

CHURCH NEWS

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Friends,
**Reflecting faith
– Easter Flowers**



**APRIL
2023**

Many types of flowers are used in churches, but during Easter, there is one that is especially loved: the Easter Lily. It is a tall, stately flower topped by large, graceful, white trumpet-shaped blooms.

While commercial bulb production of [Easter lilies](#) only began in the 19th century, Easter lilies make many appearances in both the Old and New Testaments, emphasising the flower's importance to Christianity. King Solomon spoke of them, and Christ referenced them, too.

These strikingly beautiful flowers are highly perfumed, with the central stamens covered in bright yellow or orange pollen. Unfortunately, the pollen can be a hazard, as it can permanently stain cloth due to chemicals it contains! For this reason, good florists and especially church flower arrangers will remove all the stamens before bringing them anywhere near church fabrics, or near to where ministers wearing white might brush against them.

It's thought that Easter lilies came to symbolise Christ because they embody purity - the trumpet-shaped blooms recall the horns that heralded the resurrection of Christ. This is also why lilies are identified with the Virgin Mary, and [in artworks](#) depicting the Annunciation to the Virgin they are often found in the angel Gabriel's hand.

The second reason that Easter lilies represent Christ is because of their life cycle. Each one grows from a bulb that for several years has lain quietly beneath the earth, before growing tall and stately, and blossoming into magnificent flowers. What a picture of Jesus' life and resurrection!

This month

Have a look around the church over Easter. Daffodils and Easter lilies are often displayed, because they are the first flowers of spring, when Nature is being reborn. Their life after the death of winter reminds us of the Resurrection. For we cannot imagine the death and the passion of Christ without having in mind the empty tomb, radiating hope. Christ's death has no meaning without His Resurrection.

Rev Dr Jo White - Parish Pump

NEWS AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

According to the astronomical calendar, Spring is here. However, many people say you're more likely to see snow at Easter than at Christmas. This is borne out of statistics to some extent - snow or sleet falls on average 3.9 days in December, compared to 4.2 days in March. However, because Easter is a 'moveable feast', it can also take place in April, which has only 2.3 days of snow or sleet fall. So it depends on exactly when Easter falls in any given year!

Many of us may be feeling uplifted, but there are some folk who are burdened by concerns about health and other reasons. We pray Lord that you will be with these people... We especially pray for the Elsdon family following the loss of Mike's sister who died last month

Our grateful thanks go to Pastor K for leading our worship on Mothering Sunday in such a meaningful way. Members of the worship group were kept busy for all the other services in March.

Thank you to everyone who supported our Fairtrade weekend last month. The coffee morning, Afternoon Tea and sale of homemade jams by Morag meant that a magnificent total of £500 was raised for Transform Trade which will be used to support the struggling small farmers and producers in Asia and Africa. Our special thanks go to Morag and Sandy for everything they did that weekend.

After a long enforced delay due to Covid, Mavis, Bernice and Alison went to see Christine Brooks in the nursing home in Congleton just before she celebrated her 98th birthday on 1 March. She was in good spirits and asked to be remembered to all who knew her.

Our Lent Lunch on 11 MAR raised £162 for Christian Aid - thank you to those who supported and helped.

Best wishes to everyone who will be celebrating their birthday in April.

If you would like to go to support Jenny Hodson in Calamity Jane between 24~29 April at The Brookdale Club & Theatre, do have a word with her.

The News Team

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

**Sun 16 APR - CHURCH MEETING
POSTPONED**

Fri 7 JUL - Summer Open Day, for Charities

CHURCHES TOGETHER...



EASTER SERVICE

SAT 8 APRIL

11 am

**in Oak Meadow
followed by hot drink
and mince pie**

FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE

We are all looking forward to the better weather when we will be able to sit in Mavis' lovely garden. Until then we are very comfortable in her nice warm lounge,

During March we enjoyed an interesting talk from Elva entitled "Potpourri". Thanks to Elva and also Anne who supported her with some readings.

There has also been lots of chatting and laughter with an odd quiz thrown in.

On April 12 there will be a change of venue when Eric will be playing the organ and piano (not both at once) in church, refreshments in the Coffee lounge. Everybody is welcome.

Carole Davies

ECO TIPS FOR APRIL

Re-use: Inners of cereal packets make good freezer bags.

Re-think: Mow grass less to allow flowers to bloom, encouraging wildlife.

Re-think: Buy material bin liners, which can be washed and re-used.

arochoa.org.uk

LINK TO HOPE SHOEBOXES

Thank you for the donations last month. In April we would like to concentrate on small games/toys - draughts, playing cards, yo-yos, toy cars, skipping ropes.

Bernie

SUDOKU

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			5		6			

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began at dawn in Western Samoa and Tonga in the Pacific Ocean (when we were listening to the previous day's 6pm news) and ended at dusk in American Samoa (when we were having breakfast the following day). Isn't it amazing to be part of something so huge and what makes the Day of Prayer so special.

Each year the service is written by the Christian women of a different country. This year it is the turn of Taiwan, a country that has for many years been caught in a superpower struggle. It has been isolated internationally for decades and, as of April 2022, only 13 of the 193 UN member states and Vatican City/Holy See have recognized Taiwan as a sovereign country.

'The People's Republic of China' continues to claim 'The Republic of China' (Taiwan) as its sovereign territory but a large majority of Taiwanese reject reunification with China. In May 2022 China began to harass Taiwan almost on a daily basis; according to Reuters, the risk of conflict is now at its highest level for decades. The people of Taiwan are very much in need of our prayers at this time - **The Presbyterian Church of Taiwan has a special link with our NW Synod.]**

This worship service includes letters of encouragement for women who face suffering and injustice. These stories of faith focused on issues that are shared by women and girls around the world and that continue to challenge us to prayerful action.

We thank the Christian women of Taiwan for this service and pray that our response will be affirmative and constructive as we commit ourselves to positive prayerful action.

from the Service Booklet

FOR MPs ONLY

At the Pearly Gates, St Peter greeted a minister and a Member of Parliament and gave them their room keys. "Vicar, here are the keys to one of our nicest single rooms. And for you, Mr MP, the keys to our finest penthouse suite." When the vicar protested that this was unfair, St Peter explained: "Look, ministers there are many, but this is the first politician we've seen."

+++++

+ +

+ SOUP, SWEET and MEET +

+ +

+ Tuesdays - weekly +

+ +

* 12noon ~ 2 pm *

+ +

+++++

CHURCH MEETING

There has been a delay in the auditing of the Church accounts due to the retirement of the Auditor. Elders have therefore agreed to postpone the Church meeting due to have been held on 16 April until a date to be arranged in May when audited accounts will be presented to those attending.

Alison Stevens

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The theme of this year's interdenominational service was "*I have heard about your faith*" prepared by the Christian women of Taiwan. On Friday 3 MAR we met together at All Saints' Church and, after a thoughtful hour together sharing in the worship, there was a welcome cup of tea and conversation.

We were part of a huge wave of prayer which circled the earth for at least 38 hours. It

THE 'ILLEGAL MIGRATION BILL'

Church Statements: 8 MAR23

Church Leaders from **JPIT** denominations have signed a joint statement expressing opposition to the government's new 'Illegal Migration Bill':

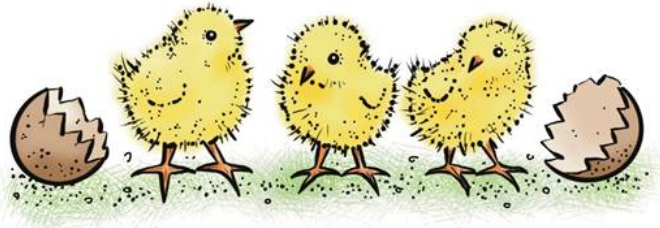
We are appalled by the proposals in the government's 'Illegal Migration Bill' to detain, punish and reject thousands of people seeking safety. They are completely incompatible with our Christian conviction that all human beings are made in the image of God, and are therefore inherently worthy of treatment which honours their dignity. Instead of dignity, these plans will foster discrimination and distrust, and cause immeasurable harm to people already made vulnerable by conflict and persecution. If ever there was a contemporary example of ignoring our neighbour and walking by on the other side, this is it.

When two in three people who cross the channel to seek sanctuary in the UK are granted asylum following rigorous checks, it seems unthinkable to reject them before they have even had a chance to have their claim for asylum heard. Many people fleeing war and persecution in countries such as Iraq, Iran, Syria, Eritrea and Sudan have been left with no safe and accessible routes to claim asylum in the UK, forcing people to make difficult and dangerous decisions. The UK falls far behind our global neighbours in welcoming people seeking sanctuary into our communities, and yet these plans essentially put a ban on claiming asylum and reject the UK's responsibility to play our part in responding to global inequalities and conflict.

We all agree that we cannot continue to see thousands of people risk their lives to reach safety in the UK, but the solution cannot be deterrence and punishment. As Christians, we believe that we should be amongst the first to welcome the stranger with open arms. We urge the government to withdraw this legislation, to honour our moral and international obligations and to behave with compassion and fairness by establishing safe and accessible routes to enable the UK to play its part in welcoming people in need of safety.

Signed by

Rev Fiona Bennett,
URC General Assembly Moderator
Rev Lynn Green,
General Secretary of the Baptist Union
Rev Graham Thompson & Anthony Boateng,
Pres & VP of Methodist Conference



CHOCOLATE

If there was nothing like chocolate
How dull would this world of ours be!
A world without wonderful chocolate
Would not be a good world for me!

For chocolate's a way to say 'thank you';
Or 'please' if you want something done.
It's better than mere words or phrases
'Cos eating it's terribly fun!

If somebody went and banned chocolate
The consequence of his dread fault
Would be dire beyond contemplation
The world – it would grind to a halt!

For nothing gets done without chocolate
Whether milky or silky or sweet,
Some folk will do wonders for chocolate
For a taste of a chocolaty treat!

So go out and purchase some chocolate
There's lots on your local shop's shelf!
Give someone a gift of some chocolate -
But also - keep some for yourself!

By Nigel Beeton

'Breakfast Before'

9.30am ~ 9 APR

[& every 2nd Sunday]

Typical menu:

**Drinks, bananas
toast, Cereal, pancakes,
~ Croissant or pain au chocolat?**

THE ORPHANAGE

We thank God that He is with the children of Suk Jai Children's Home and has led them through another year. This year we have altogether 24 children. In about a weeks time the students at the orphanage will be on their summer vacation for about 2 months. Their classes will resume again on the 17th of May. This year one of the older girls named Na see will be finishing high school and will continue her education at a nurse's aid school in the city of Chiang Mai. Her course will take around 6 months to complete. We ask that you please keep her in your prayers since this will be her first time coming into the city to study and it will be a new and different environment for her. This year we will also be accepting 2-3 new children at the orphanage since we will now have some vacancies available. During the children's summer vacation we plan to have a number of activities for the children like VBS and music classes. We ask that you please continue to pray for the children that they will grow up to be good adults and ultimately people that God can use to further His kingdom.

Rev Abel & Ruth Sairattanyu



The children of the orphanage

MY SON...

One day a Jewish man named Leo heard from his son attending university: "I've decided to become a Christian, Dad."

Leo panicked. The only thing he could think to do was call his rabbi.

"Funny you should come to me with this problem, Leo," says the rabbi. "Not two years ago my son came to me with the same speech. I had no idea what to do. I panicked, and the only thing I could think to do was go to God."

"What did God say?" asked Leo.

The rabbi laughed. "God said to me, funny you should come to me with this problem..."

Parish Pump

FILM MATINEE

Saturday 22 APRIL
2.30 pm



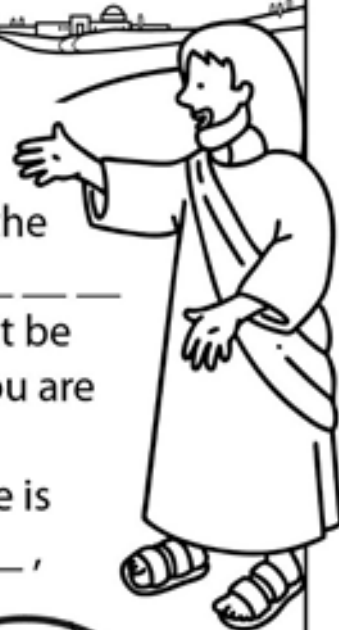
HE IS RISEN!
Read the story of
The Resurrection in
Matthew 28:1-20



How many other
words can you
make from
RESURRECTION

An _____
of the Lord came down from
_____ and going to the
_____ rolled back the _____

... the _____ said, "Do not be
_____, for I know you are
looking for Jesus who was
_____, He is
not here; he has _____,
just as he said."



Glue this page onto
card. Cut out the
ovals then colour in.
Punch a hole at the
top and hang up
for Easter

SERVICES

Elders' wish to keep everyone safe, so please stay home if you are ill. You may wear masks (perhaps for singing). Also, understand our plans may change with little notice. We may sometimes have a speaker and sometimes a simple in-house led service. Video conferencing continues and Leaders or readers may Zoom in or speak in church.

Duties are performed by a small team on a rota. Please check the board for swops.

Date	2 APR	7 APR	9 APR	16 APR	23 APR	30 APR
Service	Morning Worship	Good Friday Worship	Morning Communion	Morning Worship	Morning Communion	Morning Worship
Time	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.30 am	10.00 am
Leader	In-house team	Rev Dr Kirsty Thorpe and Rev Iain Smart	Bernie Stevens	In-house team	Prof Chris Whitehead	Elaine Noden
Elder Duty	S Smith	In church live link to service from Wilmslow URC	P Oliver / A Stevens	B Stevens	S Smith / D Phillips	CHEADLE HULME CLOSED
Door	G Elsden		J Hodson	M Hardie	M Smith	JOINT SERVICE AT BRAMHALL WITH HEALD GREEN & CH URC
Reader						
Flowers	Silk		Easter	Easter	C Davies	
Coffee	C Davies		M Hardie	H Elsden	M Morton	
N o t e s	Palm Sunday	Good Friday	Easter Communion			5th Sunday Partnership Service

CHURCH REGISTERS - none

LECTIONARY for APRIL

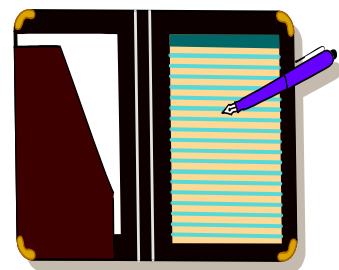
2 APR: Isaiah 50.4-9a; Psalm 118.1-2,19-29; Philipians 2.5-11; Matthew 21.1-11
 9 APR: Acts 10.34-43; Psalm 118.1-2,14-24; Colossians 3.1-4; Matthew 28.1-10
 16 APR: Acts 2.14a,22-32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1.3-9; John 20.19-31
 23 APR: Acts 2.14a,36-41; Psalm 116.1-4,12-19; 1 Peter 1.17-23; Luke 24.13-35
 30 APR: Acts 2.42-47; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2.19-25; John 10.1-10

Heaven

An exasperated mother, whose daughter was always getting into mischief, finally asked her, "How do you expect to get into Heaven?"

The girl thought it over and said, "Well, I'll just run in and out, and in and out and keep slamming the door, until St Peter says 'For Heaven's sake, Diane, come in or stay out!'"

CALENDAR



.....to the best of the editor's knowledge, unless you know better.....

APRIL 2023

Sat 01	10am~12 noon Coffee morning ~ for Suk Jai Orphanage 12~2 pm CTCH Lent Lunch ~ Methodist
Mon 03	
Tues 04	12pm ~ 2 pm SOUP, SWEET & MEET ~ coffee lounge
Wed 05	Fellowship Circle cancelled
Thu 06	
Fri 07	Choir Rehearsal cancelled
Sat 08	11 am CTCH Easter Service on Oak Meadow
Sun 09	9.30 am Breakfast Before
Mon 10	
Tues 11	12pm ~ 2 pm SOUP, SWEET & MEET ~ coffee lounge
Wed 12	10.30 am Elders' ~ Church 1.30~3 pm FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE ~ Church
Thu 13	
Fri 14	2pm Choir Rehearsal
Mon 17	
Tues 18	12pm ~ 2 pm SOUP, SWEET & MEET ~ coffee lounge
Wed 19	1.30~3 pm FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE ~ Swann Grove 7.30 pm Worship Group on Zoom
Thu 20	7.30 pm Steering Group ~ Gatley
Fri 21	2pm Choir Rehearsal
Sat 22	2.30 pm FILM MATINEE
Mon 24	
Tues 25	12pm ~ 2 pm SOUP, SWEET & MEET in coffee lounge
Wed 26	1.30~3 pm FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE ~ Visit to Nixons farm
Thu 27	
Fri 28	2pm Choir Rehearsal
Sat 29	
Sun 30	

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