

# Seek



**April 2023**

**The Church and Parish of St Mark Cambridge**

**[www.stmarksnewnham.org](http://www.stmarksnewnham.org)**

# The Vicar's Letter



There has been a lot of talk in the news recently about football following Gary Lineker's tweet about the government's immigration policy, and a number of people commented on their surprise that a footballer is the one embroiled in issues

about government policy. I am not really going to go in to this other than to say the talk seems to be more about Gary Lineker's contract and terms than about immigration itself. Anyway, I expect by the time you read this the headlines will have moved on.

But it reminded me of a comment I read a few years ago by another footballer when commenting on the team's place in the tables part way through the season. Arsène Wenger said this: 'Christmas is important, but Easter is decisive!' And while I have no idea of Wenger's faith or understanding of Christianity, I wonder if he had stumbled on a greater theological truth!

Easter is complex, very complex. While the message of Christmas can perhaps be summed up in a single snapshot – Immanuel, God with us – Easter needs a whole photo album. There are different themes and chapters that together build to something quite epic. That is why there are often rather a lot of church services on offer in churches through Lent, Holy Week and Easter, a chance to pause at each bit of the story and reflect. And while the story itself may feel rather bewildering at times, set as it is in another time, another land, another culture, the themes are ones that are rather familiar.

As we travel from Jesus' joyful and triumphant entry to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, to a meal with close, close friends on Maundy Thursday, to a betrayal and a denial, to the pain, injustice, political wrangling, forgiveness and death we read of on

Good Friday, to the silence of a dead body in a sealed tomb, we capture so much of human experience in this world.

The themes of joy and celebration, of friendship and love, of fear of the future, of betrayal, of pain, of apparent hopelessness and death are, no doubt, common to most of us. But the Easter story does not end with the sealed tomb. Friday has passed. Sunday has come. There is now an empty tomb – the decisive moment. There is new hope, reconciliation and new life. The winter may have felt long and dark and hard but spring always comes and the shoots of a new season begin to emerge. Things don't go back to how they were but there is a new chapter full of hope, a new season of life and growth. A new normal emerges.

The story we are invited to enter at Easter fleshes out the simple message of Christmas, God with us, as it captures so much of life, good and bad, but sees God still at the heart of it all. It takes us to what appears to be an end, a death, hopelessness, the extinguishing of a light but on through to the spring and summer days of new life, of reconciliation and hope for always. A reminder that God is always with us, and that nothing stays the same.

Why not join us as we journey through the remainder of Lent, but especially Holy Week which begins with Palm Sunday on the 2nd April. Services are at 8.00 am and 9.30 am on Sundays, as well as 11.00 am on Tuesdays, and during Lent, simple Evening Prayer at 5.00 pm on Mondays. The church is also open every day for quiet and space.

*Rachel*

*The Revd Rachel Rosborough  
rachelrosborough@hotmail.com*

**Sunday 16th April**  
**The Annual Parochial Church Meeting and Election of**  
**Churchwardens**  
**in the Community Centre**  
**after the 9.30 am Service**

The APCM and Election of Churchwardens, will take place on  
Sunday, 16th April, after coffee.

All are welcome (and encouraged) to attend.

# Coronation Fair



**To be held on the front lawn**

**On Monday May 8th**

**From 10.00 am - 12.00 noon**

**In aid of**

**the DEC Turkish Earthquake Appeal**

**and the Prince's Trust**

**Book Stall, Cake Stall, Plant Stall, Eco Table**

**Children's games and crafts**

**Tea and coffee**

**All welcome**

## The Bible in Colour



The New Testament was originally written in Greek. Have you ever wondered what light the Greek text could shed on your Bible's translation? For six weeks after Easter, I will be leading a group that will explore the differences in the translations we have, offering insights from the Greek and inviting your thoughts and questions about selected texts. Our meetings will be called 'The Bible in Colour', and you're invited!

After completing my PhD in New Testament here in the 80s, I taught introductory and advanced New Testament Greek in theological colleges in Nottingham and Cambridge before retiring a few

years ago. My Greek classes were always fun and full of laughter; I aim to continue that tradition with our group! We will meet weekly at St Mark's for an hour beginning on Wednesday 19th April at 3:30 pm. Attendance at every session is not required, no prior knowledge of Greek nor any preparation is needed, just bring your Bible and curiosity!

If you're interested in trying this out, please email me ([michaelangelot99@gmail.com](mailto:michaelangelot99@gmail.com)) so that I can judge the size of the group and arrange the best meeting place at St Mark's.

**Mike Thompson**

## Gombe State, N. Nigeria : April's Charity

"Christians in Nigeria on brink", was a headline in *The Church Times* in early February. The article was written by a director of *Open Doors*, an organisation which reports to our parliament on the persecution of Christians around the world. The report put the focus on Northern Nigeria. It concludes that "If violence were the only measure then Nigeria would be the most dangerous place in the world to be a Christian".

The same information was picked out by the BBC's *Sunday* programme on the 22nd January. In that programme a Roman Catholic priest in Northern Nigeria reported that he was afraid to go to church because of the possibility of serious violence directed towards his congregation.

From St. Mark's own contact with Gombe Diocese we hear the same story. He writes to Stuart, our treasurer, and in March he wrote:

*Please keep us in your prayers as a Church and Nation. Things have taken a turn for Nigeria; at this point what we need is God's intervention. The killings, poverty, inflation, corruption and religious fanaticism.*

*We are struggling to survive at this point. Please continue to pray for us and Nigeria.*

Recently you will have read in the news of a presidential election in Nigeria. The problem is that Nigeria is such a large and diverse country – there are well over 200 languages spoken there. But do their politicians even have the will to tackle the country's problems?

It is a distressing experience to look at the *Open Doors* website and see the reports of ordinary African people who have faced intense suffering. It is hard to imagine what it is like to have little confidence in those running the country while you fear physical violence towards yourself and your family. Meanwhile the church tries to maintain its witness and its work to build up its communities. Once again we have been given photos of the current building of a School of Nursing and Midwifery to which the diocese of Gombe is committed.

How can Christians maintain the gospel of 'God with us' in such situations? And yet they do and they say that whatever the cost they will continue to do it. Gombe diocese gets very little of its income from outside Nigeria. The thought that there are people in England who are willing to support them is an important encouragement to them.

**Andrew Watts**

### MAC : February's Charity of the Month

A big thank you for your very generous donation to MAC Cambridge Money Advice Centre. A total of £991.02 was raised. It's a positive endorsement of our work in helping people overcome unmanageable debt and much appreciated.

**Shev Roser**

### Cambridge City Foodbank Dates for April

St Mark's Church – Sunday 2nd April

1 Millington Road or 19 Kings Road on Thursday 6th April 9am – 4pm

Gough Way – Every Tuesday morning 11am - 1pm at the Gough Way island with the postbox.

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# The Deposition



We don't know the name of the artist of this small painting in the National Gallery, London. He is referred to as the Master on the Saint Bartholomew Altarpiece after a painting now in Munich and was active in Cologne in the period about 1470-1510. Nor do we know the early history of it. It is uncertain if it was painted for a church or whether it could have been a domestic altarpiece or devotional picture, though the small size (75x47 cm) suggests the latter. It dates from around 1500.

Deposition has various meanings, including legal ones, but in Christianity it refers to the removal of Christ's body from the cross following his death on Good Friday prior to his burial and then resurrection on Easter Day. A grim subject which appears quite often in art. In this painting, Christ is positioned centrally, his body turning grey with death and his arms locked in rigor mortis. He is being lowered from the cross by Nicodemus and an unknown helper, whose face is not visible, into the arms of Joseph of Arimathea, expensively dressed, who has donated his own tomb for Christ's burial. Five more people are depicted around the base of the cross. In the lower left is the Virgin Mary fainting and supported by St John. To the right is Mary

Magdalene in a richly embroidered gown. Behind them are two further women, one in prayer and one comforting the Magdalene and holding the crown of thorns which had been placed on the head of Jesus. Huge beads of blood spring from the open wounds of Christ and oversize tears glisten on the cheeks of the other figures, their eyes red-rimmed from weeping.

The scene appears to take place within a carved and gilded shrine imitating sculpted German tabernacles of the fifteenth century with their Gothic tracery and painted statues. There is no landscape in the background; instead what looks like wooden panelling. This along with the ladder create a sense of harshness. A skull and rocks at the base of the picture signify that this is indeed Golgotha the site of the Crucifixion.

The picture is clearly designed to offer material for contemplation in the manner of contemporary devotional books. The complex composition and curving patterns encourage the attention and thoughts of the viewer. If you get the chance this Easter do go and reflect on this picture or indeed seek out others depicting the same event.

**Chris Hammond**

## Silver Eco Church Award!



Great news folks! St Mark's has been awarded the Silver Eco Church Award. Congratulations to the Eco Team! (I'm included in that too!) Actually, it has also been with the help and support of Rachel and Bethan and many of the congregation and the other teams. We are proud of the efforts everyone has made, from improvements to the church buildings to the beautiful wildflower meadow at the burial ground on Cambridge Road (A 603). (See website... which was also commended).

It all goes to show what can be achieved when people work together. I was heartened to read that, after nearly two decades of planning and negotiations, members of the United Nations have agreed on an international treaty to protect biodiversity in international waters, which cover nearly two-thirds of the ocean. Hopefully this will enhance the ocean's resilience to some of the more damaging exploits of us humans such as dumping plastics and overfishing. I bet that was quite a battle!

*"Oceans have absorbed 90 per cent of the warming that has occurred in recent decades due to increasing greenhouse gases and 30 per cent of the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere, putting their ecosystems under intense pressure."*

But let's get back to land-locked Cambridge. What are we doing in our homes to be more sustainable?

Do let us know your ideas and innovations. No, NOT ones like turning the thermostat down to zero degrees please.

I really enjoyed growing sweet peas from seed last year but I couldn't remember which was which so I sowed them carefully this autumn in labelled pots and put them in the cold frame (remember the faff we had assembling that thing!). I opened it up on sunny days and closed the lid at night to protect the seedlings and other cuttings. Unfortunately I was often forgetful and so the plant pots containing sweet peas have spindly contents and the salvia cuttings are just ....mush! Oh well.

Undeterred I have bought a bag of seed compost (evidently the best growing medium is from mole hills but best not go there!) and have sown all sorts of flower, vegetable and herb seeds in trays this morning and put them on the sunniest windowsill. This happens to be in my husband's study unfortunately. Hopefully no-one spots them all when he has a ZOOM meeting!

I read somewhere that people are getting discouraged by all this doom and gloom about the planet. The suggestion was to 'go outside and feel the grass'! Yes, we do live in a wonderful world. Let's appreciate it and do our very best to sustain it.

Best wishes,

**Rosemary Ley**

# The Cantus Singers of Cambridge

(Conductor: Alan Howard)

The next concert by the Cantus Singers at  
St Mark's, Newnham, will be on

**Saturday 1 April 2023 at 8pm**

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and contrasting works:

*Parry: Songs of Farewell*



and



*Rutter: Requiem*



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Under 18s free

## Easter Flowers



**Lilies** - If you would like us to remember someone with lilies at Easter, please fill in the form in the narthex and give the money to Sue Payne - £3.00 per lily.

**Decorating the Church** - We shall be gathering at 9.30 am onwards on Saturday 8th April to decorate the church in our usual joyful fashion. Apart from the lilies, if you would like to contribute fresh garden greenery and some late spring flowers they would be very much appreciated and would add greatly to the joy and vivacity of the church at Easter.

**Wendy Walford**



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## Retired but not tired!



When I retired, I still craved structure to my week and wanted to stay mentally and physically active. That's when I thought about U3AC, having heard about it from a friend. On inquiring I was truly astonished by the size of U3AC and the range of courses and activities on offer.

Run by its members for its members, U3AC is a charity that offers over 300 courses and leisure activities to over 2,000 retired and semi-retired members in and around Cambridge. Canasta or Chaucer. Meditation or Mah Jong. Philosophy or poetry. Fancy a game of Badminton or perhaps a spot of bird watching? Want to chat in French, German, Dutch, Russian, Spanish, Swedish or Italian? Join a book group, a Bridge game, a walking group, a science or history lecture, try tap dancing or

wine tasting - there really is something for everyone.

Having become a member, I found a community who shared my interests and enthusiasms. After a few years I decided to run my own course – 'Making the most of your iPad' - having realised there was an interest amongst members. Becoming braver still, I then chose to join the Council as a Trustee and am currently the Chair.

New members can join at any time. U3AC's course programme follows an academic cycle, with three terms starting in October. For further information about courses, vacancies and membership visit [www.u3ac.org.uk](http://www.u3ac.org.uk)

**Tim Ewbank, Chair of U3AC**

### A Poem for Good Friday

It was hot that day.  
Passover's eve dripped  
vapoured wind - humid, laden  
to coat Golgotha's flanks

storm clouds swelled silently  
above three writhing forms  
fighting, arching, fighting  
clenched against the agonies of silent suffocation  
gunning to survive  
just one minute more

Should I glory in this, my broken Lord?  
Was this really triumph?  
Should the harrower not harrow me?

Sinews snapped and pierced side,  
Speak the damage which we wrought  
And God allowed it.  
And God needed it.  
And God bore it.  
And it should have been me.  
It should have been me.

**Tom Buchanan**

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# God's Chosen

*In a sermon in early March Rachel invited us to explore our readiness to respond to God's calling. God chooses the most unexpected people to do his work, she said, and drew our attention to a passage she had found on the internet. None of these people were perfect but God had a role for them.*

- Noah was a drunk
- Abraham was too old
- Isaac was a daydreamer
- Jacob was a liar
- Leah was ugly
- Joseph was abused
- Moses was a murderer with a stutter
- Gideon was afraid
- Samson was a flirt
- Rahab was a prostitute
- Jeremiah and Timothy were too young
- David was an adulterer and a murderer
- Elijah was suicidal
- Isaiah preached naked
- Jonah ran away from God
- Job went bankrupt
- John the Baptist ate bugs
- Peter denied Jesus
- The disciples fell asleep while praying
- The Samaritan woman was divorced five times and a sex addict
- Zaccheus was too small
- Paul was too religious
- Timothy had an ulcer
- Lazarus was dead!

## CCHP : January's Charity of the Month

After further donations the total raised for CCHP was £1,143.51. Thanks, as always to the many generous donors.



## Regular Groups

### Monday Bible Study

10:00am, alternate weeks – contact: Sue Wagner, 01223 563435

### Tuesday and Thursday Home Groups

7:30 pm, weekly – contact: Andrew Watts, [aa.watts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:aa.watts@hotmail.co.uk) or Mike Thompson, [michaelangelot99@gmail.com](mailto:michaelangelot99@gmail.com)

### Prayer Meeting

11.00 am every Friday at 10 Stukeley Close – contact: Anne Howie, 01223 356140

### Choir

The choir normally sings on the first three Sundays of the month at our 9:30 am service. Rehearsals are 6:00 pm – 7:15 pm on the first and third Fridays of the month and from 9:00 am on Sundays.

# Prayers for Easter



Lord of creation and God of grace,

we thank you for the yearly miracle of the spring, as the earth awakes from its winter sleep and is arrayed again in the glory of resurrection life.

May a similar miracle of grace take place in our lives this Easter. Send into our lives the Spirit of the living Christ, to raise us to newness of life and to clothe us with the beauty of his holiness, for your honour and glory.

(Frank Colquhoun)

Joy returns with this new morning,  
night's fears vanish at its dawning;  
life slays death, its power scorning,  
gladness now has come again.

Christ the Victor, Christ the Way,  
path that leads to endless day;  
by your dying, death you slay;  
grant that at your feast we may  
at your table find a place.

Bread of life, Vine, fresh and green,  
stream that flows with life serene,  
feed, refresh us, make us clean;  
from eternal death's dread scene  
guard and save us by your grace.

(Adam of St Victor, 12<sup>th</sup> century, translated by John Blakesley)

O Thou!

O beginning! O beauty! O brilliance!

O wonder! O presence! O silence!

O mercy! O wholeness! O healing!

O energy! O darkness! O glory!

O friend! O end! O Thou!

(Stephen Cherry)

**Chosen by Richard Bauckham**



# Services at St Mark's Church, Newnham

## for April

### with Holy Week and Easter Details

2nd April	8.00 am	Communion (BCP)
<i>Palm Sunday</i>	9.30 am	Communion with Junior Church <i>If you are able, please gather with us at the Community Centre to process into church</i>
3rd April	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer for Lent
6th April	7.30 pm	"Remembering the Last Supper" Communion
<i>Maundy Thursday</i>		
7th April	9.30 am	Walk from St Mark's to the
<i>Good Friday</i>	10.00 am	Joint Service on Grantchester Meadows <i>with Grantchester and Trumpington</i>
	2.00 pm	Last Hour at the Cross , a service of readings, reflections and music
9th April	7.00 am	Easter Sunrise Service on Grantchester Meadows
<i>Easter Sunday</i>	8.00 am	Communion (BCP)
	9.30 am	Communion
16th April	8.00 am	Communion (BCP)
	9.30 am	Communion and Junior Church (followed by our Annual Meeting)
23rd April	8.00 am	Communion (BCP)
	9.30 am	Communion and Junior Church
30th April	8.00 am	Communion (BCP)
	9.30 am	Joint Service and Junior Church welcoming the Dean of Ely Cathedral as our preacher

There is a Communion service every Tuesday at 11.00 am.

NO MESSY CHURCH THIS MONTH BUT LOOK OUT FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS OF HOLY WEEK ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN.

### The May Issue of SEEK

All contributions are welcome. Please send them by Wednesday 15th April to Jane Plows at [janemp@virginmedia.com](mailto:janemp@virginmedia.com) (350120) or contact any member of the committee.