

Seek



April 2025

The Church and Parish of St Mark Cambridge
www.stmarksnewnham.org

The Vicar's Letter



Dear Friends,

We are, as I write, in the midst of the annual spiritual pilgrimage which we call Lent.

The season began with the call, in the words of the Ash Wednesday liturgy, to 'the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word.'

It is a funny old invitation to receive. It would certainly stand out on your mantelpiece, alongside other invitations to birthday parties, weddings and anniversaries.

An invitation not to feast, but to fast. To deny yourself. To take up your cross and follow Christ, as he leads us first out into the wilderness, and then up Calvary Hill.

We could all be better at giving, sharing what we have. We could all be better at living lives of prayer and setting aside time for it. But in truth, we do not question the value of both those practices. But fasting? Fasting finds no easy seat at our society's table. Ours is a world which encourages us to see ourselves, above all other things, as consumers. As long as your pockets are deep enough, there is no limit to what you can get and when you can get it. And we are taught that this is a good thing, because happiness is to be acquired by the things we own, we possess; and the lifestyles we maintain.

So why on earth would you want to abstain, to renounce? What good does it do humanity or God to stop eating custard creams or crisps for 40 days?

The poet, artist and mystic William Blake provides the Christian response to this.

His poem 'Eternity' runs to just four lines:

'He who binds to himself a joy
Does the wingéd life destroy
He who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in eternity's sunrise'

It is a warning against letting an attachment to earthly things come between our true happiness, which is nothing less than 'winged life'. For we are spiritual beings made for God, for communion with the eternal divine, and we will never be truly satisfied by sugar and trinkets.

Hence, he 'who kisses the joy as it flies' - who frees themselves from this desire to possess and occupy and claim one's own - will find a deeper joy which is,

thanks to the work of Easter, without end; a joy which 'Lives in eternity's sunrise.' *

As Blake wrote elsewhere, 'More, more is the cry of a mistaken soul'.

This is not to say that desire is a bad thing. If anything, Lent is about wanting more. It is about not settling for anything less than our true birthright, the 'glorious liberty' which St Paul attributes to those who live as 'children of God' [Romans 8.21].

Indeed, it is this desire which has been the focus for much of our thinking throughout Lent, as we continue to reflect on C.S Lewis' insightful book *The Four Loves*. In that work, Lewis weighs up the particular merits, from a spiritual perspective, of the different expressions and manifestations of love which we participate in. Desire is the first language we speak. As Lewis wrote in his introduction:

'Our whole being by its very nature is one vast need; incomplete, preparatory, empty yet cluttered, crying out for Him to untie things that are now knotted together and tie up things that are still dangling loose.'

It is in recognition that we both need and want, require and desire God that we accept his invitation to pursue a holy Lent; that we accept our incompleteness, our inner chaos. That we cry out for him to at once free us and embrace us. That, by 'self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word,' and above all by attending to the love Christ has poured out into our hearts, we might live as people who, yes, must pass through the valley of the shadow of death, but who are at the same time, and already, dwelling 'in eternity's sunrise'.

It has been my experience that the worship of Holy Week has a particular power to bring this into focus. I warmly invite you to join in as you are able.

In friendship and in faith,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jim Robinson'.

Jim

The Rev'd Jim Robinson

Vicar of St Andrew and St Mary, Grantchester, and
St Mark's, Newnham

* My thanks to the writer Mark Vernon for this reference.

**AN INVITATION TO
CHILDREN TO HELP
MAKE OUR
EASTER GARDEN
SATURDAY 19TH APRIL
10.30am
Refreshments served.
Accompanied children only
please.**



Charities of the Month

Charity of the Month Gombe

This month we focus on the Diocese of Gombe as our Charity of the Month. Gombe has become familiar to many of us over the years through the regular reports, letters and photographs we have received and we have been able to see the difference our contributions have made to our fellow Christians there. Please give generously on the 13th April.

Gombe diocese is in the northeast of Nigeria and as one of the poorest states in the country it faces challenging social issues. The church there prays for us, as we pray for them.

Here are the totals for our Charity of the Month donations for the last year and the beginning of this year.

2024

CCHP	£1,028.35
Caring Together	£560.65
Hearing Dogs	£515.39
Christian Aid	£533.00
MacMillan	£962.73
Umoja UK	£609.02
JMECA	£350.00
Cambs Sustainable Food	£190.00
SSAFA	£2,090.00
Embrace the Middle East	£630.00

2025

ITAC/Crossways	£371.00
Arthur Rank Hospice	£812.00

Many thanks to Sandi Buss, our Interim Treasurer, for providing the information.

Newnham Scout Group Needs You



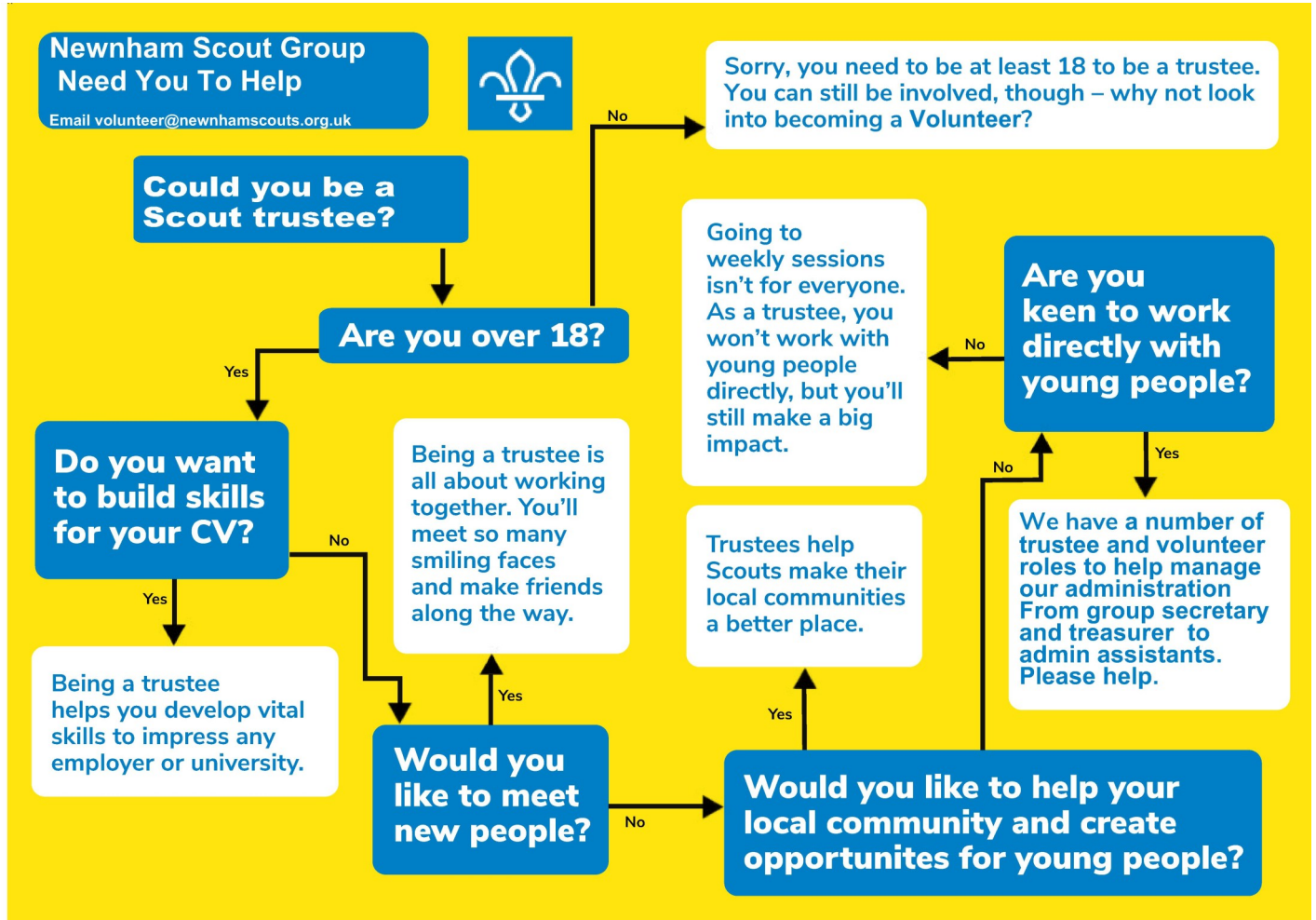
Got some time — and want to make it count? We'd love you to volunteer at Newnham Scout Group. We rely on people like you, to help give young people opportunities to dream big, give it a go, and build skills for life.

Scouting happens when a lot of us give a little. We are not asking you to sign up for life – just to help out, when and where you can, in a way that works for you. Whether you've got just an hour or a few each month, there are plenty of ways you can make a real difference to young people in your community.

You don't need to know anyone in Scouts (or be Bear Grylls!) to get involved. We're looking for people with life experience, or practical skills, or just a bit of spare time, to help make sure Scouts keeps running for the next generation.

Volunteering is also a great way to stay connected (maybe you and a friend could volunteer together,) meet new people, and use your experience to support something meaningful in your local community. We'll support you every step of the way — with clear guidance, a warm welcome, and any training you need (if you need it at all).

Got questions or think you can help? We'd love to hear from you. Just email volunteer@newnhamscouts.org.uk Or Telephone 07860788055 on Thursday evenings from 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm.



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 19th 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

JUNIOR CHOIR

STARTING AT ST MARK'S, NEWNHAM

This is a fantastic opportunity for interested young people learn to read music, to sing and perform, and to make friends and have fun.

Open to boys and girls between 7 and 13.

No charge or experience required. We only ask for your commitment.
But feel free to come and give it a go.

Rehearsals will be: Fridays in school term times, 5-5.45pm (snacks from 4.45), in the Community Centre, behind the Church. First rehearsal is on Friday 25th April.

To find out more or register an interest, please contact Marcus, our Director of Music: singing@stmarksnewnham.org

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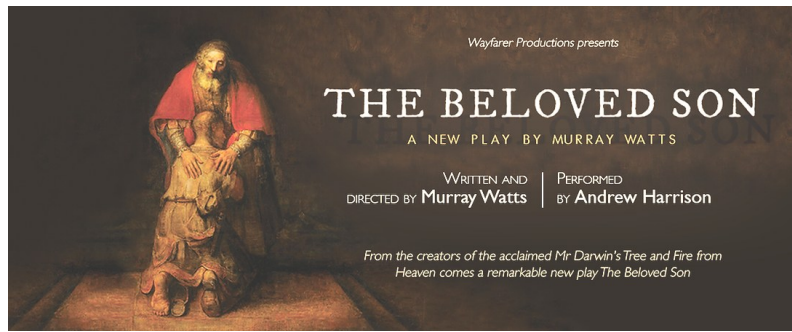
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The Beloved Son at St Mark's



The team of Murray Watts and Andrew Harrison has already delivered some impressive drama events at St Mark's, with *Darwin's Tree* and *Fire from Heaven* in recent years, and their talents as writer/director and actor came together this month in another impressive solo actor performance based on the life of the noted 20th Century Dutch Catholic priest, academic and writer Henri Nouwen. Nouwen achieved an international reputation with his bestselling books, of which two of the best known are *The Return of the Prodigal Son* and *The Beloved Son*.

Murray Watts borrowed the latter as a title for a dramatisation of Nouwen's life and beliefs. Nouwen was famously frank in his writing about his personal problems, with a strongly disapproving father, awkward male friendships, his isolation as a celibate priest and periods of depression, to all of which he brought insight from his lifelong studies in psychology, as well as theology. Murray showed great understanding of all these complex issues in this dramatised life story, brilliantly acted by Andrew Harrison playing Nouwen himself at various stages of his life. His performance was a tour de force of 75 minutes of continuous talking, in which he also played all the other people in a conversation.

There were many serious issues Nouwen thought deeply about, such as God's love for his creation and the part played in this by Jesus, the 'beloved son' of his book, and human love, which he saw as

best represented in Rembrandt's painting of the return of the prodigal son. Nouwen's great compassion and long standing work with disabled people took its toll and he died far too young from a heart attack in his mid-sixties (in 1996).

But I shall also remember the humour, brilliantly enacted by Harrison (in Russian) when Nouwen went to St Petersburg just to study the Rembrandt painting and got involved with two irate gallery keepers when he moved the viewing chair a few feet. Another very funny scene was when he became the priest at a home for mentally damaged people called the L'Arche, a 'community of the heart' in Canada, when his first Communion was interrupted by inappropriate shouted comments from some of the patients, one of whom wanted him to introduce a joke at the most solemn moments. The comedy was entirely in the way Nouwen was thrown off balance and nonplussed by this, but he learned from it that love for the patients was more important than the interruptions they provoked.

There were many other thought-provoking moments in the play, and it just remains for me to thank Murray and Andrew for a most memorable evening, happily with a full and very appreciative audience. I recommend that, if you ever have another chance to see it, you should take it, though you will now have to travel to a more distant venue on their national and international tour this spring!

Derek Cummings



ST MARK'S, NEWNHAM
SUNDAYS 3-4PM

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+ DISCUSSION
+ SHORT EVENING PRAYER
+ REFRESHMENTS

LOVE *A* LENT

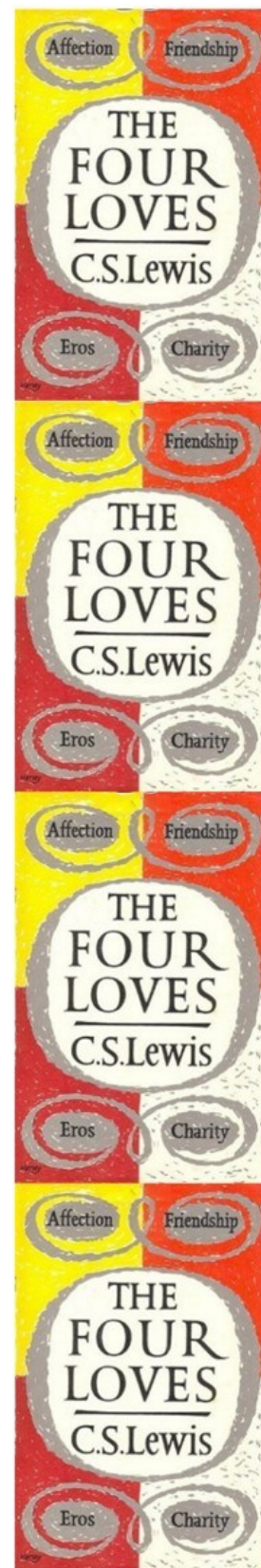
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Christ on an Ass



culpture commemorates Palm Sunday when Jesus enters Jerusalem riding a donkey to great celebrations and joy. The event is described in all four gospels. The object is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (usually referred to as the V&A) in London where it is on display in the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries. It was made in Germany around 1480 and is relatively small: 147 cm high and 133 cm long, so not quite life-size.

The bearded figure of Christ is depicted with shoulder length wavy hair seated astride an unsaddled ass. His right hand is raised in blessing while his left would originally have held reins which are now missing. The object was designed to be wheeled through the streets in Palm Sunday processions so the rectangular base has four slots for wheels and a hole for towing at the front.

It was made in three sections: the upper part of Christ's body (limewood); the lower part of his body and the ass (also limewood); and the base (pine). Originally it would have been painted and traces of this can still be identified such as gilding on the

border of Christ's robe. There is a charming naivety in the way the ass is depicted; it is not quite realistic but clearly identifiable.

The origin of sculpted images being used in Palm Sunday processions can be traced back to the tenth century. Such processions continued during the Middle Ages in France, England, Germany and parts of Italy. Today we often celebrate Palm Sunday by processing from Lammas Land to the church at the start of the main service singing a hymn and holding palms. (This year we will be gathering by the War Memorial.) Some churches recruit a live donkey for the occasion.

I find the figure of Christ particularly moving. His face conveys a sense of peace, humility and thoughtfulness. Yet the noise of the cheering crowd must have been tremendous. What were his thoughts on this momentous day? Palm Sunday marks the start of Holy Week and five days later, on Good Friday, Jesus was put to death before rising on Easter Day.

Chris Hammond

The Electoral Roll

The electoral roll lists all members of our church who have voting rights at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). The number of names on the roll also determines how large a church we are considered to be, which in turn affects various points of church governance. Therefore it is important to have an accurate and up to date roll. For this reason, every six years all parishes in the Church of England are required to draw up a completely new electoral roll. 2025 is one such year.

If you wish to be included on the new roll (irrespective of whether or not you were on the previous one) you must complete an application

form and return it no later than Friday 25th April. The earlier the better! There are blank forms in the narthex, or you can find a digital copy [here](#). Forms can be given to Felicity in person, left in the administrator's in-tray in the vestry, or emailed to administrator@stmarksnewnham.org.

Message from the vicar

As well as being the basis for church governance the Electoral Roll is a vital pastoral resource. It is the primary means by which I am able to keep in touch with you, and also provides the list of names we use to pray for members of our congregation at morning and evening prayer throughout the week.

St Mark's Church Mission Statement

To be the people of God in this place and to work to make God more real for our community.

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So why not take the plunge and join U3AC Cambridge? It's a fantastic way to make the most of your retirement years and live life to the fullest.

The new Programme for 2025/26 will be available 1 July 2025. For further information about courses, vacancies and membership visit www.u3ac.org.uk

A vertical poster for U3AC. At the top is the U3AC logo (U and 3 in blue, A and C in red). Below the logo is the tagline 'Inspiring, Educational, Sociable.' in blue. The main text is 'Retired or semi-retired?' in bold black, followed by 'Now it's your time to explore new ideas, skills and interests, meet new people and enjoy yourself!' in black. Below this is a blue curved banner with the text 'Choose from over 300 educational, social and leisure day-time activities in and around Cambridge.' in white. At the bottom is a red banner with 'Join us today' and 'www.u3ac.org.uk' in white. At the very bottom, in small white text, is '27-28 Bridge Street, Cambridge, CB2 1UJ', '01223 321587', and 'Registered Charity No: 1180769'.

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St Mark's Has Got Talent

The Arts and Events team is planning an for the afternoon of
Sunday 8th June
at which members of the St Mark's family are invited to be part of the
entertainment.

So, if you would like to be involved – by singing, dancing, reciting,
performing a sketch, conjuring etc. – do let us know.

All ages welcome.

Speak to one of the team or email Nick Warburton
at njw364@gmail.com to register interest.

Lent Lunches 2025

These lunches, hosted by Newnham residents and parishioners, have been a tradition at St Mark's for many, many years and are an enjoyable way for people to enjoy a simple lunch during Lent in return for a donation to a charity chosen by the hosts. Please contact the hosts at least three days before to let them know that you wish to attend. Please bring your donation as cash. The hosts, contact details, address and charity are listed below.

Lent Lunches : 12.30 pm - 2.00 pm

Wednesday 2nd April – Sarah and John Perry

Charity: Woodgreen Pets Charity

07778 809803 sarahperrywarden@gmail.com

11 Trumpington Road CB2 8AJ (look for the large white rock)

Wednesday 9th April – Sue and Chris Wagner

Charity: UMOJA UK

07738 698884 susan.wagner1@ntlworld.com

58 Gough Way

Wednesday 16th April – Nigel Porter

Charity: Help the Aged

01223 366976 07920 242717 nigel.porter@rocketmail.com

11 Eltisley Avenue



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Easter Prayers

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us;
therefore let us keep the feast,
Not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil,
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia.
Christ being raised from the dead will never die again;
death no longer has dominion over him.

Good and gracious God, our most glorious Creator, As we greet the signs in nature around us: of Spring once again regaling us in bloom, in the songs of returning birds and fields soon to be planted, we give you praise for an even greater sign of new life: the resurrection of your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, that we especially celebrate at this time.

The sadness and despair of His death have given way to the bright promise of immortality. For the Resurrection is our guarantee that justice will triumph over treason, light will overcome darkness, and love will conquer death.

As we celebrate, we also dare to ask for your grace so that we may live the promise given to us by imitating the life of Jesus and reaching out to the poor, the marginalised, and the least among us. As we strive to be neighbours to all those we meet, We praise you in this Easter season.

Change our lives, change our hearts to be messengers of Easter joy and hope. We make our prayer through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord forever. Amen.

Fr. Larry Snyder, president of Catholic Charities USA

The Easter Prayer of Saint Hippolytus of Rome

Christ is Risen: The world below lies desolate
Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen
Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing
Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty
Christ is Risen indeed from the dead,
the first of the sleepers,
Glory and power are his forever and ever.

Chosen by Jane Plows



Parish Treasurer Needed

Do you have experience of working with finances?

Might you be able to fulfil this important role for the parish?

We'd love to hear from you.

For an informal chat or for more information please contact the vicar:

revjerobinson@gmail.com 01223 455 463.

To Make You Smile

Many thanks to Tina Wilson for the following.

Children's Insights into the Bible and History:

The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.

The fifth Commandment is: Humour thy father and mother.

Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark.

Salome was a woman who danced naked in front of Harrods.

A republican is a sinner mentioned in the Bible.

Henry VIII thought so much of Wolsey that he made him a cardigan.

A deacon is a mass of flammable material.

The masculine of vixen is vicar.



Regular Groups

Monday Bible Study

10:30am, alternate weeks – contact: Sue Wagner, 01223 563435

Tuesday and Thursday Home Groups

7:30 pm, weekly – contact: Andrew Watts, aa.watts@hotmail.co.uk or
Mike Thompson, 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.

From the Registers

Funeral

11th March

Margaret Wiseman

Services at St Mark's Church, Newnham in April

Communion (BCP) at 8.00 am every Sunday

Sunday Services

6th April at 9.30 am	Communion (Joint Service with Grantchester)
13th April at 9.30 am	Palm Sunday procession and Communion
at 6.00 pm	Choral Evensong
20th April at 9.30 am	Easter Day Communion <u>at Grantchester</u>
27th April at 9.30 am	Communion with Junior Church

Regular Weekday Services

Monday - Friday at 9.00 am Morning Prayer

Tuesdays

Weekly Communion (BCP) at 11.00 am followed by refreshments

Full Holy Week and Easter Services details can be found opposite.



The May Issue of SEEK

All contributions are welcome. Please send them by Wednesday 16th April to Jane Plows at janemp@virginmedia.com (350120) or contact any member of the committee.

Holy Week and Easter

Palm Sunday

13th April at **9.30 am**

Blessing of the Palms and procession into Church for the performance of the Passion story and Holy Communion
We gather by the war memorial for the procession

at **6.00 pm**

Choral Evensong

Monday - Friday of Holy Week

at **9.00 am**

Morning Prayer at Newnham

at **5.00 pm**

Evening Prayer at Grantchester

Monday 14th at **7.00 pm**

Compline

Tuesday 15th at **7.00 pm**

Compline

Wednesday 16th at **7.00 pm**

Tenebrae

Maundy Thursday

17th April at **7.00 pm**

Eucharist of the Last Supper

Good Friday

18th April at **10.30 am**

Outside Service on Grantchester Meadows (beside the cricket pitch) followed by hot cross buns in the Village Hall (*A walking party to leave St Mark's at 10.00 am*)

at **2.00 pm**

Last Hour at the Cross: a service of readings, reflections and music

Saturday 19th

19th April at **10.30 am**

Easter Garden Making (*For children and young people. Bring your gardening gloves and help create our Easter Garden*)

Easter Day

20th April at **7.00 am**

Sunrise Service and Easter Fire on Grantchester Meadows (beside the cricket pitch)

at **9.30 am**

at Grantchester Church Eucharist for Easter Day

