

The Power of the Cross.... (and Hot Cross Buns)

As we enter April, we're almost through Lent and looking towards Easter. What are your favourite Easter hymns or songs? One song which has particular meaning for me is 'The Power of the Cross'. Please listen to it if you can. The combination of the sombre but moving melody and the soul-searching lyrics evoke strong emotions about Jesus' crucifixion. In particular, the reason for it (our faults and our failings) and the result it brings (our forgiveness). The chorus sums it up.

*This, the pow'r of the cross:
Christ became sin for us,
took the blame, bore the wrath:
we stand forgiven at the cross.*
Stuart Townend & Keith Getty © 2005

But if these words are too confronting or too 'theologically deep' for you, try this children's reflection when you tuck into your Hot Cross Bun.

We're told that the cross on the top of a Hot Cross Bun symbolises the cross on which Jesus died. But (depending which way you look at it) the cross can have **three meanings** which sum up the reason and the result of the whole Easter story.



When we get things wrong in our school work, and in our lives, it's marked with a cross big **X**



But Jesus paid the ultimate price for all our mistakes by dying on a cross **†**



That means God forgives us and God loves us. It's like when we send a card (or a text) to someone we love, we show our love by signing it with a big kiss. **X**

So, before you eat your Hot Cross Bun, give it a couple of little turns to remind yourself of the Easter Story.

With every blessing, Karen

APRIL CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 3rd April (5th Sunday of Lent)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Morning Celebration

Wednesday 6th April

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 10th April (Palm Sunday)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion



Palm Sunday

Monday 11th April

3.00pm Meditation Service

Tuesday 12th April

3.00pm Meditation Service

Wednesday 13th April

10.00am Holy Communion

Thursday 14th April (Maundy Thursday)

7.30pm Holy Communion & Vigil



Friday 15th April (Good Friday)

3.00pm Stations of the Cross

Saturday 16th April (Easter Eve)

8.00pm Service of Light

Sunday 17th April (EASTER DAY)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion



Wednesday 20th April

NO SERVICE

Sunday 24th April (2nd Sunday of Easter)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion

Wednesday 27th April

10.00am Holy Communion

He too

When the blackest clouds enfold us
When the strongest winds may blow;
When our dearest friends have sold us
And we have nowhere to go,
In the depths of great despairing
Through the sharpest jabs of pain
There we find our Father, caring
Giving shelter from the rain.

For He too, one dreadful Friday
Saw His most beloved Son

On a cross, raised by a highway
Naked, bleeding, cruelly hung.
Yes, He too has felt the starkness
And He too has been betrayed
For He too has known the darkness
And the price which must be paid.

As you weep, reach out your fingers
Feel His gentle, loving hand,
Feel the care just He can bring us
For your life is known and planned.
He too knows the path before us
And He too has fought the fight
Only Jesus can assure us
On our journey to the light.

By Nigel Beeton

Two donkeys

Two donkeys were walking the streets of Jerusalem. One said: "Just a few days ago I came down that hill carrying Jesus, and the people were all singing and shouting and throwing down their cloaks and palms for me to walk on. But today they don't even recognise me." The other donkey replied: "That is how it is, my friend. Without Jesus, none of us amounts to much."

BIBLE READINGS FOR APRIL

3rd April

Isaiah 43: 16-21
John 12: 1-8

10th April

Psalms 118: 1-2, 19-29
Luke 19: 28-40



17th April

Acts 10: 34-43
Luke 24: 1-12

24th April

Acts 5: 27-32
John 20: 19-31

Lord Jesus,
you came as
a humble servant
but were proclaimed
as King.
Even so, willingly you
became broken for us
and, through your death
and resurrection,
Love became
triumphant!

CHURCH SERVICES FOR MAY

Sunday 1st May (3rd Sunday of Easter)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Morning Celebration

Wednesday 4th May

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 8th May (4th Sunday of Easter)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion

Wednesday 11th May

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 15th May (5th Sunday of Easter)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion

Wednesday 18th May

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 22nd May (6th Sunday of Easter)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion

Thursday 26th May (Ascension Day)

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 29th May (Sunday after Ascension)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion

That Day

That day was a day like never before
As the Saviour died and the darkness grew,
Earth shuddered and rocks were split apart
As the veil of the temple was torn in two.

The centurion who witnessed all these things
The earthquake, the One who was nailed to the wood,
Seeing Him die could only say,
'Surely this man was the Son of God'.

He rose as conqueror of the grave,
Death was defeated, the stone rolled away –
And man was released from all his bonds,
Christ rose as victor that glorious day.

The Light had pushed the darkness back,
He now stands resplendent for all to see,
Forgiveness, redemption all wrought on the cross,
The eternal fruits of Calvary.

By Megan Carter



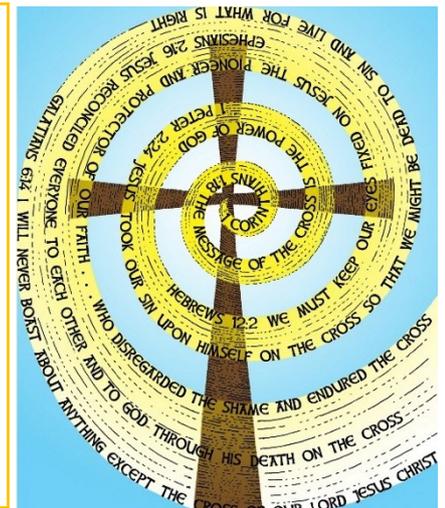
What is Maundy Thursday?

Maundy Thursday is the 5th day of Holy Week. 'Maundy' comes from the Latin word for command, 'mandare'. On this day the Church looks back to Jesus' command to His disciples that they should: "Love one another as I have loved you."

On the evening of Maundy Thursday Jesus shared the Last Supper with His disciples, before going on to the Garden of Gethsemane and being arrested. It was the last evening He had with them before His crucifixion.

Get going this Spring!

One thing you need to put at the top of your list this Spring is to simply MOVE. Whether you like gardening, cycling, jogging, walking or any other activity, make certain that you do some of it every day. As Prof James Goodwin, of the Brain Health Network in London explains, "Only 25 per cent of our ageing – both physical and mental – is determined by our DNA. The other 75 per cent is lifestyle and our environment, over which we have a lot of choice." He goes to explain that aerobic exercise indirectly stimulates the brain, and thus rejuvenates it. "Prolonged daily sitting down is the enemy of brain health." Prof Goodwin also advises people to develop a healthy routine and stick to it. "Constantly varying bedtimes, drinking and eating excesses, and irregular habits are bad for you."



25th April: Mark, disciple, apostle, writer of the second gospel

Mark, whose home in Jerusalem became a place of rest for Jesus and His 12 apostles, is considered the traditional author of the second gospel. He is also usually identified as the young man, described in Mark 14:51, who followed Christ after his arrest and then escaped capture by leaving his clothes behind. Papias, in 130, said that in later years Mark became Peter's interpreter. If so, then this close friendship would have been how Mark gathered so much information about Jesus' life. Peter referred to him affectionately as his 'son'. Mark was also a companion to Paul on his journeys. When Paul was held captive at Rome, Mark was with him, helping him. Mark's Gospel, most likely written in Italy, perhaps in Rome, is the earliest account we have of the life of Jesus. Mark died about 74 AD. Early in the 9th century Mark's body was brought to Venice, whose patron he became, and there it has remained to this day. The symbol of Mark as an evangelist is the lion, and is much in evidence in Venice.

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen.

Archbishop Justin Welby
Archbishop Stephen Cottrell

The Call

My blood so red
For thee was shed,
Come home again,
come home again:
My own sweet heart,
come home again!
You've gone astray
Out of your way,
Come home again,
come home again!

Anonymous, 17th century

Praying for Ukraine

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued a pastoral letter to the clergy and people of the Church of England, calling on them to pray for peace in Ukraine. They wrote: "This attack is an act of evil, imperilling as it does the relative peace and security that Europe has enjoyed for so long. The attack by one nation on a free, democratic country has rightly provoked outrage, sanctions, and condemnation. "We lament with the people of Ukraine, and we pray for the innocent, the frightened and those who have lost loved ones, homes, and family. "We continue to call for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Russian forces as well as wide-ranging efforts to ensure peace, stability and security."

Activities at St Michael's Church

St Michael's Maintenance Appeal Committee

Tea & Toast in the Meeting Room

Next Tea & Toast is on 7th May & 4th June

@ 10.00am to 12.00 noon Admission: £2.00

Quiz Night

Saturday 14th May in the Meeting Room

@ 7.00pm Tickets: £7.00

Crafters Group

Crafters Group meets in the Meeting Room every Tuesday from 10.00am to 12noon.

Everyone welcome, especially newcomers



"It's not as picturesque as the old steeple but it's saving a fortune in electricity bills!"

VML

If you have sometime to yourself on a Tuesday afternoon, why not tune into the VML Radio Show on HCR 92.3 FM.



Another great show from VML. This is taking place at The Brindley on Monday 26th September @ 7.00pm. Tickets: Full price **£15.00**, Concessions: **£12.00**. To book your tickets for this extravaganza go to www.thebrindley.org.uk. All proceeds to go to the VML Community Projects in Halton.



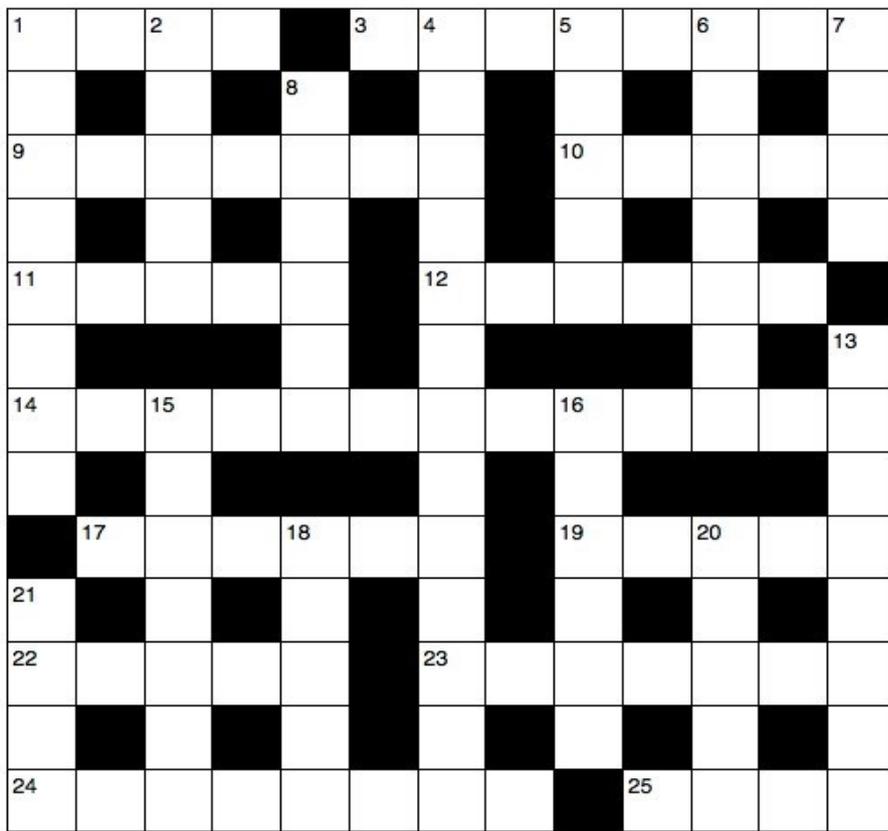
75 years since the school age was raised

It was 75 years ago, on 1st April 1947, that the school leaving age in the UK was raised to 15. This had been planned in 1939 but was delayed because of the outbreak of war. The Education Act of 1944 put it on the Statute Book, and it was brought into effect in 1947. The same Act created the grammar school / secondary modern system, although grammar schools had existed for many years before that. The 1944 Act meant that 11-year-olds would sit exams to decide whether they were suitable for an academic or practical education. This was a good idea but poorly executed, which led to those not in grammar schools being regarded as “failures” instead of differently gifted; this was exacerbated by many from poorer schools who passed the exam not being able to take up their places in grammar schools. In due course this imbalance led to the comprehensive system, with most grammar schools being abolished. The school leaving age was raised to 16 in 1972. The architect of the 1944 Act, Rab Butler, pushed it through despite Prime Minister Winston Churchill's objecting to getting involved in all the intricacies and “party politics” of it in wartime. The main problem was the integration of church schools into the state system, which had been attempted unsuccessfully before. But Butler persisted, writing later that, having seen the Promised Land, “I was damned if I was going to die in the Land of Moab”. One result was the establishment of voluntary aided and voluntary controlled church schools, both of which had at least some of their costs met by the local authority, but differed in the amount of control the authority had. The Act also stipulated a daily act of worship in all schools – although it is still required, this rarely happens today.

Bishop Julie and Bishop Sam visit St Michael's.

On the 2nd March the two new Suffragan Bishops of the Diocese (Bishop Julie & Bishop Sam) visited St Michael's as part of their 'getting to know the Diocese programme'. They had spent three days in the Frodsham Deanery visiting other Churches and projects. Apart from visiting our Church, they had requested that they would like to meet some Community leaders and Councillors. So a range of representatives from voluntary groups, statutory organisations, local Councillors and the Deputy Mayor Councillor Mark Dennett were invited to attend. Members of our PCC were also present. A well-presented buffet lunch, provided by members of the congregation, was enjoyed by everyone. On arrival both +Julie and +Sam were interested in looking round the church and finding out about its history. They were both very complimentary about the cleanliness and beauty of the church. The Bishops and many of the other guests were interested in our 'Filling the Gap' project that had just been completed, providing vouchers for 'Free School Meals' Families from Victoria Road Primary School, and our connection with the local school. The Subject Lead for RE from the school was able to explain the curriculum followed. VML explained the connection between the Church and their Arts Project, and other support groups for the unemployed and family support all had opportunities to network with the Bishops, Community Leaders, Councillors and church members. It was very clear that the event had been very valuable to both the Bishops and others present in gaining knowledge and information about our community here in Runcorn. New connections were made which will be followed up and the Bishops went away with a greater understanding about our Parish, the Runcorn community and some of the needs and opportunities here. One very positive outcome for us as a church was that through one of our local Councillors we were able to make the right connections within the Local Authority to solve the problem of parking in front of our gates. We now have white no parking H-Bars painted on the road outside our two gates and this will be particularly helpful at Funerals so that the Funeral cars can enter with ease.

Vincent Whitehead



CROSSWORD CHALLENGE

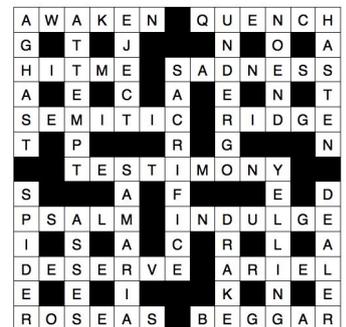
See how you get on with this crossword. There is no prize, but whoever gets it back to the Editor by April 22nd will be entered on a Roll of Honour in the next edition of *Growing Together*.

Across

- 1 'The baby in my — leaped for joy' (Luke 1:44) (4) 3 A 'don't know' in matters of faith (8)
- 9 In the distant past (Jeremiah 2:20) (4,3)
- 10 Armada (1 Kings 10:22) (5)
- 11 Where Moses was confronted with the burning bush (Exodus 3:1) (5)
- 12 Hair colour indicative of skin infection (Leviticus 13:30) (6)
- 14 'The worries of this life and the — of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful' (Matthew 13:22) (13)
- 17 Expel (2 Kings 13:23) (6)
- 19 What Jesus wrapped round his waist when he washed his disciples' feet (John 13:4) (5)
- 22 The sixth plague to afflict the Egyptians (Exodus 9:9) (5)
- 23 For nine (anag.) (7)
- 24 Where there is no time (Psalm 93:2) (8)
- 25 Goliath's challenge to the Israelite army in the Valley of Elah: 'This day I — the ranks of Israel!' (1 Samuel 17:10) (4)

Down

- 1 'I will become angry with them and forsake them; I — — my face from them' (Deuteronomy 31:17) (4,4)
- 2 Usual description of prophets such as Amos, Hosea, Micah, and so on (5)
- 4 'They cannot see the light of the gospel of the — — — , who is the image of od' (2 Corinthians 4:4) (5,2,6)
- 5 An animal's internal edible parts (Leviticus 4:11) (5)
- 6 Popular 20th-century religious novel by Lloyd C. Douglas, which became a 1953 film starring Richard Burton (3,4)
- 7 'A — on a hill cannot be hidden' (Matthew 5:14) (4)
- 8 One of the exiles, a descendant of Bebai, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:28) (6)
- 13 Old Testament hymn-singing (8)
- 15 'And O what transport of delight from thy pure — floweth' (7)
- 16 Of felt (anag.) (3,3)
- 18 'So — the — sets you free, you will be free indeed' (John 8:36) (2,3)
- 20 Comes between 'bad' and 'worst' (John 5:14) (5)
- 21 'Neither height nor depth... will be — to separate us from the love of God' (Romans 8:39) (4)



March Crossword answer

ROLL OF HONOUR

Two people got the crossword answer to me and they were
Wendy Sefton
 &
Jim & Shelagh Goffin

FILLING THE GAP - Partnership Project with Transforming Lives Together

On 16th January this year Wendy Robertson, Community Missioner for Transforming Lives Together (TLT) – in partnership with Chester Cathedral, came to St Michael's to speak to the congregation about an initiative "Filling the Gap". Many members of the Church were enthused by her talk, and we decided as a Church to start work on this campaign.

TRANSFORMING LIVES TOGETHER ⊕

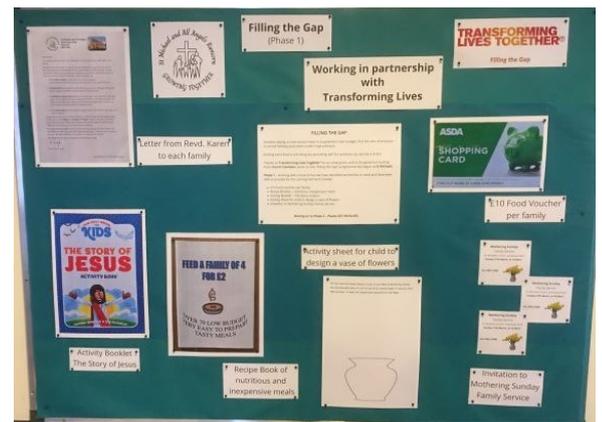
Filling the Gap

What is Filling the Gap? - Many families in our community rely upon the provision of a free school meal to supplement their budget, however school holidays and the lack of this essential provision puts an already challenged family under pressure. Finding extra food is one thing but providing safe, enjoyable activities can also be difficult. Filling the Gap can help to address these issues – we can relieve some of the pressure on families by providing food and can also provide space in our Church and meeting room for parents to interact with their children in a relaxed and supportive way.

"TLT" generously gave a £500 grant to kick start 'Phase One' of our campaign, they also provided a number of recipe booklets "Feed a Family of Four for £2" – low-cost nutritious meals for parents to try.

A small group of volunteers got together to plan Phase One Filling the Gap initiative. This first phase was an introduction to the families in need and our local school was able to identify 64 families with children taking free school meals. We provided a £10 food voucher as a one-off donation to the families.

We were very grateful to the School Head teacher and particularly the School Office Manager who packed the items we gave him and distributed to the families,



Our packs included:

- A letter from Revd Karen introducing St Michael's, explaining the initiative, and extending an invitation to our Family Service for Mothering Sunday on 27th March.
- £10 Food Voucher per family.
- Recipe Booklet kindly donated by TLT.
- Activity Booklet – "The Story of Jesus" colouring book with puzzles. <https://www.odp.org/resources/our-daily-bread-for-kids-the-story-of-jesus-activity-book>
- Activity sheet – this for a child to design a vase of flowers.

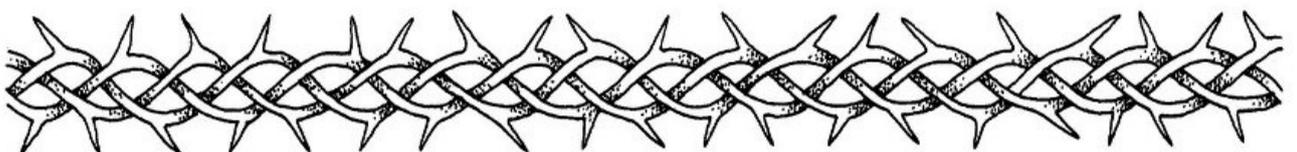
You will find a display in the Church Meeting Room. Recently St Michael's was very happy to welcome Bishop Julie and Bishop Sam to our Church and we invited a number of local organisations and members of the local Council to meet the bishops, the display of this community project received a lot of attention and was a good talking point.

Can you volunteer for the next phase of this fabulous project?

Thanks to generous donations from Church members and a super donation from Runcorn/Frodsham Soroptimist Club we are in a good position to kick start Phase Two of "Filling the Gap Project". The FtG (Filling the Gap) team of volunteers will need to decide next steps, and work to get them ready in time for the School Sumer Holiday in August.

Please get in touch - email warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk and help with this fabulous project. All offers of help would be really appreciated.

Sue Challoner





April
2022

INFORMATION

Vicar

Revd Karen Brady

01928 831795

Mobile: 07419820864

e-mail: revkarenbrady@gmail.com

Churchwardens

Chris Challoner 01928 715830

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

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

April Birthdays

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



Please Pray



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

Gerald Cook

Liz Adams

Graham & Nicola Aylett

Steve Hart

Norah Gamon

Also please remember in your prayers
anyone that you know
who is at home or in hospital.

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



Joyce Lowe

We have welcomed the following into the Church Family through Baptism



Recently we welcomed six children:

Eva Mae Joyce Kinsey (13th March), Bobby Knowles, Louis
Arthur Houghton (20th March), Archie Peter Rawlinson,
Autumn Rose Fairclough-Hunt, Willow Ivy Fairclough-Hunt
(27th March).

Please pray for Eva, Bobby, Louis, Archie, Autumn and

Willow that they may grow to love and follow Christ.

Please pray for their parents and Godparents, and pray that they may seek to
know Christ and to worship.

