmail.com for the Zoom link or call her on 07484 542878.

Background information.

The Examen is a reflective prayer practice which allows people to reflect on the day's events and to become more aware of the presence of God in their lives. It was developed by Ignatius of Loyola, a 15th Century Basque, who became the founder of the Jesuit Order of priests. Ed

Breathing the Bible

We are not supposed to just read the Bible. We're supposed to inhale it. We're supposed to take it deep down into our lungs, breathe in the atmosphere, suck in great gulps of the life-giving breath of God. When it feels like we are drowning, the Bible fills our lungs with the saving breath of God.

When we are panicking and scared, the Bible calms us with the deep breaths of the presence of God. When all the breath has been knocked out of us by the events or our lives; when our tears and sobs mean that we cannot catch our breath, the Bible brings us the oxygen of hope and comfort.

When we are becalmed, the Bible blows wind into our sails to get us going. And when we are light-headed and dizzy, when it feels as though we are scaling new heights, the Bible re-supplies us with oxygen so that we can climb even further.

We can argue all we like about the process of how books came together (and we will). We can argue about meanings and theologies and interpretations until, appropriately, we are blue in the face, but all that is missing the point of the Bible. The point is to let the Bible breathe God's life into us.

Nick Page

A New Year's Prayer based on Psalm 91

*Almighty God,
Those who believe, dwell in the secret place of The Most High,
they shall abide under the shadow of Your care in the coming new year.*

*We pray O LORD,
You're our refuge and our fortress: our God; in You we place our trust for
the year ahead.
Surely, You God, will deliver us from the snare of the fowler, and from the
noisome pestilence
of this Covid19 pandemic with all its variants.
Cover us O God with Your feathers,
under Your wings we shall trust and dwell.
Your truth shall be our shield and buckler.
We shall not be afraid for the terror that comes in darkness;
nor fear the destroying arrow that flies by day because
You O LORD, are our refuge,
our dwelling place,
even as we're migrant and stateless;*

*For our love of You O Lord, is greater than the troubles we face:
Evil, terrorism and wars, will never separate us from Your Love;
We believe Lord, You will set us on a high place of safety in the coming year,
for Your Namesake.
When we call on You,
You will hear O God and will answer:*

*Thank you Lord for Your promise,
to be with us in times of trouble;
to deliver us, and
to honour us with fruitful life
as You stretch Your Holy Hand of Salvation
upon all of humanity;*

Hear this our prayer Lord; In Jesus' Mighty Name, Amen!

*Adapted by Revd Dr Jongikaya Zihle
from London District Methodist Church News*

Do your days rush by at a hectic pass?

Have you ever stopped to think that your mobile phone and emails have not given you more time? Just more things to do in the same amount of time.

We leave our messages in one place while we take our bodies elsewhere. Instead of doing one thing after another, we shoot out a variety of tasks, and then swoop down on them later, needing to deal with them all at once.

In a four-minute clip from a street scene from an old Orson Welles film and a similar clip from a more recent film, you will see an amazing difference. In the early film, the camera records 'real time' – people get out of their cars, walk across streets, wait for lights, speak to other people, enter a bank. In the more recent film, a similar sequence was reduced to a half a dozen quick cuts. Transition time was eliminated.

Modern life teaches us that 'down time' is wasted. Time is money. So mobile phones, emails, etc, enable us to 'waste' less time. The tempo of cultural life picks up, the heartbeat of daily life races, and our own body rhythms respond with adrenaline, cramped muscles and heart attacks.

To take time out for daily prayer, for a quiet walk that is not to the next meeting, for daydreaming or for Bible study becomes a cross-cultural act. Following Christ, waiting on Him, is a countercultural act.

One lovely biblical phrase is 'in the fullness of time, it came to pass'. This suggests four things: that time crests like a wave; that there is a right moment for things to happen; that it's not ours to plan that moment, but to recognise it; and that we are not the primary agents of what happens in the world.

So, feel free to accept God's offer of rest when you are weary; receive each moment of your life as a gift from God's hand; pray to discern what each new encounter you make requires of you, and freely entrust everything else to God's care.

We are here on earth to do good unto others. What the others are here for, I have no idea.

W H Auden

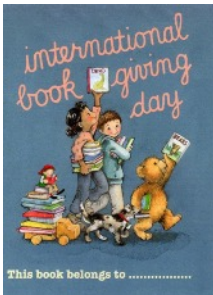
Make St Valentine's Day memorable – give a book!

International Book Giving Day, on 14 February, is about getting books into the hands of as many children as possible. The idea was started in 2012 and is now run entirely by volunteers in 44 countries. In the UK it is organised by Emma Perry of My Book Corner, emperry@gmail.com

According to the National Literacy Trust, in 2012 only one in every eight children in the UK owned a book and today generally literacy is still much lower than most of us would expect. The Covid lockdowns have slightly boosted the amount of reading that children have been doing, although much of this is not always with printed books – online activities and games were a prime source. Perhaps one of the most important comments the Literacy Trust's latest report, published last year, is that:

'Some children and young people reported that a lack of access to books (with schools and libraries closed), a lack of quiet space at home and a lack of school/peer support had negatively affected their ability to read and their motivation to read for enjoyment'.

As this is being written, the Covid pandemic is beginning to look much more serious again as around the world restrictions are being re-applied and lockdowns are being re-introduced. Getting books into the hands of children remains, therefore, as important as ever.



To find more about how you can help visit <https://bookgivingday.com> where you can also download a free printable bookplate to use with the books that you give away.

Make Valentine's Day truly memorable this year and show your love for a deprived child by giving them a book of their own to read!

This printable bookplate can be download free from:

<https://bookgivingday.com/2020/01/20/2020-bookgivingday-bookmarks-bookplate>

from ACE Forum

**We may choose to ignore the facts,
but that doesn't change them**

Valentines Day - 14th February

There are two confusing things about this day of romance and anonymous love-cards strewn with lace, cupids and ribbon: firstly, there seems to have been two different Valentines in the 4th century – one a priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, under the emperor Claudius, the other a bishop of Terni martyred at Rome. And neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples.



So why has Valentine become the patron saint of romantic love? By Chaucer's time the link was assumed to be because on these saints' day -14th February – the birds are supposed to pair. Or perhaps the custom of seeking a partner on St Valentine's Day is a surviving scrap of the old Roman Lupercalia festival, which took place in the middle of February. One of the Roman gods honoured during this Festival was Pan, the god of nature. Another was Juno, the goddess of women and marriage. During the Lupercalia it was a popular custom for young men to draw the name of a young unmarried woman from a name-box. The two would then be partners or 'sweethearts' during the time of the celebrations. Even modern Valentine decorations bear an ancient symbol of love – Roman cupids with their bows and love-arrows.

There are no churches in England dedicated to Valentine, but since 1835 his relics have been claimed by the Carmelite church in Dublin.

from Parish Pump

Say it with flowers

A man stopped by his local florist shop to buy flowers for his new girlfriend on Valentine's Day. He asked the proprietor, "You know the expression, 'Say it with flowers'?"



"I do indeed!" the florist enthused. "How about three dozen of my finest roses?"

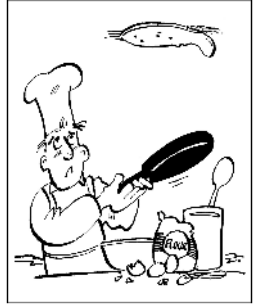
The man hesitated. "No, make it just a half dozen roses. I'm a man of few words."

from Parish Pump

Pancake Day – 1st March

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.



*In a world where people with disabilities face prejudice,
we pray for a fairer world for everyone.*

*Help others to open their eyes so that every individual
can fulfil their God-given potential.*

a CBM Prayer

St David's Day - 1st March - time for daffodils

1st March is St David's Day, and it's time for the Welsh to wear daffodils or leeks. Shakespeare called this custom 'an honourable tradition begun upon an honourable request' – but nobody knows the reason. Why should anyone have ever 'requested' that the Welsh wear leeks or daffodils to honour their patron saint? It's a mystery!



We do know that David – or Dafydd – of Pembrokeshire was a monk and bishop of the 6th century. In the 12th century he was made patron of Wales, and he has the honour of being the only Welsh saint to be canonised and culted in the Western Church. Tradition has it that he was austere with himself, and generous with others – living on water and vegetables (leeks, perhaps?!) and devoting himself to works of mercy. He was much loved.

In art, St David is usually depicted in Episcopal vestments, standing on a mound with a dove at his shoulder, in memory of his share at an important Synod for the Welsh Church, the Synod of Brevi.

Ash Wednesday - 2nd March - you are sorry

Have you done something which haunts you? Which makes you feel restless and defensive, every time you think of it? Why not deal with it this month, and put it behind you? Whatever your mistake has been, consider what the Bible has to say to you:



'I have not come to call the virtuous but sinners to repentance' (said Jesus). (Luke 5.32)

'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55.7)

'Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.' (Joel 2:12-13)

God is inviting you to come to Him this Ash Wednesday. What a wonderful offer! Make the most of it and remember how the prodigal son was welcomed back by his compassionate father.

17th March - St Patrick's Day



St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. If you've ever been in New York on St Patrick's Day, you'd think he was the patron saint of New York as well... the flamboyant parade is full of American/Irish razzmatazz.

It's all a far cry from the hard life of this 5th century humble Christian who became in time both bishop and apostle of Ireland. Patrick was born the son of a town councillor in the west of England, between the Severn and the Clyde. But as a young man he was captured by Irish pirates, kidnapped to Ireland, and reduced to slavery. He was made to tend his master's herds.

Desolate and despairing, Patrick turned to prayer. He found God was there for him, even in such desperate circumstances. He spent much time in prayer, and his faith grew and deepened, in contrast to his earlier years, when he "knew not the true God".

Then, after six gruelling, lonely years he was told in a dream he would soon go to his own country. He either escaped or was freed, made his way to a port 200 miles away and eventually persuaded some sailors to take him with them away from Ireland.

After various adventures in other lands, including near-starvation, Patrick landed on English soil at last, and returned to his family. But he was much changed. He had enjoyed his life of plenty before; now he wanted to devote the rest of his life to Christ. Patrick received some form of training for the priesthood, but not the higher education he really wanted.

By 435, well-educated or not, Patrick was badly needed. Palladius' mission to the Irish had failed, and so the Pope sent Patrick back to the land of his slavery. He set up his see at Armagh and worked principally in the north. He urged the Irish to greater spirituality, set up a school, and made several missionary journeys. Patrick's writings are the first literature identified from the British Church. They reveal sincere simplicity and a deep pastoral care. He wanted to abolish paganism, idolatry, and was ready for imprisonment or death in the following of Christ.

Patrick remains the most popular of the Irish saints. The principal cathedral of New York is dedicated to him, as, of course, is the Anglican cathedral of Dublin.

27th March - Mothering Sunday

There is an old Jewish saying: God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.



Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods – our human mothers – all of them have been part of the celebration of ‘Mothering Sunday’ – as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as ‘live-in’ servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families, which is how ‘Mothering Sunday’ got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed, and in many ways now resembles the American Mother’s Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day.



Those who want to get married

A minister was preparing to marry a local couple within a couple of weeks. At the close of the morning service, he saw them both in the congregation, and wanted to ask them to come forward, but he couldn’t think of their names. So he said: “Will those wanting to get married please come to the front?”

Immediately, nine single ladies, six single men, three widows, and four widowers walked up the aisle.

from Parish Pump

Easter 15th -18th April

How do you make sense of the Resurrection? Dead men don't rise, so why believe that this particular dead man did rise?



At the end of St Luke's gospel we read that: "they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement" (Luke 24.4). This is highly significant. The Gospels do not show us a group of disciples who were in a receptive frame of mind. After the crucifixion, they were in hiding, frightened and scattered. Then suddenly, they came out of hiding and were totally different; excited, joyful. By Pentecost they were confident, with one firm message: 'You crucified Jesus, but God raised Him up!'

How did they know this? Because of direct personal experience. Some of them had visited the tomb of Jesus: it was empty. Others claimed to have seen and touched the risen Lord. Were they hallucinating? People can hallucinate in groups – when taking drugs, for example. But of course, each one will see a different hallucination. But the disciples all saw the same thing. Or rather, the same person. Jesus.

Were they lying? Jesus had died a humiliating death as a criminal. Perhaps they wanted to rescue His good name. So, did they pretend they had seen Him?

This theory has a big problem. Their preaching led them into trouble with the authorities. They were beaten and imprisoned and some of them killed. People will die for ideas and causes which they believe in passionately. But not for things they have made up. We might suffer for our convictions, but we will not suffer for our inventions.

What about the 'swoon' theory? That Jesus didn't die on the cross, despite terrible wounds? That He recovered in the tomb, and then escaped? That the disciples nursed Him back to health? But Roman soldiers knew when a man was dead; and there was the guard on the tomb. Also, the events which followed simply don't fit. If the disciples had been hiding Jesus all along, they would have kept very low-key, and out of the way, so that the authorities did not come after Him again.

Besides, to preach that God had raised Jesus from the dead – which is exactly what they did preach – would have been a lie. Beatings and threat of death would soon have loosened their tongues. Inventions crumble under pressure; convictions hold fast.

Another reason for believing in the Resurrection is this: Jesus' continuing impact. Thousands and soon millions of people in every generation since have shared an inescapable sense of being 'accompanied' through life. Though unseen, they identify this presence as the Risen Lord.

Sometimes this experience of meeting Jesus is gentle and fitful. Sometimes it is dramatic and life changing. This reminds us that the resurrection of Jesus is not just an interesting historical puzzle. It is a vital, present day reality. It brings wonderful comfort, assuring us of the central Christian truths: death is dead; Jesus is alive; God is love.

This central notion was captured, most movingly, by the great Albert Schweitzer: 'He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: "Follow thou me," and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the suffering which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is.'

Have a joyful – and a challenging – Easter.

23rd April - St George's Day



The Saint of an English Army before he was Patron Saint of England, St George may have been a soldier, but he was no Englishman. Some stories say that he was an officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror, and was martyred at Lydda in Palestine about the year 300 AD – supposedly 23rd April. Over the years St George became the example of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful helper against evil powers affecting individual lives. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages, of whom remarkable deeds were reported.

In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine gave St George a handsome write-up. The story runs thus:

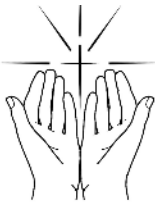
One day, St George rode up to the heathen city of Sylene in Lybia, where he found the citizens in great distress. A neighbouring dragon had forced them to surrender two sheep each day for its dinner, and when the sheep gave out, two of their children; and now they were about to sacrifice the King's daughter, dressed as if for her wedding. St George encountered the little party by a stagnant lake, where the dragon lived,

and persuaded the sobbing Princess to tell him why she was so miserable. At that moment the dragon appeared, looking inexpressibly revolting. St George charged forwards and drove his spear into the dragon's gaping mouth. To everyone's amazement, he tumbled the monster over and over.

Then St George borrowed the Princess's girdle, tied it round the dragon's neck, and persuaded her to lead it back to Sylene herself. The sight of her approaching with the befuddled dragon on its makeshift lead emptied the town. When the inhabitants timidly crept back, St George promised to behead the dragon if they would all believe in Jesus Christ and be baptised.

It was a most effective form of evangelism, for everybody said 'yes' at once. So, 15,000 people were baptised, and four carts were commissioned to remove the dragon's body.

St George thus became a symbol of the war against evil, and he is usually portrayed trampling the dragon of sin under his horse's hoofs. The Crusaders had a vision of him helping them against the Saracens at Antioch, during the first Crusade, and so brought the story of St George back with them from Palestine. Presently England put herself under the protection of the Saint. His day was declared a holiday in 1222. A red cross on a white field is the flag of St George.



Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

How do you decide who to marry?



You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming – Alan, age 10

No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before and you get to find out later who you're stuck with. – Kirsten, age 10



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee is set to be celebrated on the weekend of 2-5 June 2022.

Do you have any memories of the Queen that you would like to share with us all? For example:

- A meeting with, or seeing the Queen or other members of the Royal Family (especially at local events)
- The death of King George VI
- The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth
- Celebrating previous Royal Jubilees
- Locally taken photographs of the Queen/Royal Family members, or of previous Jubilee/Coronation celebrations.

If you are of mature years - what were you doing when the Queen came to the Throne?

If you are of younger years - what are your first memories of the Queen?

Should Kingsdown organise a Celebration Lunch?

Any memories you might care to share would be gratefully received. Ed

Time's Paces by Henry Twells

(This was seen on a clock in Chester Cathedral)

When as a child I laughed and wept,
Time crept.

When as a youth I walked more bold,
Time strolled.

When I became a full-grown man,
Time ran.

When older still I daily grew,
Time flew.

Soon I shall find in passing on,
Time gone.

O Christ, wilt thou have saved me then?

Amen



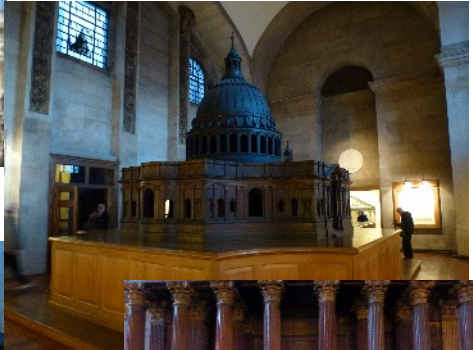
St Pauls Cathedral - 2021



St Pauls Cathedral - 1941



St Pauls Upper Knave Gallery



Scale model of St Pauls Cathedral
- insert front entrance columns



St Pauls Crypt Chapel



Old stone carvings from St Pauls

The Great Sun

(from a Normandy Crucifix of 1632)

*I am the Great Sun, but you do not see Me,
I am your husband, but you turn away.
I am the captive, but you do not free Me,
I am the captain you will not obey.*

*I am the truth, but you will not believe Me,
I am the city where you will not stay,
I am your wife, your child, but you will leave Me,
I am that God to whom you will not pray.*

*I am your counsel, but you do not hear Me,
I am the lover whom you will betray,
I am the victor, but you do not cheer Me,
I am the holy dove whom you will slay.*

*I am your life, but if you will not name Me,
Seal up your soul with tears, and never blame Me.*

Translated by Charles Causley



Love

*He held her close in his arms' embrace,
Their eyes and their lips did meet,
He looked down into her lovely face,
And her heart did faster beat...*

*They went to the kirk an it came the day,
And the book the priest did take;
He in his kilt was so bright and gay
As his promise he did make.*

*She stood at his side so white and fair,
Her white fingers fair to give,
The priest handfasted them then and there,
And he blessed them long to live.*

*O God give the joy and God the love
To those who are lovers true,
Shed down benediction from above
As in one are joined the two.*

From Prayers of the Western Highlanders

Ealing Animals Fair

Saturday 5th March 2022
10:30am - 4:00pm

Hanwell Methodist Church

Church Road, London, W7 1DJ

+ Lots of stalls + Great guest speakers + Live music!

www.ealinganimalsfair.london

Please check the website for any changes due to Covid restrictions

admission
FREE | 

Keep Alert for Scams

It could be a phone call, e-mail, web page or live person impersonating a delivery driver.



If you are not sure check check and recheck before you give out any personal details, phone numbers, credit cards, bank account or hand over parcels.

WATCH OUT THERE'S A SCAMMER ABOUT

LATEST FROM WHICH SCAM ALERT SERVICE

Fake delivery texts link to cloned Post Office website

Scammers are targeting the Post Office in a new fake text scam that's one of the most convincing we've seen.

The texts state that a parcel delivery has failed and ask recipients to click the link to 'book a new date' or 'reschedule a delivery' via two sites that have nothing to do with the Post Office. This is a sophisticated scam that you need to be aware of..



Current Shopping List



Long Life Fruit Juice & Squash

Tinned Fish, Kidney Beans, Chickpeas

Long Grain Rice (1kg size please)

Tinned Fruit, UHT Milk (semi-skimmed or whole)

Shaving Gear (foam and razors), Sanitary Towels

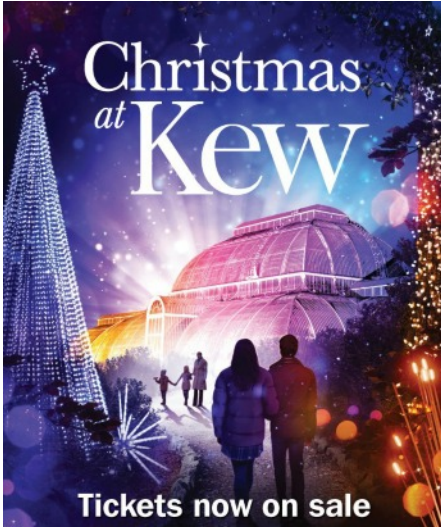
(not tampons)

Nappies (Sizes 3, 4 and 6)

Leave your donations in Bin on table in Church Foyer



"If I gave everything to the poor, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing"



NOW FOR A FULL YEAR !!

Christmas at Kew

Enter a natural world glittering with a million lights.

Wednesday 16 November 2022 -
Sunday 8 January 2023

Time slots start between 4.20pm and 8pm. The Gardens close at 10pm with last entry at 8:20pm and 7:20pm on Christmas eve.

How to book

<https://christmasatkew.seetickets.com/content/entry-selection?>

