



GROWING TOGETHER

Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

This year Holy Week and Easter will seem very strange. No church services, no family gatherings. Perhaps we can identify with the disciples on the evening of the first Easter Day, huddled away together in the Upper Room, with the door locked, because they were afraid. Jesus appeared to them, and we can also know that he is with us today.



Palm Sunday

Holy Week is the most important week in the Christian calendar. This year we might have more time than usual on our own, to reflect on the events of Holy Week day by day, walking with Jesus towards Good Friday and the cross. The gospel reading for Palm Sunday is a long one: **Matthew chapter 26 verse 14 to the end of chapter 27**. Why not read it all on Palm Sunday (if we had been in church then it would have taken the place of the sermon), then, during the week, re-read and reflect on a little bit of it each day, ending on Easter Eve.

If we have entered into Jesus' sufferings in Holy Week, then Easter Day comes as a sudden, joyful, change of direction. *Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed! Alleluia!* But we come back to the disciples in the Upper Room. They were feeling helpless and afraid, as many of us may be now. Jesus stood among them with words of reassurance and hope, and we can let those words speak to us today. *Peace be with you.* Words so important that we say them to each other at every Communion service. Because Jesus is risen from the dead, we know that he has conquered death, the ultimate enemy. That's why we can have peace. The apostle Paul put it like this at the end of Romans chapter 8:



I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow – not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.

This Easter, we may not be able to meet with each other, but we can still keep in touch by phone or social media. There are no church services, but Radio 4 has a Sunday morning service and BBC1 has Songs of Praise. If you have access to the internet, you can find live streaming of services at Chester cathedral and very many local churches around the country. Above all, we can pray for each other. There will be sadness, but Easter brings hope.

My prayer for you is from the end of Paul's 2nd letter to the Thessalonians:
Now may the God of peace himself give you his peace at all times and in every situation. The Lord be with you all.

with love and Prayers,

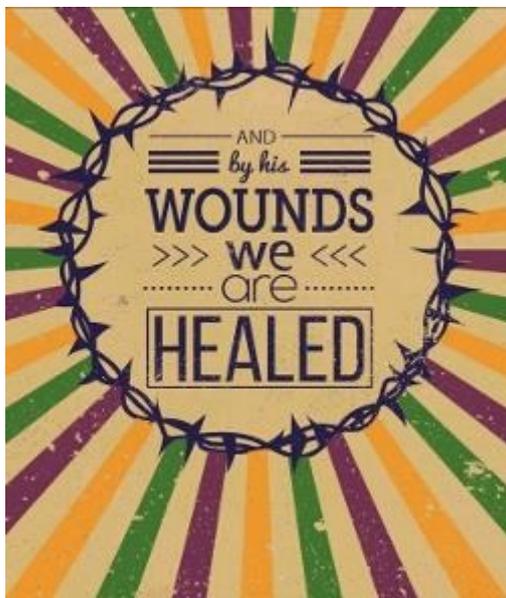
Helen Browne

In GROWING TOGETHER:

HUMOUR

PUZZLE PAGE

CELEBRATIONS



A Good Friday poem

Three 't's on the scrubby hill, neatly crossed the Roman way,
The naked 'i's, skewered like worms, dotted burgundy with blood,
As clear to the passing eye as three billboards by a roadside:

Death to the thief. Death to the rebel. Death to the author of life,
Not even important enough to murder on His own, He,
Just one in three, the uprooted vine stretched out on a barren tree:

The anointed poured out, the gift scorned
The able disabled, the healer torn,
The way barred, the truth buried,
The life killed, the door bouldered,
The King mocked, the reconciler, reviled,

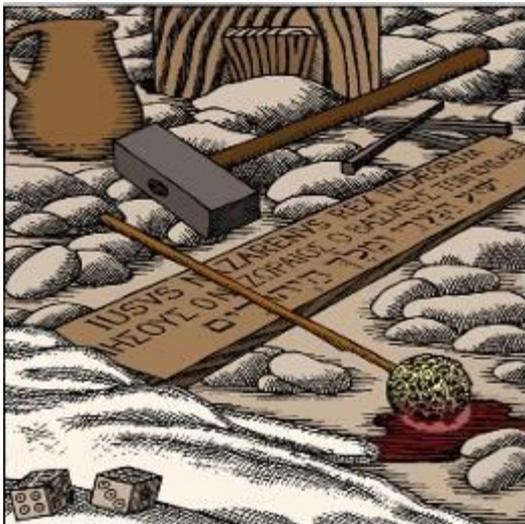


Grace, beauty, glory in spited spittle defiled,
The light snuffed out... Darkness at noon,
The world dancing to its self-enthroning tune,
The shepherd like a lamb to such slaughter.
The teacher taught his final lesson. In torture.

I know, I know on this Good Friday, that Sunday is but a blink away.
But this Friday is each and every year our 'why' day.

I look up from the water eddying out of the bathroom sink,
And see the billboard on the wall in front of me:
Whose rebellion required such grim reparations?
For whom would love submit to such savage butchery?
And the face on the billboard mouths slowly back, "Me".

By Mark Greene



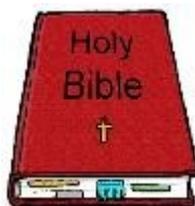
Passionflower

Why is the passionflower called the passionflower? This beautiful climbing plant that grows in many of our gardens, was discovered in South America by Spanish missionaries centuries ago. Drawings were sent back to Europe and in 1609 an Italian priest interpreted the flower to represent the crucifixion, otherwise known as the Passion. The five petals and five sepals represent the 10 disciples who remained steadfast (Judas and Peter both abandoned Jesus). The corona is the crown of thorns. The stigma is the cross or nails, and the five stamens are the number of wounds Jesus received.



BIBLE READINGS FOR APRIL

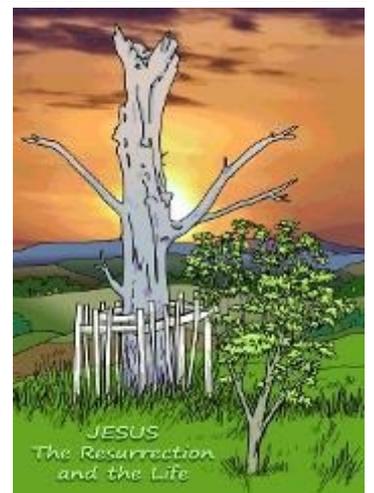
5th April
Philippians 2: 5-11
Matthew 26: 14-27: 66



19th April
Acts 2: 14a, 22-32
John 20: 19-31

12th April
Acts 10: 34-43
Matthew 28: 1-10

26th April
Acts 2:14a, 36-41
Luke 24: 13-35



April - Palm Sunday: Jesus at the gates of Jerusalem

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, when the Church remembers how Jesus arrived at the gates of Jerusalem just a few days before the Passover was due to be held. He was the Messiah come to his own people in their capital city, and yet he came in humility, riding on a young donkey, not in triumph, riding on a war-horse. As Jesus entered the city, the crowds gave him a rapturous welcome, throwing palm fronds into his path. They knew his reputation as a healer, and welcomed him. But sadly the welcome was short-lived and shallow, for Jerusalem would soon reject her Messiah, and put him to death. On this day churches worldwide will distribute little crosses made from palm fronds in memory of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem.



IMPORTANT

As you will know by now, that there will be no church services, meetings or groups at St Michael's until further notice. The Churchwardens will keep you updated as and when we get any information. We will put this information on our Facebook page, Website and in Patchwork. If you want ask any questions please contact the Churchwardens, their details are on the back page or you can email them on warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk

Thank you Colin & Rosemary
Churchwardens

Palm waving

It was Palm Sunday, but five-year-old Jamie stayed at home with mum because of a bad cold. When his father and sisters returned, they were carrying several palm fronds. His sister explained: "People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by." "That's not fair!" Jamie protested. "The one Sunday I don't go, and He shows up!"

Psalm 22: Why have you forsaken me?

'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Psalm 22:1 & Matt 27:46). *Where is God?* is a common question voiced today and shared by Jesus on the cross on the first Good Friday. This question is answered in the psalm, as we look through the lens of Jesus' crucifixion.

It is a real question: Both David and Jesus question God about the pain and darkness of their experience. It is a real question for all suffer, yet they are still able to hold onto a God of love, who has their lives in His hands: *'Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises.'* (3).

It requires faith to ask: Their complaint about the apparent absence of God is not a sign of losing faith in Him. David remembers those who have trusted God in the past and been saved from their troubles: *'In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted and You delivered them.'* (4). Just like Jesus on the cross, we are able to entrust ourselves *'to Him who judges justly.'* (1 Peter 2:23).

It is answered in experience: When David cried out to God, he experienced his deliverance: *'For He has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; He has not hidden His face from him but has listened to his cry for help.'* (24). As a result, David was able to praise God and witness to His faithfulness.

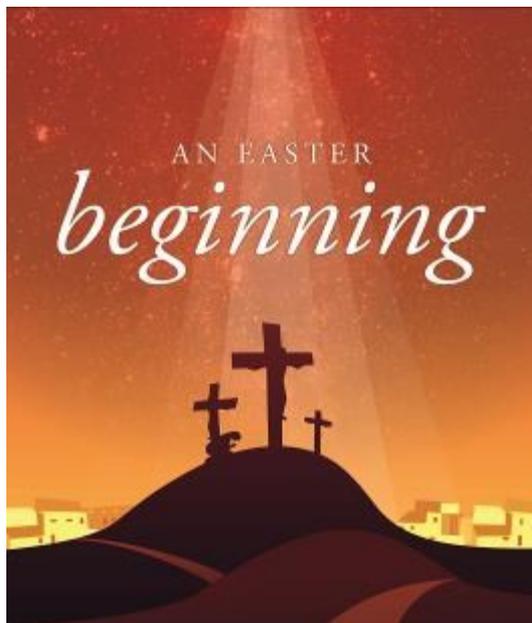
The fulfilment of these verses are seen in Jesus' resurrection, which we celebrate on Easter Sunday. He was vindicated by God and has become the source of life and hope for all who trust themselves to Him.

In answer to the question *'Where is God?'*, we hear the answer, *'Look to the cross of Jesus!'*

April - GOOD FRIDAY: the day the Son of God died for you

Good Friday is the day on which Jesus died on the cross. He was crucified at 9am in the morning, and died six hours later, at 3pm. It is the most solemn day in the Christian year, and is widely marked by the removal of all decorations from churches. In Lutheran churches, the day was marked by the reading of the passion narrative in a gospel, a practice which lies behind the 'passions' composed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750). Both the St Matthew Passion and the St John Passion have their origins in this observance of Good Friday. The custom of observing a period of three hours' devotion from 12 midday to 3 pm on Good Friday goes back to the 18th century. The 'Three Hours of the Cross' often take the form of an extended meditation on the 'Seven Last Words from the Cross', with periods of silence, prayer, or hymn-singing.





What God looks like

An infants teacher was observing her classroom of children while they drew. One little girl was working away furiously, and so she asked her what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a beat, the little girl replied, "They will in a minute."



65 years ago, on 15th April 1955 that American fast-food pioneer Ray Kroc opened his first McDonald's franchise in Des Plaines, Illinois.

15 years ago, on 2nd April 2005 that Pope John Paul II died.

If you have any recipes like these two, that people might like. Please email me at warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk and I will put them in the Magazine

Two Recipes to try while you are isolated

Vegetable Soup

This will make 12–8oz or 250ml portions to freeze

Ingredients 8oz / 250 grams of:-

Frozen Onions, Frozen Green beans cut into small pieces, Fresh Carrots, Potatoes, Celery chopped.

5 Knorr Vegetable Stock Cubes or pots.

Put 2½ pints / 2½ litres water in a large pan.

Bring everything to the boil and simmer for a least 1½ hours add salt and pepper to taste.

Version 1– puree and season

Version 2– add 8oz / 250 grams of lentils and another pint of water , simmer for 20 mins– then puree

Milk can be added for a richer soup and any vegetables can be added to the basic recipe, broccoli, cauliflower etc.

Enjoy



Sticky Blob

8oz of Self Raising Flour

4oz Margarine

4oz Castor Sugar

1 Medium Egg

Milk to mix

Jam

Oven 200°C or 400F Gas Mk 6

Grease the baking tray

Rub in fat to flour, stir in sugar. Mix to a stiff dough with the egg and milk– gauge milk 1 tbsp. at a time

Roll into walnut size pieces. Dough rises so this mix make 24.

Press thumb in the middle and fill the hole with jam, lemon curd or orange curd.

Bake for 15mins and cool on a wire rack.

If you don't want jam etc, you can add chocolate drops, smarties or cherries etc.

Keep them in an airtight tin. If you want you can warm them in a microwave before eating.



"The organist isn't too sure about it, he says he can't play that fast."

Rise in people living alone

The number of middle-aged 'bachelors' (aged 45–64) who live on their own is soaring. They now make up 1.4 million of the 8.2 million single households in the country. Overall, there are 27.8 million homes in the UK, according to the Office for National Statistics' 2019 figures on families and households.

How well do you get on with your neighbours?

If you tend to be quiet and courteous, rather than actually friendly with the people living near you, you are not alone – it is a growing trend. A recent study by the Co-op and Neighbourhood Watch has found that there is a shift away from neighbours becoming friends. In fact, it seems that only one in five of us who are homeowners/renters say that we would even *want* to be friendlier with our neighbours. These days, the best way to be a good neighbour seems to be keeping an eye on the house during holidays, not being nosy, and taking parcels around. The worst include being noisy, having dogs that bark all the time, and leaving their poo on the pavement.

William Wordsworth – the 'Church of England pantheist'

William Wordsworth, the Romantic poet always associated with the Lake District, was born 250 years ago, on 7th April 1770. He was Poet Laureate from 1843 to 1850, though he produced no new poetry during that period. In his youth Wordsworth travelled in France and came to share the radical politics of the French Revolution. He also fell in love with Annette Vallon, by whom he had a daughter in 1792. They were kept apart by the difficult relationship between England and France, but eventually met again, and the poet supported his daughter, though he married Mary Hutchinson, a friend of his beloved sister and muse, Dorothy. He had five children with Mary, three of whom predeceased them. Wordsworth's political views soon softened, and he never rejected Christianity. He has been described as a "Church of England pantheist" and saw himself as a people's poet. He produced *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 with his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who inspired his last great poem, *The Prelude*. Many Christians, especially those in the Anglo-Catholic movement, deeply admired Wordsworth. During his later years and in the next generation, he was regarded as a defender of the Faith. He himself seemed content that many found his poetry helpful in trying times.

The big surprise lurking in your Granny's chicken soup

Granny always knew her chicken soup was good for you when you were poorly, but she did not realise quite *how* good. Now research has found that the traditional hot broths used in many cultures to battle flu and fevers pack a bigger punch than even the cooks realised. A range of soups, ranging from vegetable to beef and chicken, were discovered to have the power to interrupt the life cycle of *Plasmodium falciparum*, which causes 99 per cent of deaths from malaria. Some of them were actually as effective as a leading antimalarial drug, dihydroartemisinin, in fighting malaria. No one particular ingredient was found to be common to the broths, but there certainly seems to be "evidence that they contain antibiotic properties", according to one doctor. The study was carried out at the Imperial College London and Great Ormond Street Hospital.



Intercession

Pray for your neighbours – lift them to the Lord!
Thank Him for all that they have done for you!
Claim for your friends the promise of His Word;
In intercession we find strength anew.

Ask of the Lord, and surely you'll receive
Seek now His will, and surely you will find
Knock at His door, and truly we believe
In intercession we see God is kind.

Come to the Lord, for He is always there!
Our worries, cares, and our concerns we bring;
O waste no time, just come to Him in prayer
In intercession we find God the King!

By Nigel Beeton

Hot

What do you call a chocolate bunny that was out in the sun too long? A runny bunny.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



April Birthdays

Congratulations to Ted Owen, Daniel Ratcliffe and Helen Browne who celebrate their birthdays on April 1st, and to Walter Yule who celebrates his birthday on 5th April.

A prayer for communities affected by flooding

For people battered by forceful storms
For communities battling rising floods
For emergency services stretched to the limit
We pray

For farmers losing straw and crops
For shopkeepers losing high street trade
For repeat victims losing strength and hope
We pray

For resilience and resolve to change
For impatience with using flood plains
For commitment to protect riverbanks and coasts
We pray

In Jesus' name we pray

Amen



CONGRATULATIONS

to
Tom & Una Booth
who celebrate their
Diamond Wedding Anniversary
on
26th March 2020

**Congratulations on this milestone
from St Michael's.**

Easter Story

The thud of nails on open palms,
'Father forgive' was all He said,
'Finished' was His final cry,
As death approached God bowed His head.

Born of a woman He entered our world,
Fully man yet fully divine,
Such is the mystery beyond comprehension
That One such as this should step into time.

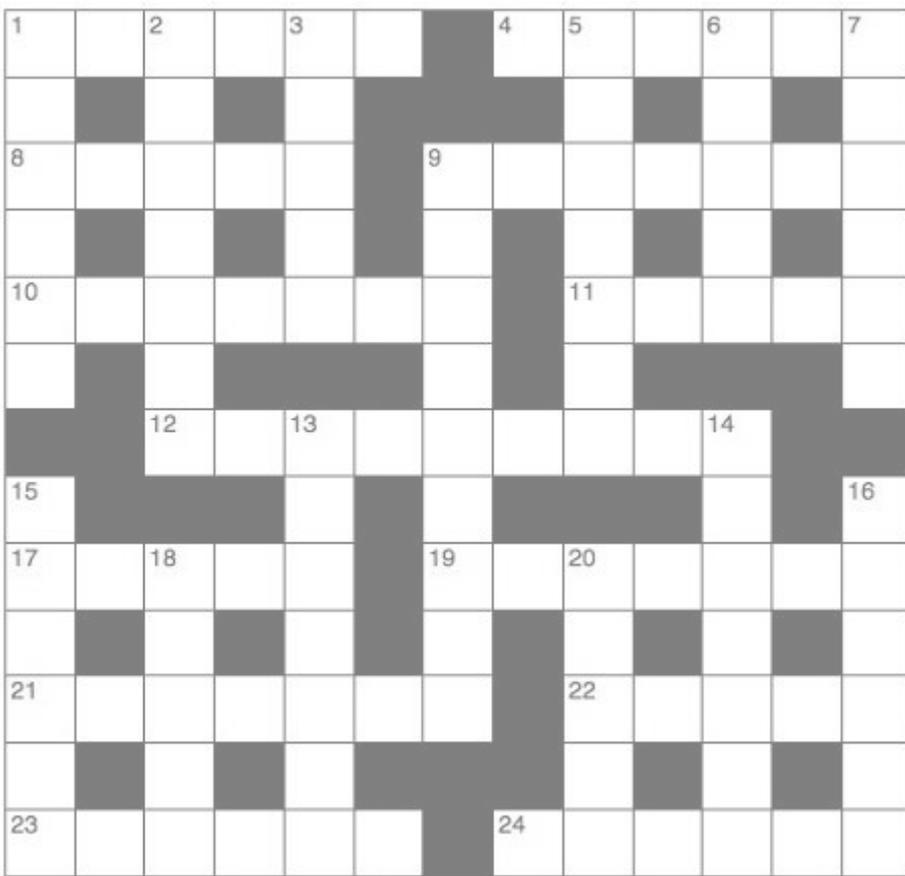
He came to die and rise again
The firstfruits of the Father's love,
That man should follow in His train
On wings of light to realms above.

By Megan Carter

The spread of Coronavirus

Thorough and frequent hand washing with soap and water is recommended by the World Health Organisation as the first step to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. I don't know who first said, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness", but you won't find that phrase in the Bible. Ritual washings are practised by many religions, but they usually signify spiritual cleansing, not physical sanitisation. Piety isn't a substitute for hygiene, nor vice versa. The Coronavirus, now called Covid-19, has been a daily news item for months, with the result that fear is spreading more rapidly than the disease itself. Stock markets throughout the world have plummeted; sales of disinfectant have soared. Sports fixtures have been cancelled, whole towns have been quarantined and worldwide trade is threatened. Statistics change hourly, so anything quoted here will be out of date by the time you read it, but we need to put this plague (if that is what it is) into perspective. Do you remember the Ebola epidemic which swept through regions of Africa from 2014 onwards? More than one in three sufferers died from that virus, but there's now a vaccine which can be used when Ebola threatens. Past influenza pandemics have been nowhere near as severe. 'Asian Flu' in 1957, led to 3,550 deaths in England and Wales, or something like 2.4% of actual cases. In 2009, the fatality figure for the swine flu epidemic was about 0.026%. The figures for today's Covid-14 virus suggest that around 80% of cases are mild, 14% develop severe symptoms, 4% become critically ill and the death rate is 2%. This virus was first publicised by Doctor Li Wenliang, who was detained and censured by the Chinese police for "spreading false rumours". Although he himself subsequently died of the disease, there can be no doubt that his courage saved many lives. There are echoes here of words from St John's Gospel: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." As for the people of China where the virus originated, the Bishop of Newcastle, Christine Hardman, tweeted a Sri Lankan poster, which shows the right Christian attitude. It says, "HATE THE VIRUS, NOT THE CHINESE. Let's pray for them instead".

Amen. And do wash your hands.



CROSSWORD CHALLENGE

See how you get on with this crossword. There is no prize, but whoever gets it back to the Editor by April 22nd will be entered on a Roll of Honour in the next edition of *Growing Together*.

Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
- 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
- 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
- 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
- 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
- 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
- 12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
- 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)
- 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)
- 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
- 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)
- 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
- 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
- 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
- 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
- 5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
- 6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
- 7 He reps (anag.) (6)
- 9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
- 13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)
- 14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
- 15 The human mind or soul (6)
- 16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
- 18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
- 20 Bared (anag.) (5)

P	L	A	N	E	T		R	U	G	G	E	D
A	D		R		I	U	X					
T	R	U	E		A	U	G	U	S	T	U	S
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S	E	R		R		S	L	E				
P	A	R	T	I	C	I	P	A	T	I	O	N
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K	E		A		I		S	A				
C	E	N	S	U	S		A	R	I	S	E	N

March Crossword answer

ROLL OF HONOUR

Congratulations to Jim & Shelagh Goffin, Stan & Wendy Sefton on completing the March crossword



April 2020

Servanthood

How do we say goodbye to someone who we have known for many years and enjoyed their company? We arrange a farewell party! When Jesus prepared to leave, it was very different. He arranged His last meal and it was no party. His disciples were in for a shock. Jesus brought His friends together and then said one of them would betray Him! He then said Peter would deny Him. Although Jesus was the host and should have been honoured, He changed His role and became a servant. He got up from the meal table, removed His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His waist. Jesus humbled Himself and washed the feet of His disciples, much to their dismay and Peter's objection. Jesus showed humility and bestowed honour onto the disciples. They were to do the same, to serve others. They were to learn, as we do, that in God's service it will often be a humbling and sacrificial experience. Jesus said "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for You" (John 13:15)

ARTICLES

News or articles for the next edition of *Growing Together* should be given to Colin Keam by April 22nd. I am looking for articles for the newsletter like people's Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries, praying for people who are sick or in hospital or any interesting or funny anecdotes.

INFORMATION

**Until the vicar is licensed,
any enquiries to the
Churchwardens please.
See below for details**

Churchwardens

Colin Keam 01928 576293
Rosemary Lunt 01928 569863
e-mail: warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk

**If you want to book
a wedding, baptism or funeral
please phone this number
07722470940
and ask for Robbie**



Please Pray



Please remember the following people in your prayers throughout this month.

Romy & Linda Tiongco

José Colley

Liz Adams

Graham & Nicola Aylett

Norah Gamon

Maureen Holden

If you would like us to pray for someone close to you please let the Vicar know. Or if you would like the Pastoral Care Team to visit someone at home don't hesitate to let them know.

....and the recently bereaved, especially any families known to you

John Goulden

Bryan Johnston

All Saints Parish Church Runcorn Bell Restoration Appeal

The bellringers of Runcorn are appealing for your help in the full restoration of the eight 1851-cast bells. The overhaul will cost around **£75,000**.

The ringers have already raised (and spent!) nearly £2000 on new pulleys, but this will only help in the short term. The bells will fall silent in just a few years if they are not rehung by specialists, so your support would be much appreciated.

Contact Us

If you would like more information or to make a donation, please contact either:

Rich Westman (Ringing Master):
27 Dale Street, Runcorn, WA7 5PF
rich.westman@gmail.com,

Bill Allman (Tower Captain)
10 Curzon Street, Runcorn, WA7 4PG



(Please make cheques payable to Runcorn Parish Bell Ringers)

Or "Like" us on Facebook
at www.facebook.com/runcornrestoration