

THE PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT MARY PENWORTHAM

Annual Subscription £6.00 By Post £12.00 Single Copy 50p

MAY 2019

From the Editors

Welcome to our May edition. Are we not blessed to live in a country whose climate is generally benign and whose Spring times cannot be bettered? At the time of writing we have had some beautiful sunny days and evenings and people's spirits are lifted. People feel inspired to get out and see Nature in all its glory, whether that be in the garden or just going for walks. Simple activities are so good for our health and well-being by exercising the body and allowing the mind to become a bit quieter. Hopefully the weather will continue to be kind to us so that we can experience more of these simple experiences which are so good for us.

Christ is Risen! Easter, that most important time in the Christian Year when we can come to a fuller understanding of what it means to live the Christian life, has come and gone. But in truth Easter can be with us always as we seek to find fresh ways to overcome the largely self-imposed difficulties we experience. As Einstein said "Life should be as simple as possible but no simpler". We do tend to seek complexity when none is needed!

We wish you a happy month of May.

Look for the bare necessities,
The simple bare necessities,
Forget about your worries and your strife.
I mean the bare necessities,
Old Mother Nature's recipes,
That brings the bare necessities of life.

And don't spend your time lookin' around,
For something you want that can't be found.
When you find out you can live without it,
And go along not thinkin' about it
I'll tell you something true,

The bare necessities of life will come to you.

Baloo the Bear, Jungle Book



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**“You have to accentuate the positive
Eliminate the negative
Latch on to the affirmative
Don't mess with 'Mr in-between',”
Louis Armstrong**

From the Editors

St. Mary's News

Plans for our new building

Plans and an artist impression of the proposed new building to replace the current 1956 building are now on display near to the refreshment table. The PCC saw them earlier this week when the architect explained them and answered questions. The PCC were very impressed.

This is the start of a very long process including consultation with Pressure Groups, the Local Authority and the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) but feel free to ask the Vicar or Churchwardens if you have any queries.

Leyland Band Concert

Leyland Band performed very well here at church on Thursday 4th May; they produce such a lovely sound. Everyone left feeling happier having listened to some of the classics of the brass band repertoire. The soloists were superb. We hope they will come again some time in the future. During the evening we had a collection for Christian Aid and we raised over £100. Fairtrade products were also on sale. Thank you to Rachel Tuke and David Thornton for organizing it.

Christian Aid Week 2019 12th-18th May

Christian Aid week this year takes place between the 12th and 18th May. We will here in Penwortham be taking part through our house to house collection. Christian Aid week remains the biggest fund raiser for Christian Aid and at the moment house to house collections continue to bring a significant portion of the money raised. I am very grateful to the many collectors who continue to help collect in our area, but there is always room for more people to help.

If you are able to give us a few hours of your time to collect in a small area please do let me know. You don't have to go alone, if you would like to work with someone else to collect in a particular area, then that can be arranged. You can encourage younger people to help by delivering envelopes but anyone collecting must be at least 16 to go unaccompanied.

If you have other ideas for fund raising or would be prepared to help organise a Big Brekkie, then again please do let me know. Any ideas gratefully received.

Churchyard.

For many years now a small but dedicated team has met on Thursday mornings to work in the churchyard and keep it looking beautiful and welcoming to worshippers and visitors alike. The team is not getting any younger and we need some help. We thought it might be a good idea to have some sessions on Saturday mornings as well. The work is not onerous mainly keeping the grass cut and looking after the flower beds. If you feel you can help you will be most welcome.

The next date is **Saturday 11th May** between 9.30 am to 12.00. Refreshments will be provided.

From the Editors

FOODBANK REQUESTS.

Penwortham Churches Together Food Bank are very short of the following:
Hot dogs: corned beef, ham, meatballs, Irish stew, Fray Bentos pies: tinned mince, stewing steak & curries, tinned peas, carrots & potatoes, tinned fruit, & rice pudding, custard, small packs of tea bags, nappies(Size 2, 3 or bigger).
Please leave anything with the Churchwardens. Thank you.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MINISTRY (FAB, SPARKS,)

WEEK ONE:

SPARKS—Cinema Sunday during 10.15am service

WEEK TWO:

SPARKS—Stories, crafts & games during 10.15am service

WEEK THREE:

SPARKS—Stories, crafts & games during 10.15am service

WEEK FOUR:

FAB (Faith and Belonging) All age Family “Messy Church” - Craft, games, family challenge, story & café time—3pm to 5pm in Church

WEEK FIVE; (when applicable)

SPARKS— Stories, crafts & games during 10.15am service.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT DEBBIE WIGGINS

Home: 803038 Mobile: 07824 628206 Email: wigginsfamily.dw@gmail.com

Church News

Cathedrals to mark moon landing anniversary

Space suits, meteorite fragments and a giant sculpture of the moon are to be displayed in one of the Church of England's ancient cathedrals as part of celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing.

A lit art installation, *Museum of the Moon*, by artist Luke Jerram, with detailed NASA imagery of the moon's surface, will be suspended from the nave of Ely Cathedral for a science festival on space exploration, Artificial Intelligence and future technologies.

The festival at the cathedral will include science-themed worship as well as lectures from high-profile figures including the Astronomer Royal Lord Rees and lunar expert and broadcaster Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock. There are also exhibits on show loaned from the Science Museum and the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge.

Ely Cathedral joins Lichfield Cathedral in mounting a spectacular display to mark the anniversary of the lunar landing, with Lichfield's nave floor due to be transformed into a huge visual reproduction of the Moon's surface.

The cathedrals are among 14 church projects receiving a total of £70,000 in grants from the Scientists in Congregations scheme to foster greater understanding about science and faith.

Church News

Funding cuts putting children at risk, says charity

Thousands of children are being put at risk as funding for crisis support continues to be scaled back, The Children's Society has warned.

The charity said parents were struggling to meet the cost of basics like food, clothing and heating following cuts to welfare schemes that provide help in the form of shopping vouchers, electricity meter top-ups, white goods and cash grants.

In a new report, *Nowhere to Turn*, it said the number of people receiving crisis support from the Government had dropped by a staggering 75 per cent since the Government devolved responsibility to councils in 2013. The impact was exacerbated by further funding cuts to local authorities that led to the end of separate cash grants in 2015.

The Children's Society believes the decrease is down to the strict eligibility criteria put in place by local councils, with some requiring that applicants first try to access food banks, take out loans, or receive unemployment benefits.

Other councils, it said, do not actively promote their crisis support schemes, meaning that many of those in need may not know that they exist. In total, 23 councils have abandoned the schemes altogether.

At present, councils are not required to consider the presence of children when considering families for financial assistance, but The Children's Society wants that to change.

It also wants councils to make decisions on emergency cases within 24 hours, as well as make the schemes available to people in work, and ensure awards available from all councils include cash and support with child-related costs like school uniforms.

Nick Roseveare, Chief Executive at The Children's Society, said many families were living in poverty despite working. Others are struggling as a result of Universal Credit delays, the benefits freeze, and the growing gap between private rents and housing benefit.

"At a time when families need support more than ever this vital source of help is drying up," he said. "An unexpected event like a broken boiler or long-term sickness, can tip a family into crisis and this kind of support can be the difference between them keeping their heads above water or drowning in debt and ending up hungry or homeless."

Bishop and MP welcome marriage registration changes by Parliament

Recent changes made by Parliament to allow for mothers' names to be included on marriage certificates have been welcomed by the Bishop of St Albans together with Dame Caroline Spelman MP.

Royal Assent was recently received to the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act following a Private Member's Bill.

Dr Alan Smith, together with Dame Caroline, who is the Second Church Estates Commissioner, said: "The passing of this Bill into law is to be welcomed and

marks a significant step forward. After years of tireless work by politicians, faith-leaders and campaigners, we have finally achieved tangible progress towards the equal treatment of both parents”

Prior to this Act, only fathers’ names were formerly recorded when marriages were registered, a custom unchanged since 1837. Bishop Smith said: "This clear and historic injustice reflected the time when children and wives were considered property of men and it is high time for this to be corrected.

Celebrations mark 25 years of women's ordination to the priesthood

Events have been taking place this Spring to mark a quarter of a century of women’s ordination to the priesthood in the Church of England. The first group of women were ordained priests on Saturday 12 March 1994, in Bristol Cathedral.

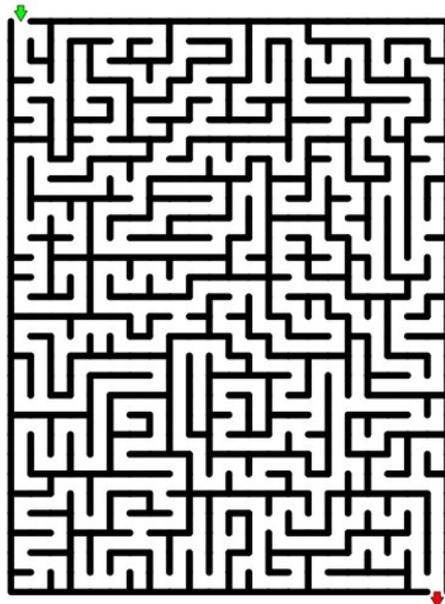
Following a recent celebration at Lambeth Palace attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, services have been held at cathedrals and churches throughout the country.

Meanwhile the number of women entering training for ministry continues to grow. Women now make up nearly a third of the 20,000-active clergy in the Church of England according to the latest figures which also show a 38% increase in the number of women starting training for ordained ministry in the past two years.

2019 also marks 50 years since women were first licensed as Lay Readers, and five years since legislation was passed to enable women to be appointed bishops.



"...and then, as the organist hits us with a cool hip-hop riff, you kick off the wedding vows in a smokin' rap style..."



All in the Month of May

It was:

500 years ago, on 2nd May 1519 that Leonardo Da Vinci, the Italian artist, scientist and inventor, died.

200 years ago, on 24th May 1819 that Queen Victoria was born. (She reigned from 1837 to 1901)

175 years ago, on 3rd May 1844 that Richard D'Oyley Carte, British theatrical impresario, was born. He built the Savoy Theatre and the Palace Theatre in London, managed some of the most important theatrical stars of the era, and founded a touring opera company.

100 years ago, on 18th May 1919 that Dame Margot Fonteyn, British ballerina, was born. (Died 1991)

90 years ago, on 4th May 1929 that Audrey Hepburn, Belgian-born British actress, fashion icon and humanitarian, was born. Her film roles included Roman Holiday, Breakfast at Tiffany's and My Fair Lady.

80 years ago, on 25th May 1939 that Sir Frank Dyson, Astronomer Royal of England and Scotland, died. His observations of the 1919 solar eclipse helped prove Einstein's theory of relativity. He also introduced the Greenwich Time Signal ('pips').

65 years ago, on 6th May 1954 that British athlete Roger Bannister became the first person to run a mile in under four minutes. (Three minutes, 59.4 seconds in Oxford.)

Also 65 years ago, on 29th May 1954 that British athlete Diane Leather became the first woman to run a five minute mile. (Four minutes, 59.6 seconds in Birmingham.)

25 years ago, on 6th May 1994 that the Channel Tunnel linking England and France was officially opened.

Also 25 years ago, on 10th May 1994 that Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as South Africa's first black president after many years of white rule.

20 years ago, on 6th May 1999 that the first general elections for the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales took place. Donald Dewar became First Minister of Scotland and Alun Michael became First Secretary for Wales.

15 years ago, on 1st May 2004 that the following countries joined the European Union: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Organisations

Guild of St. Mary

On Monday 13th May Yvonne Pinder will be telling us about 'Pinny's Pots' and how this all started. She will be demonstrating how she decorates plant pots and there will be plenty for us to see.

Ann Yates

The Parish Thanks

ALTAR FLOWERS

May

5th Mrs Harrison, in memory of Mr & Mrs Openshaw
12th Phyllis Bradley, in memory of the Bradley Family
19th Mrs Hargreaves, in memory of Harold and Elsie Cummings
26th John King, in memory of Jack & Ethel King

ALTAR LINEN

May

Mrs Michelle Greenall

History Corner

FROM THE ARCHIVES : MAY 1919

Extract from the Vicar's notes:

This Easter let us remember that on Easter Day, nearly 2000 years ago, the freedom of the world was won, and the glorious hope of the Resurrection given to be the comfort, guidance and support of all who should know the sorrow of bereavement.

We should be very glad of gifts of flowers for the Easter decorations. It is rather an astonishing fact that very very few of our parishioners send flowers at decoration times. Perhaps this year we shall find this remedied, and gifts of daffodils and ferns will be brought. The decorators will be at the Church on Easter Saturday, any time after 10 o'clock to receive them.

Penwortham Church Girls' Club

A meeting of the Committee of the above Club was held on Thursday, when it was decided to organise a Dance for Thursday, April 24th in the Penwortham End Sunday School. The tickets will be 1/6 each, and the time from 8 to 1. The Girls Club have not organised a dance since the War began, and we hope this one may prove a great success. The following Thursday a Whist Drive is being arranged, but after which there will be no dancing. Tickets 1/6 each, and the time from 8 to 11 p.m.

SPG BOXES

Miss Finch wishes us to state that the amount from the boxes was less than last year. This ought not to be, and this year we must see to it that our contributions to this our oldest Society are increased.

I am sure that most of us, looking back, would admit that whatever we have achieved in character we have achieved through conflict; it has come to us through powers hidden deep within us, so deep that we didn't know we had them, called into action by the challenge of opposition and frustration. *JW Hamilton*

Calendar

1 st	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation
2 nd	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
5 th	THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER	
	8.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 1) with Sparks (Cinema Sunday)
8 th	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation
9 th	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
12 th	THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	
	8.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 1) with Sparks
15 th	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation
16 th	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
19 th	THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	
	8.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 1) with Sparks
22 nd	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation
23 rd	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
24 th	THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	
	8.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 1) NO SPARKS (Swearing in of Sidespersons at Start of 10.15 Service)
	3.00-5.00 pm	FAB (Faith and Belonging)
29 th	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation

Calendar

30 th	ASCENSION DAY	
	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice

Charities

Children's Society

A big thank you to all those people who contributed towards the recent collection for the Children's Society. A total of £200.30 was collected.

Linda Glaister

Penwortham Food Bank

We are appealing for anyone who could help to transport food from our store on Queensway to Kingsfold Community Centre on Monday mornings between 10 and 12.

If you feel you can help please contact Sue Jones on 01772 743953

Matters of Faith

Please pray....

For those recently baptised

7th April Wilfred Paul Webster, the son of Jordan Alexander James Webster and Laura Margaret Webster

For those who have recently married

30th March Matthew Philip Molloy and Lucy Mae Bevan

For those who have recently died

Joan Motram
Andrew Nicholls



Old as taxes

As a new tax year gets underway, did you know that the men who collect our taxes are working in one of the oldest professions known? Archaeological evidence dating from 1900 BC includes a clay tablet recording a tax for public works and a papyrus scroll which reveals that even 4,000 years ago, tax-payers had some complaints. No surprise there! (*From Optimist magazine.*)

HIGH DAYS AND HOLY DAYS

1st May - May Day: unbridled merriment

May is the month when the ancient pagans used to get up to 'all sorts'! The Romans held their festival to honour the mother-goddess Maia, goddess of nature and growth. (May is named after her.) The early Celts celebrated the feast of Beltane, in honour of the sun god, Beli.

For centuries in 'Olde England' the people went mad in May. After the hardship of winter, and hunger of early Spring, May was a time of indulgence and unbridled merriment. One Philip Stubbes, writing in 1583, was scandalised: 'for what kissing and bussing, what smooching and slabbering one of another, is not practised?'

Henry VIII went 'maying' on many occasions. Then folk would stay out all night in the dark rain-warm thickets and return in the morning for dancing on the green around the May pole, archery, vaulting, wrestling, and evening bonfires.

The Protestant reformers took a strong stand against May Day - and in 1644 May Day was abolished altogether. Many May poles came down - only to go up again at the Restoration, when the first May Day of King Charles's reign was 'the happiest Mayday that hath been many a year in England', according to Pepys.

May Day to most people today brings vague folk memories of a young Queen of the May decorated with garlands and streamers and flowers, a May Pole to weave, Morris dancing, and the intricacies of well dressing at Tissington in Derbyshire.

May Day is a medley of natural themes such as sunrise, the advent of summer, growth in nature, and - since 1833 - Robert Owen's vision of a millennium in the future, beginning on May Day, when there would be no more poverty, injustice or cruelty, but harmony and friendship. This is why, in modern times, May Day has become Labour Day, which honours the dignity of workers. And until recently, in communist countries May Day processions were in honour of the achievement of Marxism.

There has never been a Christian content to May Day, but nevertheless there is the well-known 6am service on the top of Magdalen Tower at Oxford where a choir sings in the dawn of May Day.

An old May carol includes the lines:

The life of man is but a span, it flourishes like a flower

We are here today, and gone tomorrow - we are dead within an hour.

There is something of a sadness about it, both in words and tune, as there is about all purely sensuous joy. For May Day is not Easter, and the joys it represents have always been earth-bound and fleeting.

New mother: What is the most difficult thing I'll need to learn?
Nurse: That other women have perfect children too.

8th May - Julian of Norwich: a voice from a distant cell

by Canon David Winter

Many years ago, studying English literature at university, I was intrigued to be introduced to the work of Julian of Norwich. She was writing at the end of the 14th century, when our modern English language was slowly emerging from its origins in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English.

Our lecturer was mainly concerned with her importance in the history of the language (she was the first woman, and the first significant writer, to write in English). But I was more intrigued by the ideas she was expressing. She was an anchoress – someone who had committed herself to a life of solitude, giving herself to prayer and fasting. St Julian's, Norwich was the church where she had her 'cell'.

Her masterpiece, *Revelations of Divine Love*, reveals a mystic of such depth and insight that today up and down Britain there are hundreds, possibly thousands, of 'Julian Groups' who meet regularly to study her writings and try to put them into practise.

She is honoured this month (8th) in the Lutheran and Anglican Churches, but although she is held in high regard by many Roman Catholics, her own Church has never felt able to recognise her as a 'saint'. This is probably because – over 600 years ago! – she spoke of God as embracing both male and female qualities. *Revelations* is an account of the visions she received in her tiny room, which thousands of pilgrims visit every year.

Her most famous saying, quoted by T S Eliot in one of his poems, is 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well' – words that have brought comfort and strength to many a soul in distress.

10th May - Comgall

Here is a great saint for all teachers, head teachers and principals of educational institutions, and indeed anyone whose vocation is to train and equip others.

For Comgall (c 516 – c 601) was founder and first abbot of Bangor, which became the largest monastery in Ireland. And large means LARGE – for including several daughter houses, the total population is reckoned to have been 3,000.

If you have ever run an educational institution of 3,000 pupils (!), you will know it takes a special kind of person to cope with that, and Comgall seems to have been perfect for the job. A biographer at the time called him 'the outstanding father of the monks in Ireland, known for his insistence on study and strict discipline.'

Comgall's rule had what it took to succeed: it was 'strict, holy and constant', both 'graced with the hope of salvation and made perfect in love', according to the 7th century writer Antiphoner of Bangor. Above all, followers were to love Christ, and reject the love of money.

Comgall also had a gift for friendship, for on the death of a close friend, he wrote in grief: 'My soul-friend has died and I am headless; you too are headless, for a man without a soul-friend is a body without a head.'

Like heads and principals today, Comgall knew a lot of important people. He had trained Columbanus and knew Columba, whom he visited on Iona. They even preached the Gospel together in Inverness, to the pagan chieftain Brude.

Matters of Faith

16th May - Caroline Chisholm: helping the emigrants to Australia

If you want an example of someone who can show you their faith through their works, Caroline Chisholm is a saint for you. This doughty little 19th century English woman had such a compassionate heart that she helped tens of thousands of people, from India to Australia.

Caroline was born in Northamptonshire in May, 1808. Her father William was a pig dealer, and already had 15 children, by four wives. When Caroline was about five, her father brought a poor maimed soldier into the family home and urged his children to look after the wretched man well, as he had fought for their freedom. This disinterested compassion for poor struggling 'outsiders' would become the lodestar of Caroline's life.

When Caroline was 22 in 1830 she married Captain Archibald Chisholm, of the East India Company Army. Out in Madras, Caroline grew alarmed for the young girls growing up in the barracks. She founded the Female School of Industry for the Daughters of European Soldiers, to provide a practical education.

After having two sons, and working on the Indian subcontinent for a number of years, Captain Chisholm was granted a two-year furlough in 1838 on grounds of ill health. The family moved to the sunshine of Australia, near Sydney. Here Caroline was appalled at the conditions that faced emigrants, especially female, arriving in the colony. Many ended up working the streets, just to survive.

Caroline stayed for seven years in Australia, placing more than 11,000 people in homes and jobs, and in all, her Female Immigrant Home helped more than 40,000 people. Highly respected by the government, she gave evidence before Legislative Council Committees, but accepted money from no one. When Archibald left the army in 1845 he and Caroline toured Australia at their own expense, collecting more than 600 statements from emigrants that detailed the truth about the problems of emigration.

Back in England, the statements caught the attention and respect of Charles Dickens, the House of Lords Select Committees, Lord Shaftesbury, Sir Sydney Herbert, Wyndham Harding FRS and even Pope Pius IX. Caroline and Archibald went on to help more than 3,000 people *safely* emigrate to Australia, before moving back there themselves, where they both died in 1877. In his novel *Bleak House*, Charles Dickens is said to have partly based the character of Mrs Jellyby on Caroline Chisholm.

24th May - John & Charles Wesley: Let's Sing a Hymn

by Canon David Winter

Later this month the Church calendar celebrates the lives of John and Charles Wesley. John's great gift to the Christian cause was the little matter of founding the world-wide movement known as Methodism. His brother Charles had an equally profound impact through his hymns. He actually wrote over 6,000, most of which aren't sung nowadays, but among the ones we do still sing are all-time favourites

– ‘Love divine, all loves excelling’, ‘O for a thousand tongues to sing’. ‘Jesu lover of my soul’, ‘Hark the herald angels sing’ – and scores more.

40 years ago almost everybody knew quite a lot of hymns, but sadly that’s no longer true. Traditional hymns aren’t usually sung at school assemblies, not even in church schools, and while the audience for ‘Songs of Praise’ on BBC TV is substantial, most of those watching are over 50.

With only about ten per cent of the population even irregular church-goers there is inevitably a lack of familiarity with hymns of any kind. Christmas carols are an exception, as is ‘Jerusalem’ and ‘Amazing Grace’, because they are frequently heard outside church.

Singing hymns is a wonderful experience at its best – just ask a Welsh rugby crowd singing ‘Bread of heaven’! It seems a pity to lose it.

It’s not a bad idea to take ten minutes and think what is your favourite hymn, and why – ancient or modern doesn’t matter. Then try singing it in the bath or under the shower – a very purifying experience.

30th May - Ascension Day: 40 Days with the Risen Christ

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.*)

The Gospels give us little of Christ’s teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving ‘farewell’ in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: “When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.”

As Christmas began the story of Jesus’ life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus’ last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection! Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: ‘While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.’ (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: ‘I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...’ (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: ‘they worshipped Him - and returned to

Matters of Faith

Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.' (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! 'I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.' (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

Miscellaneous

International Dawn Chorus Day 2019 – 5th May

This popular annual event is promoted by the Wildlife Trust and is the perfect opportunity for all nature lovers to gather at dawn to enjoy the song of their local birds.

Nowadays Dawn Chorus Day is celebrated in more than 80 countries, and even in parts of Antarctica and the Caribbean. For details of how to find a local gathering, or how to hold your own, go to: <https://www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days->

Top Ten Silliest Questions asked on a Cruise Ship

- Paul Grayson, Cruise Director for the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line

1. Do these steps go up or down?
2. What do you do with the beautiful ice carvings after they melt?
3. Which elevator do I take to get to the front of the ship?
4. Does the crew sleep on the ship?
5. Is this island completely surrounded by water?
6. Does the ship make its own electricity?
7. Is it salt water in the toilets?
8. What elevation are we at?
9. There's a photographer on board who takes photos and displays them the next day... the question was asked: 'If the pictures aren't marked, how will I know which ones are mine?'
10. What time is the Midnight Buffet being served?

For those on the roads - a few hymns

30 mph	Pass me not, O gentle Saviour
50 mph	God Will Take Care of You
70 mph	Nearer My God to Thee
85 mph	This World Is Not My Home
95 mph	Lord, I'm Coming Home
100 mph.	Precious Memories

Miscellaneous

Editor: 65 years ago this month, an outstanding athlete broke the records book. By Tim Lenton.

Roger Bannister and the four-minute mile

The first person to run a mile in under four minutes was Roger Bannister, who did it 65 years ago, on 6th May 1954, at the Iffley Road track in Oxford. His time was 3:59.4 – the announcement drowned out by wild applause from the crowd after announcer Norris McWhirter said the word “three”.

Bannister was born in 1929: his father was a Methodist and his mother a Unitarian Sunday school teacher.

His world record lasted for only a few weeks, but because he was the first to achieve what many had thought impossible, he remains a household name. He himself always believed his successful 40-year career practising medicine – he was a neurologist – was a far greater achievement.

He was knighted in 1975 and was Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, from 1985 to 1993. After his marriage to Swedish artist Moyra Elver Jacobsson in 1955 he became friends with the Rector of All Souls’, Langham Place, the Rev Dr John Stott. He was baptised at All Souls: his sponsors were his two friends who had helped him to the four-minute mile – Chris Chataway and Chris Brasher.

One of his four children is the Rev Charlotte Bannister-Parker, an associate priest in Oxford.

Keep going

“Sitting still kills.” This rather startling observation from a scientist at Queen’s University Belfast follows research which found that couch potato lifestyles could be causing up to 70,000 deaths in the UK each year.

More than 10 per cent of all deaths is due to sedentary living, which raises the risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer. But as one doctor says, more exercise “doesn’t have to mean major lifestyle changes - just build more activity into your everyday life. Stand on the bus, stand when you talk on the phone. Take regular short walks.”

A new pulpit had been installed in the Baptist church, and the young pastor and his elders were testing the acoustics. “We’ll stand way at the back and see how you sound,” said an elder.

“What shall I say?” faltered the pastor.

“Say the first thing that comes to your mind.”

He blurted: “I’ve not had a pay rise in two years. How does that sound

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon. *Abraham Lincoln*

A generous and free-minded confession disables a reproach and disarms an injury. *Michel de Montaigne*

In misery it is great comfort to have a companion. *John Lyly*

Miscellaneous

Easy Sudoku

9	1	7		8				3
3	6		2		9	1	4	
	5	4						
		3	1					
7		9	5		2	3		4
					4	5		
						8	3	
	7	6	3		5		9	1
1				4		7	6	5

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A little harder

8			4	2				
					7			3
	4		8					1
	2		5					8
		6					9	
9					3		5	
	8				5		6	
	3		7					
				1	6			2

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Last month's
Easy solution

8	7	1	5	4	2	6	9	3
6	2	3	9	1	7	4	8	5
4	9	5	6	3	8	7	2	1
1	8	7	3	2	9	5	4	6
2	5	4	7	6	1	8	3	9
3	6	9	8	5	4	1	7	2
7	1	8	2	9	6	3	5	4
5	4	2	1	7	3	9	6	8
9	3	6	4	8	5	2	1	7

Harder solution

8	9	1	4	6	3	7	5	2
7	5	4	9	2	8	6	3	1
2	6	3	7	1	5	9	8	4
1	2	8	5	4	7	3	9	6
6	7	5	1	3	9	2	4	8
3	4	9	6	8	2	1	7	5
9	1	7	2	5	4	8	6	3
4	8	6	3	9	1	5	2	7
5	3	2	8	7	6	4	1	9

The person who rows the boat generally doesn't have time to rock it



Epitaphs found on headstones

In London:

Here lies Ann Mann
Who lived an old maid
But died an old Mann.

In Hartscombe::

On the 22nd of June
Jonathan Fiddle
Went out of tune.

In Wimbourne:

John Penny
Reader if cash thou art in
want of any Dig four feet
deep and thou wilt find a
penny.

In Maryland:

Here lies an Atheist
All dressed up, and no
place to go.

In Pennsylvania:

Here lies the body
of Jonathan Blake
Stepped on the
gas! Instead of the
brake.