

Church Magazine

APRIL 2024

FREE



Steyning and Ashurst

Steyning Parish Church

1 Vicarage Lane,
Steyning BN44 3YL

Vicar: The Revd Mark Heather LLB BA

879877

vicarofsteyning@gmail.com or rectorofashurst@gmail.com

Church Services

St Andrew's & St Cuthman's

Every Sunday

8:00am 1662 Holy Communion Service

9:30am Sung Eucharist Music Group Eucharist on 21 April

6:00pm Evening Service Reflections, entitled "Hope", on 1st Sunday
see page 5

Choral Evensong on 21 April

St James's

10:30am Second Sunday Family Service for Eastertide

Fourth Sunday Holy Communion

Wednesdays at St Andrew's & St Cuthman's

11:30am Midweek Eucharist

At Annual Church Meetings we elect church wardens and to fill PCC vacancies in each parish, to hear about our plans for the future. This year's meetings will take place as follows:

- *Steyning: Sunday 21 April*
- *Ashurst: Sunday, 12 May*

The meetings will take place in church immediately after the morning service.

Parish Office Address:

Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning, BN44 3YB Tel: 813276

office@steyningparishchurch.org

www.steyningparishchurch.org

Parish Administrator: Pat McMullan.

Parish Office open: Tuesday - Friday 10am - midday



Pastoral Letter

Dear Friends,

We're more used to celebrating Easter in April but this year is one of the relatively few when it occurs in March. The exact date is subject to the cycles of the moon, and is calculated to fall on the Sunday following the first full moon that falls after the March equinox (21 March). Originally the church wanted to keep the date close to Passover, when Jesus and his disciples shared the last supper, but Hebrew and Roman calendars went their separate ways. This means that Easter nowadays, sometimes happens close to Passover, and sometimes doesn't. (This year Passover won't take place until 22 April).

Passover, as you may recall from Sunday School (or learn from Wikipedia!) commemorates the 'Exodus' of the Hebrew people from captivity in Egypt, the evening their families evaded the avenging Angel of death and began the fabled journey that took them safely through the Red Sea. The Hebrew word *Pesah*, which we translate as Passover, may refer both to the 'passing-over' of the avenging angel that killed the Egyptian children, and to the lamb that whose blood was used to mark the entrance door of every Jewish household and keep them safe (Exodus 12:7-8). St Paul drew these ideas together when he calls Jesus our Passover lamb, and refers to Jesus as our Paschal Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) sacrificed to save the world from sin and death.

Notwithstanding the discrepancy between calendars this year, Easter is the Christian Passover, as the we sometimes sing in the ancient hymn:

Christ, the Lamb whose blood was shed,

Paschal Victim, Paschal Bread!

With sincerity and love, eat we manna from above.

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us – therefore let us keep the Feast!

Fr Mark

FROM THE EDITOR:

As we acknowledge the huge impact on everyone in Ukraine now that this war is in its third spring, our thoughts and prayers continue to be with them all. We hold before God those families who have found refuge within our community.

We extend our love and deep concern for The Holy Land and all the Bible lands.

The front cover picture is called "On the Road to Emmaus" by Mike Moyers, and depicts the resurrected Christ walking with his disciples (see page 6). There are many pages of important church news as well as thoughts, pictures, prayers and invitations to concerts and activities.

Lovely to read about the Grammar School too.

Thank you to all who send in their articles and thoughts providing this rich variety for us to read. You are welcome to join these contributors.

Do please send to:

steyningchurchmag@gmail.com

Sunday Notices

The weekly Sunday notices sent from the Parish Office gives all the information about services, news and events. There is also the list of those needing our prayers. If you would like to receive the Sunday notices contact: office@steyningparishchurch.org or ring 01903 813276

To add any new prayer requests contact:

prayers@steyningparishchurch.org

or ring 01903 813276

Contents

Church Services	2
Pastoral Letter	3
Prayer Diary for April	5
Parish Registers	6
Reflections Service.	6
Easter + 40	6
Abbey Road	8
Prayers for the Holy Land	9
Prayers for Ukraine & World Peace	10
The church five year plan	11
Just a thought	12
Caroline Pinder	13
Prayer Points for April	15
Community Coffee	15
Saint of the Month	16
Church celebrates	17
Diary dates	17
News from the tower	18
Chanctonbury Chorus	19
The Memorial Book	20
Church flowers	20
The Arts Society	20
Steyning History Society	20
Parish Office	20
The Beatitudes - some thoughts	21
Young Chinese Students	23
At Last	24
Quiet thoughts	25
Concert Shoreham Choir	27
Recipe for April	28
Sussex Wildlife Trust	29
Church Directories	30, 31

Prayer Diary for April

Easter Season

Sunday 7 April The Second Sunday of Easter

**Monday 8 April The Annunciation of our Lord to the
Blessed Virgin Mary**

We beseech you, O Lord, pour your grace into our hearts, that as we have known the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his cross and passion we may be brought to the glory of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever.

Sunday 14 April The Third Sunday of Easter

Sunday 21 April The Fourth Sunday of Easter

Tuesday 23 April George, Martyr, Patron of England

God of hosts, who so kindled the flame of love in the heart of your servant George that he bore witness to the risen Lord by his life and by his death; give us the same faith and power of love that we who rejoice in his triumphs may come to share with him the fullness of the resurrection; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever.

Thursday 25 April Mark the Evangelist

Almighty God, who enlightened your holy Church through the inspired witness of your evangelist Saint Mark: grant that we, being firmly grounded in the truth of the gospel, may be faithful to its teaching both in word and deed; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever.

Sunday 28 April The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Saint George

Very little is known about George's life, but it is thought he was a Christian in the Roman army, though from Greek and Christian descent. The fifth century Greek texts tell that he became a soldier after his father died. He was a good soldier but because of his faith he was arrested and tortured, then paraded and beheaded on 23 April 303.



Parish Registers

FUNERALS

29 February 2024

Caroline Anne Pinder (died 4 Feb 2024)

7 March 2024

Pauline Smalley (died 22 Feb 2024)

11 March 2024

Richard Hadley Perry (died 7 Feb 2024)

MEMORIAL SERVICE

24 Feb 2024

Brenda Carney (died 14 Jan 2024)

Easter + 40

This magazine is due to be in church on Palm Sunday as Easter Day is 31 March this year, so I am able to wish you a blessed and happy Easter.

The whole of April is called Easter Season and it gives us the majority of the 40 days until our Lord's Ascension in May. On Easter Day we celebrate Christ conquering death, part of the physical proof being Mary finding him in the tomb garden, mistaking him for a gardener.

We read in Luke's gospel ch 24 v 13 - 35 the story of Cleopas and his companion walking to Emmaus, and Jesus came along as an unknown person walking and talking with them. I think most of the readers of this magazine will be familiar with this story, perhaps you were told it as a child. I was, at Crusaders and Church, but for this short reflection about the story I hope you might linger a while and journey with me as I try to tease out some of the many layers of meaning it can have for us, on a personal level and living out our faith on our road to Emmaus and Pentecost.

Has anyone been to Emmaus? David, my husband, was fortunate enough to have made a journey to The Holy Land visiting the places mentioned in the Bible. But not Emmaus. Historians tell us that there is no record of any village called Emmaus, and so we simply do not know where Emmaus might have been. The Bible tells us it was just a few hours walk from Jerusalem, but then other scholars will tell us it is nowhere. Perhaps Emmaus is nowhere precisely because Emmaus is everywhere, and each one of us has at some time, or many times, travelled along our own road to Emmaus.

St Augustine wrote:

“Scripture teaches nothing but charity and we must not leave any interpretation of scripture until we have found a compassionate interpretation of it.”

I have that quote on a piece of paper in my Bible, and it helps me many times, certainly to “love your enemies” and “don’t judge others”.

Compassion is concern for everybody and for the earth and all creation, and the kind of compassion Jesus shows us can be seen in the way he treats the two on that road. God is alive and walks with us on the road we are travelling. Compassion will make a difference to the way we relate to others, our concerns and priorities.

While Cleopas (traditionally thought to be Jesus’ uncle) and his friend were walking they were talking about their grief and about the events that had happened to Jesus in Jerusalem. I imagine them with heads cast down just looking at the sand and pebbles on the road and not watching anything around them. Completely absorbed within their shared grief - just as I would be with a dear friend. Jesus joins them on the road and travels with them, walking no faster or slower, just meeting them where they are at, not where he thinks they should be or ought to be, and journeys with them, even though they are walking the wrong way - away from Jerusalem. They did not recognise Jesus because of the turmoil they were going through themselves, but Jesus does not judge them, just asks them to recount their story of loss and sorrow and grief. It is in the “normal” of our lives that he meets us, he comes to us, not waiting for us to come to him, and he listens to our accounts. When we meet new people in a variety of settings it is an opportunity to learn, have a dialogue and listen to where they are in their story. Love and compassion can happen, and God is at work in our lives.

All our experiences matter; when we have dialogue, we are drawn closely into God’s heavenly life and work, because we are also drawn into God at work in that other person.

Also on that walk Jesus encourages them to talk about their pain and hurt thus allowing them to be put in touch with their deepest parts and heal some of their memories. Jesus can help us put a blessing on our past. An obvious example of this could be encouraging others to choose the readings for a funeral service.

The day is almost over for Cleopas and his friend, now becoming these three friends

deciding to share lodgings, and that open heartfelt invitation to eat together. Hospitality and welcome were, and are, so important, quite simply because Christ welcomed others without reservation throughout his life, even to the end, when he was crucified between two thieves. He moved into their world, had dialogue with them, and journeyed with them.

It was in the breaking of bread that Cleopas recognised Jesus - joy, mystery, unbelief - then suddenly, in the blink of his eye, Jesus was gone from their sight. What a celebration this breaking of bread was. What an affirmation for these two and then the disciples in Jerusalem, when they heard the story, and it was crystal clear to them that they were now to become Christ for others. Their hopelessness and heartache was turned to hope and courage.

This transforming, dynamic encounter with the risen Christ empowered and enlivened the disciples. Today he makes himself known through the love of his community, the church here on earth, the community of faith. I can see the church family here in Steyning - all who have and feel a connection with the church - enlivened and empowered by the power of the Holy Spirit to truly live and work for the glory of Christ, sharing his welcome, joy, compassion and love and who will walk our journey with us.

Chris Fitton

Abbey Road Conservation Area Open Day. Sat 20 April. 11am to 3pm.

Tucked away behind the Church and next to Gatewick House grounds is the Abbey Road Conservation Area.

We are having an Open Day here on 20 April to showcase the site and its wonderful mix of habitats, including stream, pond, woodland, orchard, scrub and meadow. Our volunteers and other experts will be on hand to explain what we have here, and to answer any questions you may have.

We will have a display of maps and pictures showing the history of the site. Another display will show what plants and animals we've recorded in the three years we've been working here. There will also be nature-related activities for children.

We want to hear what you think about what we are doing here, and to collect ideas about how we can improve it even more.

Getting there:-

It's just a 2 minute walk from the Church. Take the steps down towards the cottage, follow the path behind the vicarage. Take the left path, then left at Church Mead and you are there.

Roger Brown 07795 084546

Prayers for Times of Crisis *in Jerusalem and all the Holy Land*

God of light and salvation, our refuge and our strength,
We pray for the people of Israel and Palestine amid the escalating violence.

We pray for those killed and injured in southern Israel. May your rod and staff comfort them. We pray for those who are grieving, may they know your ever present help.

We pray for the protection of those who have been taken hostage by Hamas. As they walk through this dark valley may they fear no evil.

We pray for all the civilians of Gaza. May they know that their help comes from the maker of heaven and earth.

And we pray for those in leadership in Gaza and Israel. May you guide them along the right paths. We ask all this in union with Christ and trusting in the power of your Holy Spirit.



God of all justice and peace we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land.

Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for people of all faiths - Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land.

While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the people.

Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father.

We pray for those with power over war or peace, for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Amen

*Lord God, our protector,
be with all aid agencies,
and especially those
delivering essential
food to Gaza.*

Pray for Ukraine and World Peace



Lord we ask for peace for those who need peace, reconciliation for those who need reconciliation and comfort for all who don't know what tomorrow will bring. Lord may your Kingdom come, and your will be done.

We pray that people still in Ukraine will be protected from the violence; that there will be provision of essential food, power and clean water; for vulnerable people who cannot flee.

That refugees will find safe places to stay. For healing for people who are wounded or have experienced trauma; and comfort for those who are grieving. We pray that international leaders will know wisdom and understanding, strength, courage and compassion.

Ukrainian citizens ask that we pray:

- That God would intervene in the situation and stop the violence
- For God's wisdom for the presidents and authorities of both countries
- That God will care for those who are in danger, especially for Ukrainian people who have lost their loved ones, for His comfort and protection over them and the church

Please also pray for the people of Russia:

- That God will comfort Russian families who have lost their beloved ones

Heavenly Father,
Two years on, we continue to pray for peace in Ukraine and for an end to all conflicts around the world. We remember all those who have suffered and experienced loss through conflict and we pray for peace.
Amen

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine;
for peace and the laying down of weapons.
For all those who fear for tomorrow,
May your Spirit comfort and draw near to them.

Five Year Vision

The PCC held an 'Awayday' in October 2021 to develop ideas

- to involve everyone in the love and joy of the Christian faith,
- to attract, encourage and support an all-age congregation with children, young people and families, whilst being true to our tradition,
- to communicate well with the congregation and the wider community,
- to maintain the character of the magnificent Norman building,
- to improve accessibility and WC facilities to allow the church to play a part in wider community activities

Five teams (Mission and Discipleship, Worship Advisory, Projects and Fundraising, Communications, Finance) were formed so that people could use their talents and interests to develop and implement detailed proposals and good progress was made in 2022.

The plan for church improvements has been developed and costed but the quinquennial inspection by our Architect in 2023 revealed the need for major work probably costing over £200,000 to rectify water damage to the roof trusses of the tower and this will need to be done first. Consultants, part funded by the Friends, are advising on how best to raise the funds.

During 2023, we have worked with representatives of St Mary's, Littlehampton, facilitated by Canon Jack Dunn as part of the Diocesan Programme 'Growing the Household of Faith'. Bible studies kept Jesus at the centre of our deliberations and we felt the power of the Holy Spirit keeping us going to develop initiatives under the six themes of the work.

1. Collaborative ministry, culture and managing conflict

Demonstrating collaboration by a programme of interviews at the 9:30 am services. Surveying the gifts and talents of the congregation.

2. Welcome, inclusion and reordering worship

Putting ourselves in the shoes of a visitor. More welcoming signage, welcome packs and contact cards. Encouraging participation in services by adults and children.

3. Teaching, sharing and learning

Jesus at the centre of what we do. Pilgrim Course established and expanded. Develop house groups and promote Bible study. Extend 'Open the Book' into primary school classrooms. Use magazine, website and social media for mission and evangelism.

4. Growing younger

Work with parents, gatekeepers and teachers. Raise funds and employ Families and Children's worker for three years. Integrate existing children's ministry teams.

5. Intentional community outreach

Find out what God is doing and join in. Wednesday Coffee, develop pastoral care team, dementia training, men's group, links with Family Support Work

6. Recruiting, training and retaining volunteers

Harvesting gifts from God. Following the gifts and talents survey identify and recruit a new churchwarden, a treasurer and PCC members who will work with others in carrying out their various duties.

2024 sees us half way through the five years of the Plan. It will be a year of fundraising and preparation for work with families and children and for the start of building work in 2025.

John Edwards

Just a thought ...

ANTICIPATION.

As I write this in early March we await with anticipation the announcement of a Families and Children's Worker for our Parish.

The ideal Church Family needs every age within it from the tinies to the very elderly - after all it is the structure of the society in which we live and it creates a sense of normality. Any Church which focuses entirely on 'the Young', 'the Families' or 'the Elderly' is somehow out of kilter. And so we see the need in our Church to welcome young families in order to redress the balance - hence our excitement!

However, as we are undoubtedly an 'older generation' congregation there may be times when we don't feel at ease if some elements of change are introduced. Perhaps we say 'we need more young people' thinking that 'they' will simply slot in to what we are used to, or how we like 'our worship' to be.

Stop! Do some re-thinking, and consider where and how, 'they', the young, might also feel comfortable. As within families, to be happy, we need to feel integrated as a unit, each considering the needs of the other.

Lord, we pray for sensitivity in those who will be involved in this new phase in the life of our parish, that care is taken to retain all that is precious in our worship. We thank you for each other and for all your blessings.

Remember - it was the Tortoise who won the race !!!

Maureen Jones

4 June 1960 -
4 Feb 2024

Caroline Anne Pinder



When sitting to write this tribute I found it hard to draw on specific memories. I know there are many that I would love to share but for whatever reason I couldn't conjure them, and that made me sad.

But when thinking of mum one word always comes to mind, strong. My mum was the strongest woman I have ever known. Throughout her illness she never complained, she always just got on with it. An outsider looking in would never have known that she was sick, she never showed that she was struggling. Every treatment or procedure she had she tackled head on, she never wanted her illness to dictate her life.

Now, as a mum myself, I realise more than ever how much she shielded, protected and sacrificed for Luke and me. She always made the most of the time we spent together when we were children, she always made us feel special, safe and cared for. Looking back, her time was the most precious thing she gave us.

When talking with Luke about memories of mum, Christmas was a time of year that did evoke strong memories. When it came to presents mum was such a big kid, she was the one who was rushing us to open more presents when we had barely finished opening the last. She would make brandy butter every year in huge amounts, for who I'm not sure as neither Luke or I ate it, and it was far too much for just her and dad. There was so much brandy in there that it floated on top.

As mum was one of four children we are lucky to have a big extended family. Multiple times a year we would gather at our Grandma and Grandad Luxford's house, surrounded by cousins, aunts and uncles, 15 of us around the dinner table, lots of fun and laughter. Mum loved spending time with her parents and siblings. Family was so important to her.

When you are a kid it's hard to believe that your parents are people who had a life before you were born, but they did.

Mum and Dad met when Mum was 16 and Dad was 18.

My Uncle Gavin and Auntie Claire were seeing each other and had been invited to my Dad's 18th birthday party, my mum tagged along, and as they say, the rest is history. The way that my parents got engaged was typically them. My Dad was walking my Mum to the bus stop after spending the day together at Dad's house. Casually Dad asked Mum if she wanted to get married, plain and simple. No big romantic gesture, no down on one knee, very casual. Knowing Mum, she wouldn't have wanted the massive public display of affection, that would have

embarrassed her and drawn unwanted attention. This was perfect for them.

They were married for a staggering 42 years, and no matter the ups and downs they stuck together. They very rarely held hands in public, kissed or cuddled in front of us, but I know that their love ran deep, that was apparent.

When contacting friends of Mum's to tell them of her passing the same things were said about her. That she was such a great friend, she was kind, caring, loving and a proud Grandmother. The friendships my mum made were long term, these friendships spanned decades. Friendship was so important to her.

Another thing that was extremely important to her was her faith. Throughout her illness her Church community had given her so much strength and support. Mum has been heavily involved with Steyning Parish Church for as long as I can remember. When Luke and I were younger she taught Sunday school. We also have so many fond memories of Sundays at church, along with Christmas Day and Easter services. These special memories always involved the Knowles family. Mum was close friends with Vanessa and they brought up the children side by side, sharing their faith.

Mum was always involved in some sort of charity work, whether it be collecting donation envelopes for Christian Aid or volunteering for St Barnabas events. She was such a compassionate person.

There are no words to truly describe how happy and proud she was to become a Grandmother, G-Mum, as she is known to Hazel and Violet. I am so glad that Hazel got to spend so much quality time with Mum, her 'G'. Along with Dad they looked after Hazel whilst I worked and were able to make so many precious memories together. Puddle jumping on rainy days, curling up on the sofa reading books together under a blanket, trips to the park where an adventurous Hazel would worry them with her fearlessness.

When we would arrive at Mum and Dad's house, Hazel would always pick a flower for mum from the garden to give to her when we arrived. Mum would do the same thing when visiting us, presenting Hazel with a freshly picked flower.

The hardest thing is knowing that mum won't be here to watch them grow, and my girls won't be able to make memories with her. But as Mum's strength is a part of me, I know it will be a part of them. Mum will always be talked about and at every milestone I know that she will be with us.

Luke and I feel privileged to have been blessed with you as our mum. The imprint that you have left on all of our hearts means that you will be with us everyday. I know that a heart that's broken is a heart that's been loved, you will be forever missed.

*Written by Emily, Caroline's daughter, read in church
by Caroline's brothers, Peter and Paul*

Prayer Points for April

- ◆ Praise God, for Christ is risen.
- ◆ For families who have children are on holiday.
- ◆ Give thanks for the community fridge and all who volunteer to help others.
- ◆ For young people studying hard for their summer GCSEs and A Levels.
- ◆ For all who live and work in Shooting Field and Middle Mead.
- ◆ For the leaders of the West as they continually reassess how they can best help Ukraine and the Holy Land, and all war zones that they may work towards peace.
- ◆ That we may open our hearts for our neighbours and all we meet.



Community coffee



**Do come and join us
on a Wednesday morning
any time between
10am and 11:30am**

**COME IN ...
PLEASE
JOIN THE TEAM
FOR A COFFEE**

Several of our visitors go across to the Church in time for the Wednesday morning service, but there are always plenty of people wishing to chat until the coffee mugs are empty and we don't finish until 11:30.

Elizabeth Brown and the Coffee Team

Put Peace into each other's hands

Put peace into each other's hands

And like a treasure hold it

Protect it like a candle flame,

With tenderness enfold it.

Put peace into each other's hands

With loving expectation

Be gentle in your words and ways

In touch with God's creation

Put peace into each other's hands

Like bread we break for sharing

Look people warmly in the eye:

Our life is meant for caring

Put Christ into each other's hands,

He is love's deepest measure;

In love make peace, give peace a chance

And share it like a treasure.

Fred Kaan

Saint of the month



CHRISTINA ROSETTI,

CHRISTIAN POET (1830-1894)

Christina Rossetti was born into a talented family, her brother, Dante Gabriel the influential artist, and the other brother, William Michael, and sister

Maria, were writers. She was educated at home through religious works and the classics. The household came from an evangelical background but Christina and her sister became influenced by the Anglo-Catholic tradition in the Church of England and worshipped at All Saints Church, Margaret Street in London. Religious devotion became an important part of their lives and eventually Maria joined the Convent of the All Saints Sisters of the Poor based at All Saints Church.

For religious reasons Christina decided not to marry, turning down three suitors. She was by this time writing poetry which was recognised as having a high degree of technical perfection. Her themes were often the renunciation of earthly love and her concern with death and the world to come. At one time she was considered as a possible successor to Tennyson as Poet Laureate.

Two of her poems have become well known Christmas carols, *In the Bleak Mid-winter* and *Love Came Down at Christmas*.

From 1859 to 1870 Christina worked at the St Mary Magdalene House of Charity in Highgate, a refuge for ex-prostitutes. She opposed slavery in the United States and, throughout her life, was vocal in condemning the exploitation of girls in under-age prostitution.

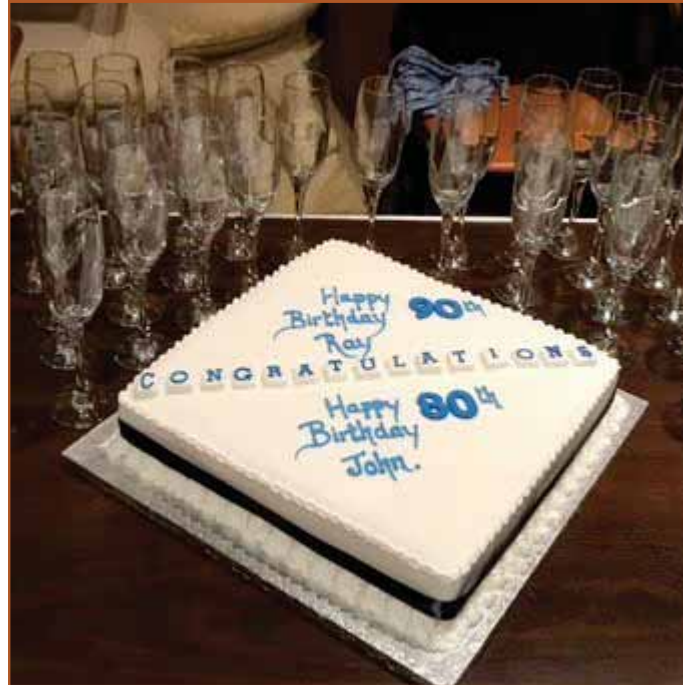
In her latter years Christina suffered a great deal of ill health but continued to write her devotional work and children's poetry. In 1891 she developed breast cancer and died in great pain in 1894. The Church of England calendar commemorates her on 27 April.

The Steyning connection: Dante Gabriel's muse and model was Fanny Cornforth, born Sarah Cox in Steyning. Commemorated by a blue plaque on what is now the Doll's House Shop.

Two celebrate together

On Sunday 17 March the church celebrated two special birthdays with this beautiful cake and Sarah's much loved wine.

*Ray
was
90 years
old*



*John
was
80 years
old*

Thank you so much to everyone for making my 90th so special.

For the cards, gifts and messages, and to those on Sunday for organising the drinks and cake. A truly special service and celebration for both John and myself.

Love Ray

Thank you to everyone who made the celebration of my

80th birthday so special, to Sarah, Marie, Wendy, Sue, Yvonne and Jim for their help, and for all the good wishes in the cards.

John

Diary Date

Study Day on The New Testament
Saturday 11 May 2024,
10:15am to 3pm

The Palace, Chichester PO19 1PY

Also time given for you to explore the Bishop's Palace garden.

(Tea and Coffee will be provided, but you will need to bring or shop for a packed lunch.)

Eco Church and Eco Diocese present:

Diocesan Environment Day

St Mark's Church Horsham, RH12 5PU.

Saturday June 15 from 9:30 - 4:00

Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

A Rocha UK speaker, Karen Park.

Choose 3 Workshops

Free ticketed event. For details contact
Revd Buff Forbes Stone. 07954 652824

News from the Belfry

People may have recently noticed a slight change in the bells for a couple of weeks as the largest bell (the Tenor) lost its voice. The clapper mechanism unfortunately broke at the end of ringing one Sunday morning. We only noticed this at the following Thursday practice night when the bell refused to make any sound however hard we pulled! So we removed all of the clapper bits and then local ringers transported them to the workshops in Oxfordshire. After a couple of days the clapper was returned to Sussex by courier, though we are not sure what the driver thought of the package as it had been wrapped tightly in cling film and weighed about 30 kilos!

Installing the clapper back into the bell was a fiddly and a difficult task due to lack of room for manoeuvre, plus its weight. It was eventually fitted in the bell and test rung to ensure that all was well. At the following practice night everyone was glad to be able to ring all eight bells once again.

The band continues to progress and we have been joined by two new recruits, Roz Mynard and Sam Shaw. In addition a ringer who has moved to the local area now joins us on most Sunday mornings. Roz has progressed well and has reached the required standard to join the Sussex County Association of Change Ringers. She was therefore welcomed at a recent event and presented with her membership certificate.

Looking ahead we are going to be ringing the bells for the opening of the 2024 Steyning Festival, and hopefully also on 8 June as part of the national 'Ring out for Peace' event to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day. This is a Thursday so fits in well with our practice.

This year marks three hundred years since the first ring of six bells was installed at Steyning Church; they were cast by John Waylett and one of these bells still exists in our current ring of eight bells.



David Kirkcaldy

Concert: Chanctonbury Chorus

SATURDAY 11 MAY 2024 AT 7:30

Now is the Month of Maying

David O'Dell sings tenor with the Chanctonbury Chorus, does meticulous research and writes the programme notes. I invited him to introduce our next concert:

"1May traditionally marks the beginning of spring, ecologically, if not meteorologically or astronomically, and this year Chanctonbury Chorus will mark the occasion with a concert of works that reflect the season.

Four-hundred-year-old madrigals, such as *Sing we and chant it* and *It was a lover and his lass*, will rub shoulders with George Shearing's *Songs and Sonnets* and Bob Chilcott's *Little Jazz Madrigals*, both written in the last 25 years, and accompanied by keyboard, bass and drums. There will also be a performance of Vivaldi's 1715 setting of the *Magnificat* and our professional soloists will entertain with their choice of seasonal numbers.

This performance will raise money for the RNLI, which celebrates its 200th anniversary this year.

Be sure to book early. All of the choir's recent concerts have sold out and we have only avoided having to turn people away on the door by using a shoehorn and remarkable ingenuity. Please don't wait till the last minute!"

David O'Dell

Tickets are £18, which includes a printed programme, available on the door on the night. You can buy tickets from a variety of sources - *Steyning Bookshop, online through Eventbrite (but they charge a booking fee!), from members of the Chorus, or - perhaps easiest of all - from me after most 9:30 services.* I charge no commission! My reward is seeing you enjoy the music we sing. Ask me, if you want to know more.

Canon Nigel



MEMORIAL BOOK

To arrange for someone's name to be added to the memorial book in the north aisle of Steyning Parish Church please complete a form found at the back of church. There is a suggested donation of at least £10, to include the cost of all the calligraphy.



Church Flowers

April 7 Easter flowers remain

April 14 & 21 Carol Lathweitt

April 27 Sue Morris and Julia Elliot

Carol Mckechnie

STEYNING HISTORY SOCIETY

Wednesday, 10 April 2024

STEYNING CENTRE 7.30 for 7.45
start

SCANDAL, SALVATION

AND SUFFRAGE

**The amazing women of
the temperance movement**

BY ROS BLACK

The Arts Society

Modern British Sculpture: Moore, Hepworth, Caro, Frink and Others

A talk by Raymond Warburton

Monday 8 April 2024 10.00am – 12.00 The Steyning Centre,

This lecture explores the work of prominent sculptors in the 20th century, including Epstein, Moore, Hepworth, Caro, Frink, and Gormley. They embraced modernism in diverse ways, drawing inspiration from different cultures and techniques. While some pursued social and humanitarian themes, others preferred an abstract approach. Despite their differences – and some clashes and quarrels - these sculptors have an enduring influence. The talk also discusses the distinction between sculpture and installation.

Free to members, £10 donation for visitors steyning@theartsociety.org



F Family
S Support
W Work
THE SUSSEX CHARITY FOR CHILDREN
SINCE 1870

Love from
Penny and
all the FSW
team.

**TO YOU ALL
FOR YOUR GENEROSITY**

What if Jesus actually meant it?

Some thoughts on the Beatitudes

One of my many favourite books is “Jesus before Christianity” by Albert Nolan. Like all his writing, it is deceptively simple – even the title. What does “Before Christianity” mean? Does it mean time – prior to when Greek theologians added layers of complication to the message of the Jesus who went round delighting and upsetting people? Yes. Does it mean that Jesus is more important (takes precedence) than what we have made of the message? Yes. But who was Albert Nolan anyway?

I met Fr Albert, the head of the Dominicans in South Africa, in 1983, when I stayed in their house in Mayfair. Now don't think about the top value real estate Mayfair of the Monopoly board. This was a run down area in Johannesburg. It was unclear whether, in the parlance of the apartheid era, it was in a “white area” or not. This had real advantages to the Dominicans. It kept them real in their vows of poverty – they could not get a gas or electricity account. They had candles and cooked over a gas cylinder. It also meant that they could have black people staying without that causing legal problems. Fr Albert took me to Soweto for the first time and I saw the conditions which led the school children to revolt and take on the South African police in the 1976 riots. In 1983, Fr Albert was chosen to be head of the Dominicans worldwide, but he asked the brothers to let him carry on his work to which he felt to be his calling in South Africa. They did let him - good choice.

Anyway, back to Jesus before Christianity. In it, Fr Albert tried to get readers to imagine the original message of Jesus, as Jesus saw, with an increasing sense of doom, the catastrophe into which his people were heading. That brings us to the Beatitudes, which Matthew and Luke present as a kind of manifesto. The two accounts are different, but both incredibly radical.

I remember two comments from Germany on the Beatitudes. One was from the great Bishop Scharf of Berlin, who when the evangelicals in his church attacked the World Council of Churches in a declaration in 1974, told me in an interview. “I've got nothing against fundamentalists. But they are fundamentalist in the wrong places. If they were fundamentalist about the Sermon on the Mount that would sit with me better”. The second was from the peace debate in the German churches in the 1970s and early 1980s. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt said, quoting Bismark: “You can't rule the world with the Sermon on the Mount”. The retort to that was – “Nor without it”.

We have to consider that Jesus actually meant what he said. I mentioned the differences in the way in which Matthew and Luke recorded the Beatitudes. In Matthew, we have: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:3). Luke gives us: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God” (Luke 6:20 both

from the NRSV). However, both the categories overlap and thus there is probably no real contradiction.

Fr Albert addressed the issue of "The Service of the Poor and Spiritual Growth" in a lecture in London in 1984. He outlined the stages which many go through in this endeavour. The first is compassion and relief work. This is followed by finding out that there are structures which make and keep people poor. This gives rise to anger. A third state is discovering the strength of the poor, and the fourth is the transition from romanticism to real solidarity.

We have to be realistic. As a former Director of Christian Aid, Charles Elliott argued in his uncomfortable book "Comfortable Compassion", that to suppose that grant aided projects can solve the problem of the absolute poverty of a billion people, is not to take the issue or the reality of our world seriously.

There are many reasons for believing that poverty is not good news. And that Christianity has often not been "Good News for the Poor". But there is also much in the Christian tradition to show that poverty, voluntarily chosen to be in solidarity with the poor is a powerful force for good. (I am reminded of our friends the Anglican Franciscans in the East End of London who joked that for them a "financial crisis" was when they had more than three months living expenses in the bank, so they had to give some away consistent with their vow of poverty).

Finally, to bring together our theme of the Beatitudes and "Jesus before Christianity", I want to quote a Jewish author, Pinchas Lapide, from his book, "The Sermon on the Mount: Utopia or Program for Action?"

"To those suffering from hunger, to the destitute, and the marginal members of Jewish society who suffer day after day from the futility of all their exertions, hope is here given that despite all appearances to the contrary, all the suffering and struggling will turn out to be meaningful. God's plan for salvation for humans is far from coming to an end; God is the Ruler of the world, the God of the lowly, dwelling among the poor and the repentant (Isa. 57:15)."

I pray and hope that our reflections on the Beatitudes will help us to be both hearers and doers of the word. I think Jesus meant it.

Roger Williamson

References

Albert Nolan, Jesus before Christianity, Orbis, Maryknoll, 1980

Albert Nolan, The Service of the Poor and Spiritual Growth, CIIR, London 1985

Pinchas Lapide, The Sermon on the Mount, Orbis Maryknoll 1986. The quote is from pp. 27-8.

Visiting Chinese Students



A Chinese school spent some time with the students at Steyning Grammar School, and here we see two of their students who visited the church and met Brian Sawyer, the organist and director of Music. Budding pianist, Jerry Ren, is seen here being given a crash course on the organ. He then played a piece of Chinese music - possibly the first time such music has been played in Steyning Parish Church.



At Last...

I am continuing thinking about the books of the New Testament. Last month I hoped to see if there was more to be learned about the early church if we put the books roughly in the order in which they were written and looked at the things they were thinking and talking about at the time. On the whole I was a bit disappointed at the result.

Early Christian church seems to have worried about short lived matters, most of which seem to us to be quite weird, mostly to do with the Second Coming which didn't arrive as expected; and should the Christians continue as a minority sect within Judaism, or become a separate faith on its own. My suspicion is that Paul made up all the answers as he went along and no-one bothered or dared to argue with him. He certainly solved the Jewish/Gentile problem by flooding the church with his Gentile converts all round the Mediterranean whether deliberately or as a by-product, it's not for me to say. You have your opinion!

At any rate the church dealt with problems as they came along. Making new standards for marriage and ministry, and rules and regulations for ritual. It all seems very normal, and early Christians mostly seem to have behaved as unreasonably as modern ones. As the saying goes, "there's nowt so queer as folk!"

Anyhow, all the writers seem to have directed their words, or in the case of the gospels, selected and edited their stories, to meet the needs of their readers. And quite right too.

BUT there is one matter which seems to me to be very much more important than habits and customs, and that is belief. The New Testament seems to be all aimed at people who had been converted to believing in Jesus as Saviour, and that belief seems to have developed as time went by. The evidence appears in the writings.

I will try to explain: Paul is the first writer; he has converted Gentiles to believe in Jesus. But what he has to say about Jesus seems largely limited to his Death and Resurrection, and its prequel, the Last Supper. What does he care or say about Jesus' earthly ministry? I don't think he is bothered. For Paul, salvation begins on Maundy Thursday.

Next in time is Mark and his gospel. He is certainly bothered about Jesus' saving life and his teaching, but for him it begins with Jesus' baptism by, and taking over from, John the Baptist. His ministry and teaching is definitely part of his saving work for Mark.

And then a few years later we find Matthew and Luke at different ends of the Christian world sitting down, looking at Mark's gospel, and saying "this won't do, there must be more to it than parables and miracles". Salvation must come from God, not Galilee. So they each reach out to the pile of tales about Jesus for something that shows salvation coming from the Divine not from the human level. The two writers add on to their gospels the section we call the Infancy narratives. Matthew finds a section which features Joseph (two of them!)

and their various dreams or messages from God, to start the Saving work. Luke finds another set of stories featuring Mary and her visions and angel messages, giving an equally divine source for salvation. Each gospel writer puts his 'find' at the start of his gospel to stress the divine origin of salvation. The fact that the two sets are totally incompatible doesn't matter, as long as God starts the work off outside the human race.

And last of all, some years later, John writes his prologue and (some other) John writes about worship in Heaven to take us one step further back to the Word of Salvation, as part of the eternal nature of the Divine Beginning. It's all a far cry from the simple Paul mantra "a man died and came alive again".

I think we can see all this unfolding in the Christian mind through the writings in the New Testament, but it doesn't stop there. The great Council of Nicaea, AD 325, added further definition to the nature of the Saviour and so did, or tried to do, the General Synod debate I attended in my working life, which also tried to define the incomprehensible!

To God be the glory. We only catch a glimpse. Keep looking.

Senex

Quiet Thought, Outreach

When I retired back in July 2023, I wanted to get involved with the upkeep and maintenance of our Churchyard. For years various people have toiled away trying to keep everything in check, tending the flower beds and trying to add wild flowers wherever possible. Luckily, when I volunteered to help out, those involved were only too pleased to have an extra pair of hands. Although sometimes I need to be kept on a tight lead otherwise I do get carried away!



I wondered what benefits I would get through working in such a beautiful place; the answer, so much more than I expected. At times I have worked with others and sometimes with just one other, or alone. Each opportunity led to conversations, sharing of thoughts or expanding my thoughts in a quiet space. One quote I remember is:

Caring has the gift of making the ordinary special by George R Bach.

Each one of the people in our team care so much, not only for the grounds, flora and fauna, but how it makes others feel overall.



Mike, who joined our team recently, commented, *I pass through the Churchyard so many times in a week, and I would love to help turn it into one of the most beautiful places in our town.*

This brings me onto the subject of outreach. Outreach is quite often seen as what we do for others outside of our Church. While working in the Churchyard I quite often see the same people passing through, but on many occasions strangers/visitors have stopped to chat. Mothers, fathers, grandparents, teenagers/children I know from school, all pass by commenting

on the work carried out, asking about what is happening next. Actually, in some cases it's just a grunt in recognition! At a meeting recently, I mentioned about the amount of people passing through and to my amazement, they said, maybe you should have some coffee in flasks to offer?

Well, you can imagine how my brain slipped into overdrive!

This leads to another quote:

I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver

Maya Angelou



Through giving we can make such a difference, not only to the look of our Churchyard, but to the thoughts and feelings of all who pass through our small piece of God with creation.



Simon Knowles

*The Churches Together Service at Croft Meadow is on April 15 at 11:30am
You will be very welcome to come and sit and chat with the residents and sing.*

Shoreham Chamber Choir



A concert of
**Spring Music
and Byrd Song**
including music by Byrd, Pärt,
Rachmaninov, Gjeilo, Duruflé,
Stanford, Holst, Elgar
Saturday 13th April 7.30pm
Shoreham Chamber Choir
Music Director: James Elias
Steyning Parish Church
of St Andrew and St Cuthman,
Vicarage Lane, Steyning BN44 3YQ
Tickets: £13 on the door
(cash or card)
Refreshments available

The anagram for this month is:

Anagram for April

PILGRIMAGE

REMEMBER: All words to have three or more letters, but only use each letter once. NO capitalised words and NO plurals.

Don't Rip the Page please.

Recipe for April

HOT CROSS BUNS PUDDING

- 6-8 hot cross buns (halved)
- 200 g milk chocolate (bar)
- 300 ml milk
- 275 ml double cream
- 2 medium eggs
- 3 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 100 g chocolate chips



Becky says:

This recipe feeds 12 for pudding, but it can easily be halved and left overs kept in the fridge.

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C/160°F and grease a large ceramic/glass baking dish/tray. It should fit 6-8 hot cross buns sat next to each other.
2. Halve your hot cross buns like you would to toast them, and put a few chunks of chocolate in the middle and sandwich again.
3. Lay all your hot cross buns next to each other in the dish. Mine easily fits six, and then a 7th split in half on the ends - or as many as you need.
4. In a bowl, whisk together the milk, double cream, eggs, sugar and vanilla until combined. Pour over the hot cross buns, and sprinkle over the chocolate chips.
5. Bake in the oven for 40 minutes, and then remove and leave to cool for 10 minutes before eating!

*Gracious God, as we reflect on Easter,
May we carry your love in our hearts.
Thank you for this Easter food and for all our blessings.
Amen*

I love heading out at the weekends for a hike over the Downs - but 90 million years ago, this part of the planet wouldn't have been a safe place to be. I'd have been busy avoiding the teeth of hungry aquatic predators like the 10-metre-long Mosasaurs as I cruised through a shallow sea. But it would be much smaller, less fearsome prehistoric organisms that would shape Sussex. The calcium shells from microscopic marine algae slumped to the sea floor and millions of years of pressure and erosion moulded them into the curvaceous chalk hills that form the familiar foundations of the South Downs.

It only feels like yesterday (well, about 6,500 years ago) that we humans showed up and got to work. The wild Sussex woods were chopped down and eventually sheep grazing became the dominant activity on the cleared hills for many centuries. The sheep-nibbled short downland turf is an internationally rare habitat, rich in flowers and the creatures that depend on them.

And, as chalk downland is such a rare habitat, the species that live here are also uncommon. Our

butterflies are a prime example. Species like the Grayling, Silver-spotted



Skipper, Small Blue, Adonis Blue and Chalk Hill Blue are restricted to this special habitat.

But it's not just wildlife that benefits. Those porous chalk hills filter, store, and provide us with most of our water. They also offer loads of other free services from flood prevention to pollination and food production. The open countryside around Sussex also offers us immeasurable physical, mental and spiritual benefits. The South Downs were designated a National Park in 2011.

While writing this article, I discovered a letter penned in 1915 by the Lewes naturalist, W. E. Nicholson, expressing concern for the future of the South Downs around Lewes, and especially the rare Adonis Blue butterfly and scarce Forester Moth that live there. I'd like to think that Mr. Nicholson would be re-assured to know that, more than a century later, his beloved Lewes Downs, butterflies and moths are still just where he left them and all flourishing under the care of Sussex Wildlife Trust on their reserves at Malling Down and Southerham.



Michael Blencowe

On The Road to Emmaus

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. As they talked and discussed the things that had happened, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. "What things?" he asked.

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

"He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be crucified; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. Some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning, but didn't find his body. They had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive.

He said to them, "Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going further. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.

From *Luke ch24* NIV

