



Holy Trinity



St.  
Gabriel

# The Parish of The Good Shepherd, Ashton-under-Lyne



St. James



St. Peter



St. Michael and All Angels

**APRIL 2021**

**Price 50p**

## Editorial

*“So many people right across the country are anxious about employment, anxious about food, isolated from loved ones and feel that the future looks dark.”* These are words from the Archbishop of Canterbury’s sermon on Easter Day 2020. Who would have thought that we are experiencing the same uncertainties this Easter!

Yet the Easter story remains one of hope overcoming darkness and despair. The women arrived at the tomb on Easter morning with mixed emotions, as they came to anoint Jesus’ body (Mark 16:1). They were confused, as they tried to make sense of Jesus’ death. Their hopes were dashed with an uncertain future. In the current pandemic, we too are left asking: *Where is God in all this?* Yet the young man at the tomb tells them not be alarmed: *“You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.”*

The women had forgotten Jesus’ promise to the disciples that He would die and rise from the dead. Jesus’ resurrection is also the sure foundation of hope for us in the present crisis. He turns our confusion and fear into joy and wonder! We can trust Jesus’ plan for the future of our world and lives, despite the fact that things can’t return to the way they were: *“There needs to be a resurrection of our common life, a new normal, something that links to the old, but is different and more beautiful.”* (Justin Welby).

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*The views expressed in articles in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Parish of The Good Shepherd. The editor reserves the right to amend articles as appropriate, for editorial purposes. Please consider writing something for the magazine yourself! And, if you have any comments to make on the Magazine you can contact the editor, Roger Farnworth on 0161 330 2771 or talk to a member of your DCC or PCC who will pass on any comments that are made.*

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### The Parish Prayer

Father God, whose Son came to bring love and peace to the world, help us to grow in faith and share our hope and joy with all whom we meet, so that we can work together to build your kingdom in Ashton, welcome new people into our churches, and be relevant to those around us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[www.goodshepherdashton.org](http://www.goodshepherdashton.org)

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## ***New life and new hope . .***

“See the land, her Easter keeping,  
Rises as her Maker rose,  
Seeds, so long in darkness sleeping,  
Burst at last from winter snows.  
*Charles Kingsley “Easter Week”*



The day after my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday I decided that I would keep a diary. Goodness knows why I left it so long to come to that decision but there we are! It was a sort of new decade resolution - one has to continue to be optimistic through life after all!

I have to be honest and say that I don't write something every day. I tried to do it like that at the beginning but some days there was nothing much to write about – retirement slows life down a fair bit – so I decided instead to write a continuous entry for each month, putting dates in brackets where they were significant.

I wanted to begin each month with something specific to the time of the year and so I decided to look back into my many poetry books and choose a poem that would say something about each of the months before I added my own – and more personal – observations. It's fun choosing a different poem each month and it has reminded me of some of the beautiful writing that

poets have contributed to our language over the centuries.

So here we are in April. In so many ways, April is a transitional month.

January, February and much of March tend to bring biting winds, icy frosts, long hours of darkness and a natural world that looks very damp and dead. But April marks a change. The nights are lighter, the cold days don't seem quite as cold, the winds aren't quite so biting and there is a little warmth in the sun and, towards the end of the month, we are officially in Spring and the clocks jump forward.

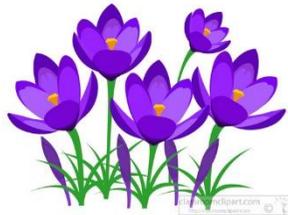
April feels like a month full of hope and new life as we watch the trees begin to bud and go into leaf with that beautiful, fresh shade of green - leaf green that was in every child's paint box when I was little. More adventurous plants begin to flower, and colour comes back to the garden, bringing the hope of the summer months to come.

This year, especially, April is a month of transition and with that transition comes hope – and perhaps a return to life, rather than new life. For so long now we have all had to live with the restrictions of the lockdown on and off over the past year, restrictions which were necessary and understandable under the circumstances. But there is no denying that they changed our lives and our outlook. Living as we have needed to do for significant periods of time over the past twelve months has undoubtedly been hard, and the sacrifices that we have all had to make have been extremely difficult.

Everyone has their story to tell about our year of Covid. Many people have had to come to terms with grief and sadness. Others have had to endure isolation and loneliness. Still more people have served their communities to the end of human endurance. I'm sure we would all agree that it has been a strange time and that seeing our families through the window, or on Zoom, is not the same thing as being able to wrap our arms around them and tell them how much we love them and have missed them.

This year, April brings us hope, and the possibility of new experiences, as the country moves to the second stage of the easing of those

restrictions. Our Churches can open again, the Stay at Home order has ended, even though some restrictions will stay in place a little longer, shops will open their doors and hospitality venues can welcome us back to their outside eating areas. It's a start! It's giving us the hope that we need to know that it, hopefully, won't be too much longer till we can see our families again. Just as the flowers in our gardens gradually open their petals to the warmer breezes and sun's welcome rays, so we can begin to venture outside our homes again and hopefully find some elements of normality in our days.



And, of course, this month is a time of transition and new life for Christians. At the beginning of April, the reflections of the penitential season of Lent give way to Holy Week – a time to look into the events leading to the death and Resurrection of Jesus.

We commemorate the foot-washing at the Last Supper, the arrest and trail of Jesus, we walk with him on his journey to the Cross and we grieve with Mary at the foot of the

Cross. The Saturday of Holy Week gives us time to reflect on our lives and how readily we walk with Jesus or how much we struggle to go our own way.



And it all leads to Easter Sunday, that joyous celebration of the empty tomb, the Risen Christ and a reminded, were one needed, of the new life that we have in Jesus. A lasting memory of mine, from being a very small child, is hearing my dad singing his heart out on Easter morning in the kitchen to the words of “Jesus Christ is risen today! Alleluia!” It was such a public declaration of faith from a normally quite reserved man but he clearly felt the joy and the hope of Easter Sunday.

And our hope, this year, is surely that we can celebrate Easter, in Church, with our socially distanced Church families again. I think it will be quite emotional after so long of not being able to be together to share the love of God with each other as we usually do.

So let’s enjoy all that April brings us, this year especially, and go forward, in hope, that our World is gradually moving to a better place for all God’s people, giving thanks for all those who have worked so hard to find a way of helping us all live to get back to living a much more normal life in the months ahead.

*If ever I saw blessing in the air  
I see it now in this still early day  
Where lemon-green the vaporous  
morning drips  
Wet sunlight on the powder of my  
eye.  
If ever world were blessed, now it is.  
“April Rise” by Laurie Lee.*

*Revd Pat Lodge*



# April Services



At the time of printing, we hope that the following services will take place. Holy Week services will be different this year as we are required to keep them as short as possible, follow social distancing rules and all government restrictions and safety advice. Also, it may be necessary to change or cancel any of these services at short notice should government or local guidance change.

Please check our weekly sheets or with your wardens for up-to-date information.

Please note that those who are extremely clinically vulnerable/shielding, or who have symptoms of a continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of or change to sense of smell or taste, should not attend church.

## Holy Week

Readings and Prayers are in our “**Holy Week and Easter 2021**” booklet.

<b>Palm Sunday</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> March	
9:30 am	Holy Communion	St Gabriel and St James
11.00am	Holy Communion	St Michael and St Peter
4.00pm	St James on Sunday Afternoon	

<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April	
7.30pm	United Holy Communion Service at Holy Trinity	

<b>Good Friday</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> April	
10:30 am	An hour at the Cross	St James
2:00 pm	An hour at the Cross	St Peter

<b>Holy Saturday</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> April	
7.30 pm	Service of Light	St Michael

<b>Easter Day</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> April	
9:30 am	Holy Communion	St Gabriel and St James
11:00 am	Holy Communion	St Michael and St Peter

No midweek services between 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> April

*Our services on Palm Sunday and Easter Day will be suitable for both adults and children – we look forward to welcoming all to our services.*

***Please be aware of the need to maintain social distancing and wear your mask in church unless you are exempt from doing so.***

# April Services

## Sundays from 11<sup>th</sup> April

9.30am Holy Communion or Morning Prayer St Gabriel and St James

11.00am Holy Communion or Morning Prayer St Michael and St Peter

St James on Sunday Afternoon 4.00pm 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> April

## Thursdays from 15<sup>th</sup> April

3.30pm Evening Prayer

Holy Trinity

***Please be aware of the need to maintain social distancing and wear your mask in church unless you are exempt from doing so.***

We shall continue to send out, either by post or email, a weekly sheet containing prayers and readings for each Sunday and the readings for the following week.

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## The Way of The Cross.....

is the only way to God - as Jesus said 'I am the way, the truth and the light. No-one can come to the Father except through me'.

As we continue to walk our own Way of The Cross, by faith and not by sight, we cannot, of course, make a comparison with Jesus' Way of The Cross, why and who for, but even so we can continue to endure and overcome, as Jesus did.

Once again, during Lent, we can take time to reflect, rethink, refocus and renew.



Barry Bowden

*"Let the resurrection joy lift us from loneliness, weakness and despair to beauty and happiness."*  
Floyd Tomkins - US Episcopal Deacon

## Archbishops in the Spectator: Church in changing times



The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have recently written an article for the Spectator magazine, responding to the recent media coverage asking: ‘Where is the C of E?’

The Archbishops say: “Let us offer an answer. ... the Church of England has been a bedrock

of faith, love, hope and compassion in this country for centuries through wars, plagues and pandemics — we still are, and we will go on being just that.

“You can imagine our shock, then, when we read in the media about what is supposedly happening... That the parish system, with its beautiful vision of serving every inch of the country and every person in it, is being systematically dismantled. That clergy are being made redundant. That there are plans to somehow centralise everything and for services, even beyond Covid, to be online rather than in person.

“So let us try to set the record straight. There are no plans to dismantle the parish network. We are committed to our calling to be a Christian presence in every community.

“...Yes, there are hard decisions currently being made across many dioceses. Overall some stipendiary posts will be lost. ... But the aim is to make each parish and each Christian community sustainable. If that doesn’t happen, there really will be no Church of England.

“... There are rascally voices around who want to undermine the church — it was ever thus. But the real story is that we so believe in that vision of serving every inch of the country, and every person in it, that we are having to expand what it is to be the church.”

## Easter Story Biscuits for young children

*Prep. Time: 20 minutes    Total Time: 1 day*

### **You will need:**

110 grams of pecan nuts	1 pinch salt	wooden spoon
5 grams vinegar	200 grams sugar	tape
3 egg whites	large plastic bag	Bible

### **Instructions:**

Preheat oven to 150C

Place pecans in the plastic bag and let the children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.

Let each child smell the vinegar. Put vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.

So far the ingredients are not very appetising...

Add sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Ps. 34:8 and John 3:16.

Beat with a mixer on high speed until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the colour white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.

Fold in broken nuts.

Drop by teaspoons onto non-stick baking parchment-covered baking sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matthew 27:57-60.

Put the baking sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matthew 27:65-66.

**GO TO BED!** Explain that they may feel sad to leave them in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers felt despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matthew 28:1-9.

# Parish Notices

From the March registers:

*There were no baptisms, weddings or funerals in March.*

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## Free national phonenumber bringing worship and prayer



Government figures show that 2.5 million people aged 75 and above have never used the internet. And so, to help them, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, recently launched a free national phonenumber to bring worship and prayer into the homes of those without access to the internet.

Daily Hope, which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England.

## CONTACT DETAILS

**CLERGY:** (\*usual day off)

Revd Roger Farnworth, Team Rector (\*Tues.)  
The Vicarage, Westbury Street, Ashton OL6 9NL 330 2771

Revd Ben Brady, Team Curate (\*Fri) 400 1556

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Fairly Traded Tea and Coffee and to work for justice for the world's poor

