

ST. WILFRID'S & ST. MICHAEL'S ARLEY

UNITED IN WORSHIP

Meeting Needs, Bringing Hope, Sharing
Love



APRIL NEWSLETTER 2021

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Rev John's Jottings - A year from one Easter to another Since March 2020, a year ago when the first lockdown started, the congregations in the Benefice of Ansley and Arley have been doing their best to communicate and support each other, as well as trying to help those around the villages in practical ways where possible. Unlike this time last year, we are moving forward with hope in our hearts that Covid19 will be less of a threat. However, will the hope in our hearts also be one where we have drawn near to God than we have ever before? This Easter is a good time to renew our Christian convictions and commitments. Why not come along to our special joint benefice Easter Sunday service 10.30am at St Laurence, Ansley. It is the month of Easter. Lent has been another wilderness experience for us all one way or another, as the whole world continues to go through this coronavirus pandemic. Just as Lent gives way to Easter, so the darkness of these days will bring new beginnings. But how much of Easter is relevant to you in these days? It's the greatest message of hope the world can know. Sadly, our nation is losing its grip on its Christian heritage. Can you recount the Easter story?: Holy week begins the time leading up to Jesus death. Palm Sunday was when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey proclaimed as a king by the crowds shouting 'Hosanna'. Thursday night and the Last supper was when Jesus shared His last meal with his disciples – and became the institution of communion. Then there was Jesus praying sweat like blood in the garden of Gethsemane and his arrest. Good Friday was when Jesus was mocked, tried, crucified and then he died and was buried. Easter Sunday came and his body could not be found – the tomb was empty 'Hallelujah' and the supernatural appearance of two angels declared, 'He is not here, He is risen'. It was an event that has changed the course of history and the lives of millions of people ever since. Easter reminds us that death is not the end of life, there is the resurrection and the promise of eternal life. It could be your greatest discovery this Easter. Wishing you a very blessed Easter, and month ahead. Keep well and safe. God bless you. Rev. John

Quiet Corner:

As we reflect on the Resurrection of Jesus, let's take some time to praise Him and ask for even more of His Presence in our lives! Here's a simple Easter prayer you can reflect on:

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for the gift of eternal salvation that we get to celebrate on Easter morning. Your love is so great! Come close to me and renew my mind to let go of everything I've held on to that hinders me and entangles me.

I ask you to draw near to me as I draw near to you and purify my heart. Thank you for being the example of mercy when you ministered to and saved a thief while you suffered your own death. Your love covers a multitude of sins! I repent of my sins and ask you to cover me with your love and help me love others deeply. Help me to forgive those who have offended me and give me the courage to bless my enemies. Thank you for the anchoring of peace the Cross gives us. When difficult times find me, help me keep my eyes on you. Help me calm and quiet my soul so I can find full contentment in You alone. Thank you for the promise of joy and the restoration to the Father through the work of the Cross. Let me remember to take active steps in rejoicing together in fellowship with family and friends.

May we never forget the good works You have done in our lives.

I praise you that you are the gift of HOPE. Nothing can separate me from your love for not even death could do it. I love you, Jesus! Amen!

This Easter, why not spend a little quiet time with Jesus, thanking Him for His sacrifice, soaking in His Word and connecting with Him in a very real, personal and meaningful way? Let's breathe in the Easter story and rejoice in the empty tomb—in our risen King and in His unending love for us, because "Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty." Psalm 91:1 NIV. **EASTER SERVICE St.Laurence.10.30am**

April 4th

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When you study the painting of the crucifixion by the famous Dutch artist Rembrandt, your attention is drawn to the cross and to Jesus. Then, as you look at the crowd, you are drawn to the faces of the people involved in the awful crime of crucifying the Son of God. Finally your eyes drift to the edge of the picture and catch site of another figure - almost hidden. This we're told is a self portrait of Rembrandt, for he recognised that by his sins he helped nail Jesus there! Someone said, 'It's a simple thing to say that Christ died for the sin of the world. It is quite another to say Christ died for my sin! Think again of the painting. If you look closely you will see in the shadows you, too, are standing. Christ bore the penalty of your sin. He was wounded for you.

At the Foot of the Cross

At the foot of the cross, I lay it all down
Everything in my life, that's hidden deep inside
I give it away, for my Saviour to heal
These fears that I have, that I've buried for years
At the feet of Jesus, my heart pours out tears
As I kneel and pray, my thoughts become clear
And I finally see what's so very dear

At the foot of the cross, I cry out in pain
Anguishing thoughts pour out like rain
But, amidst these tears, I find a peace so calm
As Jesus scurries in, the darkness fades away
My heart is freed, my mind once again sane
And the past torments I've had are forever washed away
My life burns brighter, like the dawning of a new day

At the foot of the cross, I'm loved and not lost
Where the Holy drops of blood, have paid off sin's costs
And the Saviour was taken, now risen once more
Through the grace of God, the veil was torn

And the world was cast a new rope of hope
Dangling freely from Heaven, climbable by faith alone
To an eternal place, where sin and death are dead

At the foot of the cross, life can be found
On your knees draped in blood, on Calvary's sacred ground.

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Three keys to real peace: 1) Fret not – because God loves You (1John 4:16)

2) Faint not – because God holds You (Psalm 139: 10)

3) Fear not - because God keeps You. (Psalm 121:5)

God holds our hand. We have nothing to fear!

April's Recipe: Cheesy Broccoli Soup:

Ingredients:

1 tbs Olive Oil
2 cloves of Garlic – crushed
1 Onion – chopped
2 heads of Broccoli, cut into small florets
850ml(1.1/2 pint) vegetable stock
100g (3.1/2oz) Mature cheddar cheese – grated
Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste.
To serve: Crusty bread.

Method:

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat.
Add the garlic and onion and saute' for a few minutes until the onion is soft and translucent.
Add the broccoli and cook gently for 5 minutes.
Next, add the stock and bring to the boil, then lower the heat to a gentle simmer and cover. Cook for 10 minutes, or until the broccoli is just tender.
Pour the soup in a blender, in batches, and puree until quite smooth. Pour the soup back into the pan, stir in a handful of the grated cheese and stir until it has melted.
Season to taste, then serve topped with the rest of the cheese.

*If you wish you could perhaps use blue cheese instead of the Cheddar for an instant touch of luxury and depth of flavour.Enjoy!

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Easy Raspberry & Eton Mess: (serves 8)

600ml Double Cream. 15gms Granulated sugar. 300gms Raspberries(washed)610gms Lemon Curd. 8 Meringue Nests.
In a glass bowl mix cream sugar and cream together until soft peaks form. Fold in the Raspberries(keep some back for decorating) and lemon curd. Break the meringue nests into the bowl and mix with a large spoon. Divide mixture into serving glasses and top with whole raspberries. Delicious. Enjoy!

Children's Corner:

An Incredible Plan:

The cross just didn't happen. Jesus' death was not an accident. The cross wasn't a sad surprise. Calvary was not some cosmic mix up or galactic goof. It wasn't some failed attempt to save the world. Jesus' death was anything but unexpected.

No, Jesus' death was part of God's incredible plan to save you, to save me, and to save all His children. And that plan started thousands of years before Jesus came to earth.

The moment that forbidden fruit touched the lips of Eve, God had a plan to save us all. Although the cross wouldn't appear for centuries, the plan for it began in the garden of Eden. And between that moment the first nail went into the cross, God's great plan to save us was fulfilled.

Growing in Grace: - April 1st is called April Fools Day. And one day, more than two thousand years ago, Satan became the biggest fool of all. When Jesus died on the cross, satan thought he had won. But - April Fool! - Jesus rose from the grave, and the devil lost forever.

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Planting Seeds of Kindness

Want to see a miracle? Plant a kind word in the heart of some- one who is sad and hurting. Water it with a prayer and add a sunny smile – and then watch what happens.

Want to see some more miracles? Fix a snack for your Mum or Dad without being asked. Smile at your teacher just because. Give a friend a pat on the back when she's had a tough day. Draw something special for a person who is sick. Bring in the post or newspaper for an older neighbour. Offer to clean up, even when it's not your turn.

Sowing seeds of kindness is like sowing beans. You don't know how they grow or why; you just know they do. And some how that one little seed of kindness that you plant will grow into a whole garden of good deeds. Never doubt the power of a seed.

Sow some flower seeds. Fill each cup of an egg carton with soil. Poke a seed – like petunia or snapdragon – into each cup. Add a little water and sunshine.as they grow think, think about how they started from tiny seeds. What do you think will grow from a seed of kindness.?

Memories of Arley Villages by Owen Stain:

Mr. Douglas (the poor mans solicitor) used to walk from Arley to Coleshill for meetings – I'm told he refused a car offered by Squire Weston – the working man – these principles I'm afraid didn't make him very popular with Upper Buffers of the Village. Billy Robbins was a well built gentleman – who really enjoyed his pint, or should I say his pints. I can remember the Church had a Men's service once a year on a Sunday Afternoon which he used to attend, this being after a morning session at the 'Wagon'. Bill mainly slept through the Sermon.

Then there was old Harry Whitmore who used to work for Mr. Bert Stain who supplied Horses and Carts for various jobs round the pit and villages. One such job was to empty the sewer buckets around the village and I can see him now when his cart was full riding on the shafts, probably having a bite of bread and cheese and not care how much was spilling on the road – that's if you could call them roads – so many humps and hollows. He and his wife lived in an old wooden hut in Mr. Stain's field, it could have been an old railway carriage, I'm not sure. Characters all and of course many more as I mentioned earlier. You don't seem to have these today, I suppose it's because the people of the village are not so closely knit, although there is all round friendship.

Going back to our school days, our leisure time was spent playing in the backs or for the boys playing football on the Rec, that is if someone could produce a football! There seemed to be seasons for various games – Marbles, Whip and Top, Bowl – this being an old bike wheel and hit with a stck. In season we played Conkers, I think I only got to a Conker Oner no matter how long I baked them in the oven for

before putting them on the string ready to do battle. Running the gand around the backs with a knotted scarf was what we did mostly in the Winer months. When one was caught, just a quick slap on the backside and then he took over the chasing. All in all I don't think we must grumble about our young years. No one had much money and us young-uns made our own enjoyment. When we look back we can talk and have a good laugh and say, 'The Good Old Days', but, were they? At least our parents didn't have to worry about our safety. We were all in a gang together and I'm sure we didn't cause too much trouble

the other householders – just a little bit of a nuisance now and again running up and down the entries.

The Church as I stated earlier, is mainly 12th century. Electricity wasn't installed until the 1920's, previous lighting being Oil lamps. In our younger days we attended Church on a regular basis, I don't think we were forced to go, but it was a recognised practice we did. There was always Sunday School. I suppose this was more of an attraction knowing there was usually an outing one day during the Summer. Canon King was the rector till 1947 when he retired. Then came the Rev. Hugh Artus who was an ex Naval Chaplain. I know he trusted in the Lord because he used to go out of the pit yard on his H>R>D. motor bike as though there was no other traffic on the road, with cassock flowing!! This was after preaching at St. Michael's and was returning home. The pit yard entrance or exit in the case I'm stating was just past the railway Bridge, which was blocked off when Spinney Close was developed. Another little tale about him – there was a fault on the electric organ in the Church and he asked my Father if he could rectify it – which he did. Thanking Dad for his trouble he said, 'For that Arthur I'll will bury you for nothing', but I stress he didn't!. Talking about my Father and Church, whenever we attended a funeral service, a bier used to transport the coffin into the Church it was old fashioned with very big wheels. He would say to us, 'Please don't ever think of putting me on that when the time comes – promise'. We didn't and carried him shoulder high instead; so he had his wish.

In the Summer months Cricket came to the fore in the village. One match in particular was looked forward to each year – the game against Haunchwood Brick and Tile Co. This was a very competitive match, the Knox brothers in opposition and it attracted many supporters from both sides. Local cricket at its best, both sides recruiting the best of the talent available. These days of course the Cricket Pitch was a sacred patch. No-one was allowed to put a foot over the boundary line(only the players of course)not even when there was no match on. Mr. Parrot was the groundsman and he was really a 'hawk eye'. If anyone did break the rules and seemed to get away with it, he caught you next, having seen you through his house window.

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH)

More true stories about Whitacre from our friend Anne:

Next door to my grandparents lived a Mr. & Mrs. Wadmore, a childless couple who seemed quite elderly to me. We shared a toilet with the Wadmores, it had holes in the seat, one small and normal size, so I presume it was not unknown for a child to accompany a parent when they had to go. It was a source of constant anxiety to me that I would walk in on Mr. Wadmore, as he didn't always lock the door. I always did, although I was forbidden to take the key which hung on a string through a cotton reel and hung behind the kitchen door, but even as a child I couldn't bear to be looked at when I was in the toilet. I think they thought I might lock myself in and not be able to get out, but I insisted on turning the big key in the lock before I settled down to do 'my duty'.

Mr. Wadmores wife was a wizened little woman who my Grandma called Annie, she had no teeth and wore a shawl over her head as some of the ex-mill girls still did then. When we met her going to the 'beer off' with a jug for a 'gill' of beer for Mr. Wadmore, she grinned toothlessly at me. I thought she looked like a witch and hid behind my grandmother. Next door to the Wadmores lived Mr. & Mrs. Eckersley and Mrs. Eckersley's brother, 'deaf and dumb Ernest'. The grunts that Ernest made in an attempt to communicate bothered me. Once when I was passing the outhouse where he did some shoe mending and he beckoned me making his odd guttural noises, I was a bit scared, but this was before the days when children were taught to be wary of everyone they meet, so I went to him. He just pressed two mintoes into my hand and waved me on my way. It seems such a shame that children today have to be suspicious of everyone and yet most men like gentle Ernest, love children and would never think of harming hem. But you can never be sure and its better to be safe than sorry. Uncle Jack was the kind of man who loved children and would pick them up and swing them around. When he was a young man he swung a toddler over his head and the child had a fit in mid air. After that he was too frightened to play with children in a rough physical way.

Another neighbour was a Mrs. Hunt who lived at the top of the street with her family. when I was staying in Old mill Lane I used to play with her son John who was about my age. There was some mystery to

about Mrs. Hunt and her situation. I heard my mother talking to Grandma and asking was still living 'tally'. She mouthed the word tally, so that I wouldn't hear. What was 'tally', I didn't know but found out later, it meant living with someone and not being married to them. In those days it was considered shameful to live together without marriage lines and people were ostracised sometimes because of it. How different is the attitude today. My son lived happily with his girlfriend for about twelve years and they have a little boy. They have been so long together I forget they are not married and always call Wendy my daughter - in - law and woe betide anyone who dares to say anything about my grandson.

It's amazing the things they try to keep from children then. No-one spoke of periods, it was just hinted that so and so was poorly, and if a woman had an hysterectomy it was referred to as 'having everything taken away', and the word whispered in front of the children. I had nightmares about everything being taken away. I thought they removed all their insides and I was terrified of it happening to my mother. Mrs. Rivers, who was my favourite among Grandma's neighbours had everything taken away, but she didn't really look too much different to me. Mrs. Rivers kept the 'beer off' right at the top of Old Mill Lane and when it was time for us all to go home after our holidays she always gave us 1/- each and sweets every time we went into the shop. The year I passed the scholarship she gave me 2/6 for being a good scholar.

Although our holidays were usually in the Summer, I do remember spending one Christmas in Barnsley and that year we slept at Auntie Nelly's on Christmas Eve. She had a large noisy family and we thought it was great fun being there. She died in 1947 so it must have been when Dad was still in the army we stayed there but can't remember exactly when. On Christmas Eve we hung our stockings over the mantle shelf and went to bed. Every Christmas Eve we had the same ritual, we climbed the stairs and sang: - Christmas Eve is here, as we climb the stairs. Nod each sleepy head, take our stockings off, Hang them in a row, then jump quickly into bed. Off to sleep we go. Not sure if mother made this rhyme up, but she probably did!

*Thank you Anne for our trip down Memory Lane -to be continued.
Maureen X.*

God in the Garden in April

I have an area of lawn that looks patchy. I have a large willow in my garden whose roots have congregated in this part of my garden, so they drain away the water from this patch quite quickly. Most gardens have a problem area. Perhaps you have an area of soil which never seems to become fruitful, however much you work with it. Short of felling my massive tree(which will never happen) I just have to accept that its chosen to send many of its roots under this particular patch of lawn. It's frustrating but not the end of the world. Every couple of years, around this time of year I simply lay new turf and it looks sparkling fresh for another season. In the Bible, Paul talks about a problem in his life. He describes the problem as a thorn in his flesh. This phrase is used today to describe persistent niggling which doesn't go away.

Even if I choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no-one will think that is warranted by what I do or say, or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me, But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you' for my power is made perfect in weakness, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2Corinthians 12:6-10)

Many explanations have been suggested as to what this thorn actually was. Some people argue Paul was talking about a recurring temptation, some that he was talking about a physical affliction, such as a speech impediment or epilepsy, and others he was talking about a person. If these arguments are still not answered to anyone's satisfaction, they are unlikely ever to be answered in this world. Whatever the thorn is, we can all relate to having problem areas, both in our gardens and in our lives. What is remarkable about Paul is his attitude to the 'thorn'. He could have let it drive him to distraction but instead he chose to let it drive him onwards in this mission. He trusted that God could even turn this problem area to good and praised God that the thorn reminded him God delights in weakness. As we consider problem areas in life and in the garden, we can change our attitude.

Father God, you turn our expectations upside down. Where there is less of me, there is more of you. Thank you God that you are loving and powerful. Thank you God that even my weaknesses are a tool to be used in your service. Help change my attitude, and encourage me rather than discourage me. Amen

First, there is Jesus, the leader and prophet from Galilee. When his popularity was at its apex in Jerusalem just the week before, many had considered him the Messiah. But on Friday, his enemies had succeeded executing him by crucifixion. There are soldiers guarding his tomb. Why? His enemies had heard a report that Jesus was supposed to "rise again" on the third day. Preposterous, his enemies said, but they could take no chances. If there were a guard — especially a Roman guard — his disciples wouldn't dare steal the body and claim he'd been raised. Keep a lid on any stories that might re-enflame the populace — that was the plan. In the moist, bone-chilling darkness, the soldiers huddle around a sputtering fire that flickers ghostly images amidst the shadows of tombs. They're not afraid, mind you, just ill at ease, anxious for the dawn that will soon brighten the horizon. Jesus' disciples figure in the story, too, but they *are* afraid — terrified that they too will be arrested because of their close association with Jesus. They're in hiding within the city. "No worries from them now," their enemies smirk. Crowds of pilgrims that had swelled Jerusalem to the bursting point over the Passover weekend have gone home now, back to their villages, bearing a disquieting story of how the Galilean healer had been killed. They are still angry, of course, but the danger of riot over the Nazarene's trial and execution is past. That's how things stood just before dawn. Sad, tragic. So much hope, so much promise. But now it had come to nothing. A movement so full exuberance had been crushed — its famous leader cut down, its lieutenants in hiding, its followers scattered. But after the storm, life must go on. And now we meet Mary Magdalene. She has been one of the Nazarene's most devoted followers. She and some of the women have risen very early to honour the teacher's body and are headed for the garden tomb just outside the city walls. Within the sepulchre he lies, cold and lifeless on a rock slab. Mary Magdalene had been there Friday night. Her own hands had helped wash and prepare the body. The women turn from the lane into the cemetery garden, walking numbly, one foot in front of the other. Suddenly Mary looks up and shouts: "The stone has been moved!" She runs into the garden, past remnants of a smoky fire, soldiers' equipment in disarray, abandoned in haste. She sprints to the now-open tomb. The ribbon and Roman seal that have guaranteed its security hang limply in the morning air. "Where is he?" she shrieks, and ducks inside. The darkness of the tomb and the concrete-like odour of fresh-cut limestone at the back of her mouth overwhelm her for a moment. As her eyes adjust, there on a shelf chiselled from the wall of the cave, she can make out grave clothes, neatly folded. But where is Jesus? Grave-robbers! Out in a flash, she begins to run back into the city. "I'll tell Peter and John," she calls as she speeds on. In a few moments, the disciple-women will see an angel who

tells them, "He is risen!" But by now, Mary is back in Jerusalem. She pauses for a moment at the head of the street where the disciples are staying. Hands on her legs, heaving, trying to catch her breath. Now she pounds on the door. "Peter, Peter!" After a long pause, the disciple who, until recently, everyone acknowledged as the leader, opens the door a crack, looks up the street, then down it. Finally, he motions Mary inside and quickly shuts the door. "Somebody has taken his body out of the tomb! We can't find him!" Now Peter and John are in panic mode. They pull on tunics and sandals and dash towards the cemetery. Mary follows. Slowly now, head down, she walks and weeps. By the time she arrives back at the tomb, Peter and John have come and gone. The women are nowhere to be seen. She pauses by the door for a long moment, weeping uncontrollably. Then she gathers herself and steps into the cold chamber. The sun is rising now, casting long shadows across the garden. But this time, the tomb seems lit, also. Two men in bright white, dressed in long robes that extend down to their feet, rise as she enters. "Why are you crying?" She sobs out her story. "They have taken my Lord away, and I don't know where they have put him." She dissolves into tears. When she looks up the men are gone. She turns. There, the sun silhouetting him in the doorway, is yet another man — the gardener, she supposes. Perhaps he'll know. "Why are you crying?" he asks quietly. "Who are you looking for?" She begins her sad tale for a third time, of grave robbers who have desecrated the tomb and of the teacher who had healed her and restored her very life to wholeness. "If you have taken him," she pleads, "tell me where his body is and I'll see that it is retrieved. There'll be no trouble." "Mary!" The voice so familiar. She looks up in sudden recognition. "Rabbi!" she cries and falls at his feet. It is Jesus. It is the Lord. He is not dead. He is risen from the grave. He is alive. He is resurrected as he had said. The storm has passed and the sun has broken through the clouds into a new day. What does it mean? What did it mean to Mary? First, her discredited Lord no longer lay in shame. He had been authenticated by God himself who had raised him from the dead. With his lifeless body in the tomb, confusing doubts had come. But now, everything he had taught took on new meaning. She actually *was* forgiven by God. He *would* return. It was all true. True indeed! Jesus stayed with them on and off for more than a month. Then one day he ascended into heaven. But his Spirit lingered and spread. Over the next few years, Mary would watch the Christian movement grow in spurts, from 100 to 3,000 in a single day. Then to 5,000 men — more than a fifth of the Jerusalem's entire population. Persecution came, but instead of snuffing out this story of the resurrection of the Son of God, persecution caused it to spread worldwide.

JEREMY:

Jeremy was born with a twisted body and a slow mind. At the age of 12, he was still in his second year, seemingly unable to learn. His teacher, Doris Miller, often became exasperated with him. He would squirm in his seat, and make grunting noises. At other times, he spoke clearly and distinctly, as if a spot of light had penetrated the darkness of his brain. Most of the time, however, Jeremy just irritated his teacher. One day she called his parents and asked them to come in for a consultation. As the Forresters entered the empty classroom, Doris said to them, "Jeremy really belongs in a special school. It isn't fair to him to be with younger children who don't have learning problems. Why, there is a five-year gap between his age and that of the other students." Mrs. Forrester cried softly into a tissue, while her husband spoke. "Miss Miller," he said there is no school of that kind nearby. It would be a terrible shock for Jeremy if we had to take him out of this school. We know he really likes it here." Doris sat for a long time after they had left, staring at the snow outside the window. Its coldness seemed to seep into her soul. She wanted to sympathise with the Forresters. After all, their only child had a terminal illness. But it wasn't fair to keep him in her class. She had 18 other youngsters to teach, and Jeremy was a distraction. Furthermore, he would never learn to read and write. Why waste any more time trying? As she pondered the situation, guilt washed over her. Here I am she thought. Lord, please help me to be more patient with Jeremy.

From that day on, she tried hard to ignore Jeremy's noises and his blank stares. Then one day, he limped to her desk, dragging his bad leg behind him. "I love you, Miss Miller!" he exclaimed, loud enough for the whole class to hear. The other students snickered, and Doris' face turned red. She stammered,-why that's very nice, Jeremy. N--now please take your seat."

Spring came, and the children talked excitedly about the coming of Easter. Doris told them the story of Jesus, and then to emphasize the idea of new life springing forth, she gave each of the children a large plastic egg.

"Now," she said to them, "I want you to take this home and bring it back tomorrow with something inside that shows new life.

Do you understand?" "Yes, Miss Miller," the children responded enthusiastically --all except for Jeremy.

He listened intently; his eyes never left her face. He did not even make his usual noises.

Had he understood what she had said about Jesus' death and resurrection? Did he understand the assignment?

Perhaps she should call his parents and explain the project to them. That evening, Doris' kitchen sink stopped up. She called the landlord and waited an hour for him to come by and unclog it. After that, she still had to shop for

groceries, iron a blouse, and prepare a vocabulary test for the next day. She completely forgot about phoning Jeremy's parents. The next morning, 19 children came to school, laughing and talking as they placed their eggs in the large wicker basket on Miss Miller's desk. After they completed their math lesson, it was time to open the eggs.

In the first egg, Doris found a flower. "Oh yes, a flower is certainly a sign of new life," she said. "When plants peek through the ground, we know that spring is here." A small girl in the first row waved her arm. "That's my egg, Miss Miller," she called out.

The next egg contained a plastic butterfly, which looked very real. Doris held it up. "We all know that a caterpillar changes and grows into a beautiful butterfly. Yes, that's new life too." Little Judy smiled proudly and said, "Miss Miller, that one is mine."

Next, Doris found a rock with moss on it. She explained that moss, too, showed life.

Billy spoke up from the back of the classroom, "My Daddy helped me," he beamed.

Then Doris opened the fourth egg. She gasped. The egg was empty.

Surely it must be Jeremy's she thought, and of course, he did not understand her instructions. If only she had not forgotten to phone his parents. Because she did not want to embarrass him, she quietly set the egg aside and reached for another.

Suddenly, Jeremy spoke up. "Miss Miller, aren't you going to talk about my egg?"

Flustered, Doris replied, "But Jeremy, your egg is empty."

He looked into her eyes and said softly, "Yes, but Jesus' tomb was empty, too."

Time stopped. When she could speak again, Doris asked him, "Do you know why the tomb was empty?"

"Oh, yes," Jeremy said, "Jesus was killed and put in there. Then His Father raised Him up."

The recess bell rang. While the children excitedly ran out to the schoolyard, Doris cried. The coldness inside her melted completely away.

Three months later, Jeremy died. Those who paid their respects at the mortuary were surprised to see 19 eggs on top of his casket, all of them were empty.



Arley Easter Eggstravaganser

Join us for the Arley Easter Eggstravaganser
Online Easter bonnet competition
Decorate your windows competition

Easter trail to find the bunny's name
Small gift on the day

Look for us on facebook and join in the fun

Arley Easter Eggstravaganser

Or call 01676542753



Happy
Easter!



Covid:

Lets take a closer look at how months of isolation have affected us all

Stay at home. Protect the NHS. Save lives. That message has been repeated again and again over the past twelve months, as ministers and health officials have urged us to stay inside in order to beat Covid-19. While the majority of the population has kept the rules, the voices of those criticising the lockdown policy have grown louder over time. When the first lockdown began, there were relatively few detractors.

We have all been living under the threat of the virus for many months now, but human beings were not designed to live with ongoing threat, nor the level of uncertainty that the ever-changing regulations have caused. We wonder why we're not sleeping, why our appetites have changed, why we're on edge all the time."

The problems are numerous but interconnected: some are coming to terms with the emotional and physical effects of 'long Covid' while others must deal with the grief of not having been able to say goodbye to a loved one.

Loneliness is an issue that has concerned a lot of us, and so we need to contact those people we know who live alone, just to have a chat and see how they are doing.

May we learn to really value each other, not to see the other as a commodity. The saying goes: 'Love people and use things, but don't use people and love things.' Let us look forward with hope and faith,

I believe we can see a light at the end of a tunnel, so hang on in there,

and soon we will be able to get back to some normality.

Little Quips:

Once, all villagers decided to pray for rain, on the day of prayer all people gathered and only one boy came with an umbrella. That's Faith!

Growing old is mandatory, growing up is optional.

The Pyramids of Egypt are famous because they contain the mummified bodies of ancient Egyptian kings. Westminster Abbey is noted because within its walls there are contained the remains of many nobles and notables. Muhammed's tomb is visited because of the stone coffin and the bones there. Arlington national Cemetery in Washington, DC is revered because it is a resting place for many outstanding Americans. But the Garden Tomb of Jesus is famous because it is empty!



The best way to dress up is to put on a smile. A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at.

Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.(1Samuel 16:7)

God in the Garden in April

I have an area of lawn that looks patchy. I have a large willow in my garden whose roots have congregated in this part of my garden, so they drain away the water from this patch quite quickly. Most gardens have a problem area. Perhaps you have an area of soil which never seems to become fruitful, however much you work with it. Short of felling my massive tree (which will never happen) I just have to accept that it's chosen to send many of its roots under this particular patch of lawn. It's frustrating but not the end of the world. Every couple of years, around this time of year I simply lay new turf and it looks sparkling fresh for another season. In the Bible, Paul talks about a problem in his life. He describes the problem as a thorn in his flesh. This phrase is used today to describe persistent niggling which doesn't go away.

Even if I choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no-one will think that is warranted by what I do or say, or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me, but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you' for my power is made perfect in weakness, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:6-10)

Many explanations have been suggested as to what this thorn actually was. Some people argue Paul was talking about a recurring temptation, some that he was talking about a physical affliction, such as a speech impediment or epilepsy, and others he was talking about a person. If these arguments are still not answered to anyone's satisfaction, they are unlikely ever to be answered in this world. Whatever the thorn is, we can all relate to having problem areas, both in our gardens and in our lives. What is remarkable about Paul is his attitude to the 'thorn'. He could have let it drive him to distraction but instead he chose to let it drive him onwards in this mission. He trusted that God could even turn this problem area to good and praised God that the thorn reminded him God delights in weakness. As we consider problem areas in life and in the garden, we can change our attitude.

Father God, you turn our expectations upside down. Where there is less of me, there is more of you. Thank you God that you are loving and powerful. Thank you God that even my weaknesses are a tool to be used in your service. Help change my attitude, and encourage me rather than discourage me. Amen

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By Ralph Featherstone – born 1846 in Montreal Canada.

My Jesus, I love thee, I know Thou art mine,
For Thee all the pleasures of sin I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art Thou,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

I love Thee because Thou hast first lov`ed me,
And purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree;
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

I'll love Thee in life, I will love Thee in death,
and praise Thee as long as Thou lendest me breath;
and say, when the death-dew lies cold upon my brow;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

In mansions of glory and endless delight,
I'll ever adore Thee and dwell in Thy sight;
I'll sing when the glittering crown - on my brow;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

One story about, 'My Jesus I Love Thee', that Ira D. Sankey, the famed musician for Moody, told is: "A famous actress, walking down the street, passed an open door, through which she saw an invalid girl laying on a couch watching people pass by. Thinking to cheer her up, she went inside. The sick girl was a devout Christian. The actress, impressed with her words, her patience, her submission, her heaven-lit countenance, and the manner in which she lived her religion, was to lead her to seriously consider the claims of Christianity. She was thoroughly converted and became a true follower of Christ. She told her father, the leader of the theatre troupe, of her conversion and her conviction that she could not live a consistent Christian life and still be an actress., she consented to fill the published engagement, that evening came and the father rejoiced. When on stage the actress began to say the words of the first verse, she left the audience in tears..... eventually her father too became a Christian

Holy Week:

We begin with Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter and commemorates Jesus' triumphal ride into Jerusalem, entering on a donkey which symbolises arrival in peace. The crowd waved palm branches, shouting hosanna, a Hebrew word meaning 'save now'.

Maundy Thursday is the day when we remember Jesus sharing the Last Supper with his disciples before his death. Maundy Thursday gets its name from the Latin word *mandare* meaning to command. We remember Jesus' command: 'Love one another as I have loved you'.

He took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. At the Last Supper Jesus washed the disciples' feet. Father, on this the night he was betrayed, your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet. We commit ourselves to follow his example of love and service.

Good Friday is the day when Christians remember the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ. It is a sombre day. Usually, churches meet, pray and reflect on the sacrifice Jesus willingly paid for all our sins. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life

Easter Vigil: The Easter Vigil is the first service of Easter and begins sometime on the evening of Holy Saturday (the day before Easter Day). It begins with a symbolic expectant waiting for the resurrection of Jesus on Easter morning. The Easter Vigil is usually a quiet and thoughtful service, but one full of joy.

On Easter Sunday, churches across England will celebrate because Jesus died for our sins and then rose again.

On the third day after being crucified, Jesus' tomb was found to be empty. He had risen from the dead. Life triumphs over death! The joy of resurrection is possible only because Christ endured death and conquered it





God of grace and mercy, your son Jesus wept at the tomb of his friend Lazarus. Send your Holy Spirit on those who grieve, who struggle, and all who fear. Meet us in our times of questioning, anger, and doubt. Show us what we can do to enable one another to overcome isolation, distress, and despair. And make us a humbler people who know our need of you. In Christ's name. Amen

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*Lord, Yours is the victory, ours is the hope;
Yours is the triumph, ours is the joy;
Yours is the glory, ours is the peace;
Yours is the power, ours is the trust;
Lord, may your risen presence hold us, guide us, and lead us'
Now and forever. Amen*

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Loving Father,

*You have not waited for us to become perfect before loving us;
You have loved us perfectly from the beginning.
Thank you for Jesus, the Friend of sinners,
Who showed us the measure of Your love by laying down his life
for his friends.
Help us make your love known to good and bad alike, and by our
self sacrifice to proclaim forgiveness and freedom to every man,
woman and child.
May the story of Easter become the message our lives proclaim.
May the joy of the disciples become the joy we radiate.
May the Christ who is risen be our living Lord today. Amen ,*

Prayer for each day during April:

1	Lord, we pray you will bless Rev. John and Frances with your healing as they continue to do your good work throughout our Parishes
2	Good Friday – God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son
3	During Holy week may we be aware of your overwhelming love for us
4	Easter Day – May your risen presence Lord hold, guide and lead us
5	Bless all who are sick in body, mind or spirit with Your healing love Lord
6	Thank you Lord for answering our prayers and our anxieties
7	Let us begin a new start as we look forward to enjoying Spring
8	Praying for all the unrest in the world – help us to make peace
9	Thank You Creator God for all the wonderful joys you bring each season
10	We give thanks for our families and friends who are so precious to us
11	We look forward to attending Church soon and resume our fellowship
12	Praying for the elderly, the lonely – may they all feel your presence Lord
13	Let us all pray for strength to help us cope with what lies ahead for us all
14	Pray for those that mourn – continue Lord to give them comfort
15	Do not be anxious for anything – trust in our Lord He will sustain you
16	Let us look out for our neighbours and see if they need a helping hand
17	We give thanks for Covid vaccination that will help many of us keep well
18	Thank you God for all frontline workers during this very difficult time
19	Praying for all school children and students as they return to education
20	Lord, keep our faith strong and help us to continue to focus on You
21	Giving a piece of your heart is better than giving a piece of your mind
22	Worry doesn't improve the future, it only ruins the present
23	When God saves us, our sins are forgiven and forgotten forever
24	A person who knows God's Love shows God's Love.
25	Pray for all living in sheltered dwellings around our villages
26	Remember like a compass, the Bible always points you in the right direction – follow your heart that leads to our Lord
27	As a Christian, Kindness comes from your heart, - share it
28	Our purpose on earth is not to get used to the dark but to walk in the light
29	Bless all families Lord and bring them peace and understanding
30	Fill us with hope as we look forward and enjoy Spring Time

Census 2021 'Be Scam Aware'

Census Day is Sunday 21 March 2021. After Census Day, at the end of March and into April, census field officers will be visiting households from which they have not received a completed census form. They will encourage people to complete the census and help residents to access further help if they need it.

Scammers may seek to use the Census as an opportunity to perpetrate doorstep, telephone, and online scams, so it is important to remember the following:

- At no point will you be asked for your national insurance number, passwords, bank account details, or your credit or debit card numbers, nor any payment
- You will not receive any payment for completing the census, so any offers of money in exchange for your account details will be fraudulent
- You will not be called for information about the census unless you've made an appointment with the Census Contact Centre or made a query or complaint
- No-one will enter your home in relation to the census
- Help to fill out your form is free (for more information visit: <https://census.gov.uk/> or phone 0800 141 2021)
- You can report a fraud direct to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or visit: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

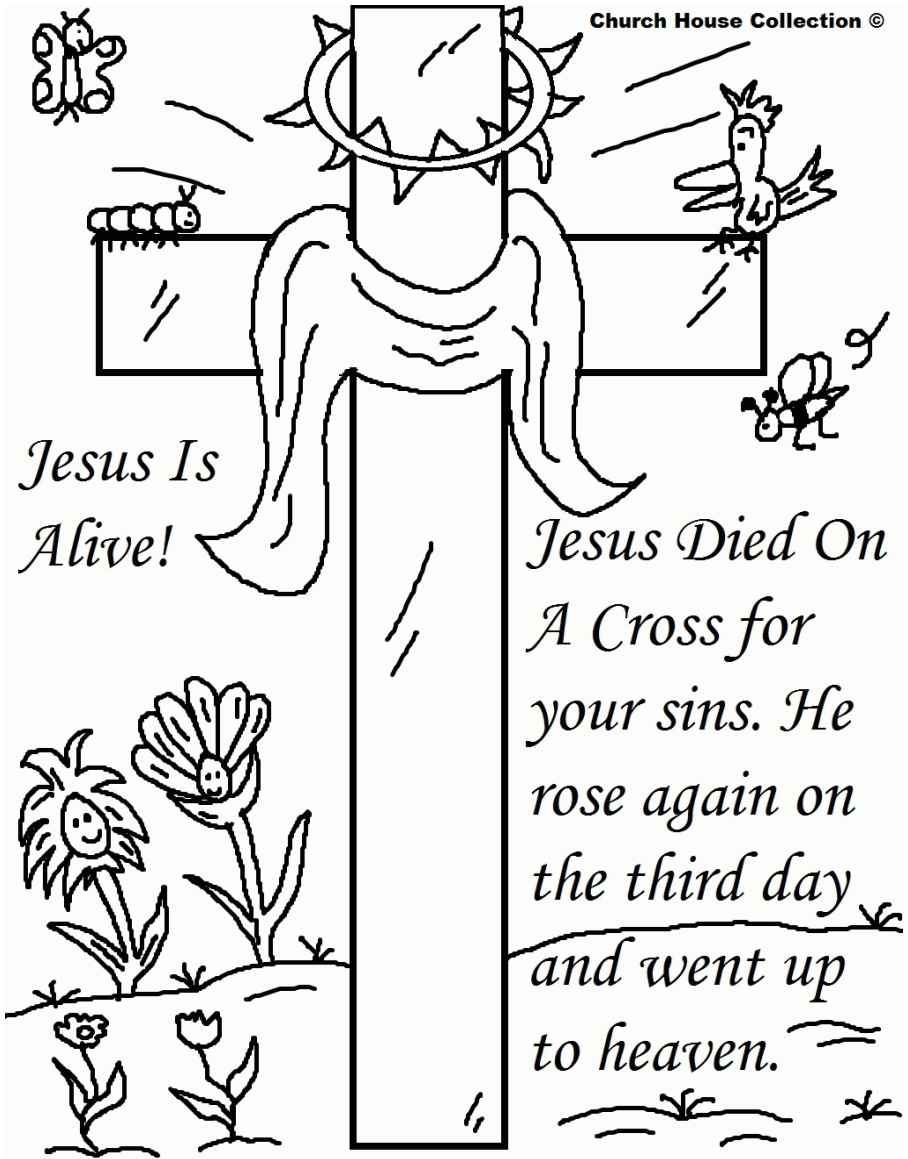
Damp Proof Scam Warning

Warwickshire homeowners have reported receiving nuisance phone calls from people informing them that someone will visit their property to check for damp. The callers were also asking about the resident's financial situation. Offering free surveys is sometimes a way for unscrupulous businesses to access people's properties so they can apply the 'hard sell' and carry out often very expensive and unnecessary insulation work. Put the phone down immediately on cold callers and never buy goods or services from unexpected callers, either on the doorstep or over the phone. For more information visit: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/consumeradvice>

Bogus Royal Mail Parcel Delivery

More residents are reporting receiving bogus emails stating that Royal Mail has attempted to deliver a parcel to them without success and now requires 'additional details' in order to attempt to re-deliver the parcel, as the 'address appears to be incomplete'. The emails contain a 'book your delivery' link that directs you to a bogus website. Never click on a link in a suspicious email. For more information on scam emails visit: <https://www.getsafeonline.org/protecting-yourself/spam-and-scam-email/>

Simon Cripwell.Trading Stdrd Off: 01926 738987 or 07771 975570.



Dwelling in the shadow of the Most High:

Are you dwelling in the secret place of the most High? Perhaps you are feeling severely pressurised financially, physically, or spiritually. If you felt that it was hard to get up this morning to face a new day, I want to ask you a question: are you abiding under the shadow of the Almighty?

I'd like you to picture a massive rock in your mind. In Zimbabwe, Africa, one sees the most incredible rock formations. Massive boulders balance on top of one another. It is a very hot place in the dry season, just before it rains, but if you take shelter underneath the shade of one of those rocks, it is wonderfully cool and refreshing. The rocks are so large, they never heat up or grow cold and the temperature remains comfortable.

I believe the Holy Spirit wants us to abide under the shadow of Almighty God. Come out of the heat before you do anything else today. Come aside and he will give you rest and refresh you. He will give you strength to see this day through.

Make it a habit first thing every day – before the cares, heat and pressure of the day get to you to spend some time under the shadow of the Almighty in the cleft of the Rock. Your day will go far more smoothly. No problem will be too big for you because you will have your eyes fixed on Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of your faith. (Taken from Psalm 91:1)

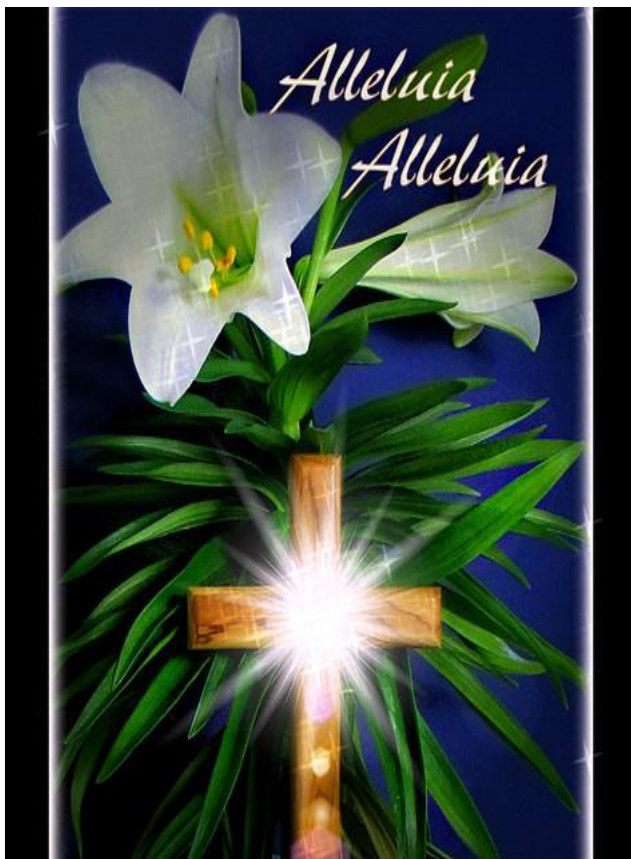
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In the Garden:

My Dad used to love to sing the old hymns. One of his favourites was 'In the Garden'. A few years back, we sang it at his funeral. The chorus is simple: 'And He walks with me, and He talks with me, He tells me I am His own, and the joy we share, as we tarry there none other has ever known' That song brought joy to my Dad – as it does to me.

Hymn writer C. Austin Miles, says he wrote this song in Spring 1912 after reading chapter 20 of the Gospel of John. 'As I read it that day, I seemed to be part of the scene. I became a silent witness to that dramatic moment in Mary's life when she knelt before her Lord and cried, 'Rabboni ' (Teacher)' In John 20, we find Mary Magdalene weeping near Jesus' empty tomb. –There she met a man who asked why she was crying. Thinking the man was a gardener, she spoke with the risen Saviour – Jesus! Her sorrow turned to joy, and she ran to tell the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'. We too have the assurance that Jesus is risen!. He's now in heaven with the Father, but He hasn't left us on our own. Believers in Christ have his Spirit inside us, and through Him we have the assurance and joy of knowing He's with us, and we are 'His own'.

Jesus, I'm so thankful You're alive and as Your child You live in me!'



*If you wish to contribute to the Newsletter with your own testimonies, stories Or memories from years ago – we would love to hear from you. Please contact Maureen or John on 02476.394802 or send us an e-mail to strowgerhouse@btinternet.com Many thanks.

**EASTER DAY SERVICE WILL BE AT ST. LAURENCE CHURCH
ANSLEY 10.30am April 4th.**

NB. www.arleycofechurches.org.uk/