

# Stockport Sunday School

April 2025 Newsletter 59



Hooray! The sun is now appearing more frequently, and has some warmth, so I think we can safely say Spring is actually on its way.

Then in a week's time, we will be celebrating Palm Sunday, closely followed by Easter Day, the most important date in the Christian calendar.

In that week the significance of Jesus' teaching and example comes to fruition, but two Sunday services only give a limited time to think about the events of Holy week. So here are a few thoughts for consideration.

As is often the case, in their gospel accounts, the writers, Matthew, Mark and Luke focus in their own particular ways on describing the events from the Last Supper up to the resurrection. In each case they cover 3 chapters.

John, however, takes 8 chapters because he goes into depth recounting the teaching Jesus gave His disciples with regard to the significance of what was about to happen, before addressing the Good Friday events.

He clearly predicts His coming death, and tells them He has not come to the world to judge mankind but to save us.

He comforts His disciples, telling them He is going to prepare a place for them (although Thomas, typically, wants to know where and how to get there!)



He promises the Holy Spirit will be there to support them, and He prays for Himself, and all believers that they may be one.

With regard to the individual accounts of the events in the Garden of Gethsemane up to Jesus' horrendous execution on the cross, the four Gospel accounts are similar to each other but with some differing emphases.

They highlight the failings of the various people involved; people we might consider blameworthy. Foremost Judas of

#### course!

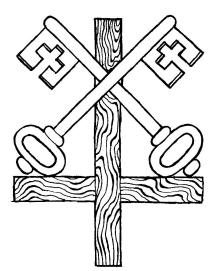
Was he as bad as the gospels might suggest, or did he just lose patience because he thought that Jesus was not using His God-given-powers strongly and quickly enough to achieve freedom for the Jewish nation from the Roman yoke. He wouldn't have been the first revolutionary pursuing a worthwhile cause to think that way.

Concerns about Jesus as a revolutionary and the possibility of riots and violence were what gave rise to the response of the Sanhedrin and the Jewish hierarchy.

The Roman Empire would be ruthless in responding and they, the Sanhedrin, would be in the firing line.

Hence the statement by Caiaphas that "It would be good for one man to die for the people", spoken from the politician's perspective. What he didn't realise was that was actually the essence of God's will, but with a completely different objective!

In a way, Jesus was what in modern terms we might call the whistle-blower who puts their job, future employment and maybe their lives at risk to confront evil and wrongdoing.



Then we have Peter, the gung-ho follower of Jesus, who denies Him when challenged. We forget perhaps he had taken the risk of following Him into the High priests' courtyard. And how many of us, when caught on the hop, have not said something we regretted later. What remorse Peter must have felt when he heard the cock crow.

Lastly, what about Pilate? He does not seem convinced by the Jews accusations about Jesus. Indeed by offering the choice between Jesus and Barabas, he is perhaps hoping they would choose Jesus. Back in Rome, reports of him releasing Barabas, a convicted criminal might yet have some repercussions!

Did he put the inscription on the cross 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews' to anger the Jewish leaders or to justify to his

superiors that Jesus was a potential threat?

So what can we conclude from the above?

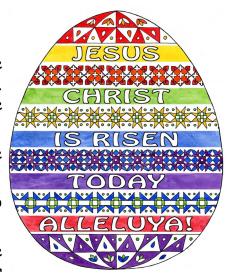
Well there was a lot going on in Jerusalem at that time.

Perhaps the crowd who shouted for Barabas were not the people who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Let us be followers of Christ who will remain faithful, come what may.

Before we jump to conclusions about other peoples failings we should try to put ourselves into their shoes.

Let us be grateful that in Jesus we have a friend and guide to whom we can turn when we have difficult decisions to make.

And let us all renew our commitment to our Lord as we once again celebrate His Resurrection and saving grace on Easter Day.





The empty tomb of Christ has been the cradle of the church.

- WR Nicoll



The Christian Church has the resurrection written all over it.
- E G Robinson



#### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday wishes this month to:-Beryl Manley - 12<sup>th</sup> April and Judith Hadfield - 2<sup>nd</sup> May



#### HOSPITAL STAY

We were sorry to hear that Don Curry had been in hospital for a few days, but were pleased to hear that he is now home. Our thoughts and prayers are with Judith and Don and also for all our members and their families who have been unwell recently.







#### WILLIAM MANLEY

Although being in the country for the very sad reason of the passing of his father, it was good to see William Manley when he joined his mum, Beryl, to one of our Sunday services. We hope that he had a safe journey home to his wife and son in Australia.



#### THANK YOU JOYCE

After 14 years of keeping our Compass Point building beautifully clean and tidy, Joyce Darvill has retired this week. We are aware that Joyce has done much more than just the cleaning, she has put in a lot of extra time making sure that the building is welcoming to our many visitors and setting out the chairs for our Sunday worship. Your work and commitment has been much appreciated, Joyce, and we hope that you have lots of things planned for your retirement.











15<sup>th</sup> April, 2025 1.30pm -3.30pm

Compass Point, 96 Nangreave Rd
Stockport, SK2 6DQ
In aid of



Various stalls including

Toys & Crafts

Raffle & Eater Tombola

Brica brac, Knitwear

Refreshments







# KNIT 'N NATTER SPRING FAIR

The Knit and Natter group are holding their Spring Fair on Tuesday April 15th from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. This event is in aid of Parkinson's UK, so why not bring along family and friends to enjoy this fair and support a worthy cause.



# PALM SUNDAY, 13TH APRIL

We look forward to a return visit from Adrian Nottingham, a former mayor of Stockport.



He last spoke to us at the School Anniversary in 2022, when he spoke about the need for prayer in the world today. He said we should all 'learn from the past, live in the present and look to the future.' Please invite any friends and family who may like to join us for this service.





# **SERVICES**



# SUNDAY 2ND MARCH 2025

Margaret Forster led a very interesting service with a difference. Her theme was God's wonderful world. Joyce Darvill read the Story of Creation Genesis 2 verses 5-10 and 15-17.

Margaret has always been a keen rambler and also has an interest in nature. On many of her walks she has photographed the plants she has seen.

During the service, she showed slides of many of the plants and talked about the beautiful colours and shapes of the flowers God has created, the wonders of pollination and growth of new seeds for the production of new plants.

We all enjoyed the service and many people asked questions, which Margaret was able to answer from her wide knowledge.



We only had time to see half of Margarets photographs so have asked her to complete her talk in the near future.

Thank you, Margaret.



# SUNDAY 9TH MARCH 2025

Judith Higgins spoke about three important dates that had been in the church calendar that week.



The previous day,  $8^{th}$  March, commemorated 'Woodbine Willy', the nickname given to Rev. Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy MC, who was an army chaplin in World War I. He got his nickname because he handed out woodbines to the soldiers in the trenches as well as prayers and words of comfort. He was awarded the MC in 1917 when he ran into no mans land to help wounded soldiers during an attack on the German front line.

March 5<sup>th</sup> was Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent and Shrove Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> March. Judith spoke about the significance of these two

days and the customs observed during them and also importance of Lent, a time for each of us to reflect on our lives and consider whether we are living it as God intended or whether it is time to make changes, to ask God for His guidance and to listen for His answer.



# SUNDAY 16TH MARCH 2025

Walter spoke about Rev. Elizabeth Rundle's study of St Paul's letter to the Romans. His first epistle was written soon after his life-changing experience on the road to Damascus.

He was writing mainly to Gentiles but also a number of ex patriate Jews in Rome.

His message to both groups was redemption through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Paul felt that God had called him to preach to the Gentiles.

In Romans chapter 7, Paul spoke about a new relationship with God and other people brought about through Jesus' death.



Rev. Elizabeth Rundle

Paul speaks about his own despair and struggles but says he put his hope and trust in God. He knew Jesus was his rock and salvation and he channelled all his energy into sharing this fact as widely as possible.

In Romans chapter 8, Paul shows he is in tune with both the spiritual and natural world of creation. Today with our concerns about global warming his words seem to have an additional significance.

In his conclusion in chapter 10, Paul declares 'Jesus is Lord of all Jews and Gentiles. If you confess to Him, you will be saved.'

Paul was an evangelist to the Gentiles, his new and timeless message that all are welcome and included in God's family. Jesus had offered everyone a connection with God.



# SUNDAY 23RD MARCH 2025

The form of service on this Sunday was a change from our usual practice.



We asked for volunteers to choose a favourite hymn for us to sing and to explain the reason for their choice.

Seven members put forward their suggestions covering a wide range of styles.



Some had been learnt as Sunday School scholars, others at primary and secondary school.

Then there were the favourites from our own regular services. In some cases it was how the words related to a particular church season or a particular time of importance in the person's life.

The task had prompted some of us to explore the background of the authors which also proved interesting.

All In all, it proved to be a very enjoyable time of worship, well worth repeating



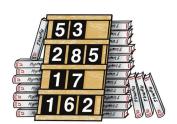
#### **SERVICES**

6<sup>th</sup> April Margaret Forster

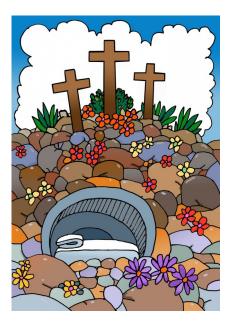
13<sup>th</sup> April Palm Sunday - Speaker Adrian Nottingham

20th April Easter Sunday - Officials

27<sup>th</sup> April Judith Higgins 4<sup>4h</sup> May Walter Stead







## PROVE IT

'Prove it!' they cried, 'that You're the Messiah Wouldn't He come as a conquering king? Not as a poor man riding a donkey How do you think we'd believe such a thing?'

Wherever He went large crowds would follow, He calmed the storm and turned water to wine, The lame could walk and the deaf made to hear, Fully a man and yet also divine.

His teaching had never been heard before, He fed the five thousand with fish and bread Gave sight to the blind and lepers were healed, He cast out demons and raised the dead.

He died on a cross to take away sin
Rose up from the grave, what more could He do?
To prove of His love for all of mankind
Believe it or not, it's all up to you.

By Megan Carter

# LANCASHIRE HILL SUNDAY SCHOOL



# Recipe

# Little Gem wraps with sticky hoisin chicken

#### Serves 6

4 tbsp hoisin sauce

2 tbsp soy sauce

1 tbsp honey

2 tsp sesame oil

½ tsp garlic salt

400g chicken thigh fillets

12 Little gem leaves

4 spring onions, shredded

 $\frac{1}{4}$  cucumber, shredded

1 red chilli, finely sliced (optional)

1tsp sesame seeds



Put the hoisin, soy, honey, oil and garlic salt in a bowl and mix. Add the chicken thighs and toss. Leave to marinate for at least 30 minutes (or overnight).

Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Put the chicken on a non-stick baking tray and cook for 20-25 minutes or until dark brown and glazed.

Leave to rest for 3 minutes then slice and serve in the lettuce leaves with spring onions, cucumber, chilli and a sprinkle of sesame seeds.



## EASTER - GOD'S CONUNDRUM

He came with a purpose, a purpose to die But how could we understand such a thing? Born in a stable, worshipped by wise men Lived as a poor man but destined as King

Loved by the masses, hated by others, Hung on a cross as they watched Him die, What of the promises written in scripture, Were they the truth, or just a lie? He told them beforehand that He would suffer Despised, betrayed, rejected by men, Condemned to die a criminal's death Be killed and three days rise again.

As Mary went to the tomb to find Him "Why look for the living among the dead, Remember His words?" the angel told her "Jesus has risen, just as He said".

by Megan Carter

## 'SPECIAL SONGS'

As we go through life, it is inevitable that hundreds of songs, tunes and melodies come into out lives via the radio, concerts, choirs or television.

Many of these songs and tunes hold special memories for each of us, and, when we hear them, we are reminded of some event or person who has been significant in our lives. I'd like to share some of my special musical memories with you.



One of my earliest ones, which always makes me smile, was of my Grandma, who was a loyal member of Hempshaw Lane Methodist Mission. She loved singing hymns to me and I loved hearing them. One of her favourites was 'Now the day is over, night is drawing nigh' and that was usually a reminder that it was my bed-time. I also recall lying in bed and listening to Sunday Half Hour playing on the radio downstairs on Sunday evenings.



Now, my Grandad was <u>not</u> a keen Methodist but had a great sense of humour and he would suddenly surprise me by bursting into song, which was usually either 'I shall know Him by the nail-prints in His hand', or 'Swing me over the garden wall, Obadiah, do!' My Auntie played the piano and the tune which always reminded me of Auntie Alice was 'Butterflies in the rain', I never hear it now but can still remember the tune and the words.

Next came memories of Mum's songs. She was a keen walker and together we walked miles in the Derbyshire country-side, usually singing. Two of her favourites were 'I'm happy when I'm hiking' and 'Keep right on to the end of the road!'



On my first day at Cale Green Junior School, we sang 'O God our help in ages past'. I



sang with enthusiasm but not many of the children near me seemed to know it, but I had sung it at Heaviley Sunday School! On our first singing lesson at Cale Green, we learnt the words and music for 'Greensleeves', which, in retrospect, seemed rather difficult for 8 year olds!

One of Derek, my husband's favourites, was 'The party's over, it's time to call it a day' and his other

and his other masterpiece, having

heard it at a concert at St Paul's Infants where I was teaching, was 'Good morning, Mr, Hedgehog' and his cheerful rendering could be heard during his shower on many mornings! (and not a hedgehog in sight!!)



On many occasions, when my friends, Mary and Kate and I were together, Mary would say, 'Come on, let's all sing 'Join the Tufty club', with all the actions', which we did, accompanied by disgusted looks from our husbands! The 'Tufty Club' was a Road Safety song which most children learnt when they were in the Infants and I think that the staff enjoyed it as much as the children!



Mustn't forget Peter, who was an ardent Elvis fan. 'Hound-dog' was his favourite, but anything by Elvis would bring a smile to his face.

Finally, when I joined the U.R.C. in 1998, I was asked to choose a favourite hymn, I chose 'I want to walk with Jesus Christ', which I still love and will always remind me of happy times at Buxton Road U.R.C. and also of our organist, Brian, who used to play us out at the end of the Service with 'Heigh ho, heigh ho, it's off to work we go'.

Just think! We all have a little Alexa of our own in our heads. Aren't we lucky?

Margaret M. Jones



#### WHAT DID EASTER ACTUALLY CHANGE? - EASTER: A NEW WORLD IS USHERED IN

'Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary of Magdala went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple... and said "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" (John 20:1,2)



No one was ready for Christ's resurrection. On the Friday, two sympathetic Jewish council members - Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus - had taken the body of Jesus down from the cross, burying Him in a new tomb before instructed guards had moved into place.

Thirty-six hours later the tomb was empty and the guards were scattered - to be paid off with hush money by the chief priests (Matthew 28:12).

The account rings with authenticity. Here is no ingenious attempt at a carefully-contrived scenario, with Pontius Pilate or Caiaphas the High Priest falling back in confusion before a resurrected Christ and a crowd of impressive witnesses. The whole account has feet running everywhere - yet ushering in a new world that would never be the same again. At this stage it is a complete jumble:

1. The right actions, but the wrong deductions, Mary Magdalene witnesses the empty tomb and then runs, rousing Peter and John, having concluded that her Lord's body had been taken away. She then returns to the tomb - Peter and John presumably outstripping her on the way. It was only then that she met the risen Lord for herself.

- 2. The quick feet, but the slow minds. As for Peter and John, they breathlessly reach the tomb - and are gazing at the grave clothes, still twirled together and collapsed under the heavy spices. How long did they wait? John eventually perceives what has happened - and believes (v.8). In his account he admits his slowness to take in the truth of the resurrection (v.9).
- 3. The new era, but the familiar routine. Verse 10 gives us an interesting statement: 'Then the disciples went back to their homes.' There was Jerusalem outside - just the Perhaps Peter's mother-in-law would like a cup of tea? Before long they'd go out fishing again (John 21:3). Life looked unchanged - for the present.



Yet, from now on, Christ's gift to them of Resurrection to eternal life would captivate hearts, loyalties and energies for ever.



The 12<sup>th</sup> April sees the centenary of the birth of Oliver Postgate, whose distinctive voice brought us such magical tales as 'The Clangers', 'Pogles Wood', 'Noggin the Nog', 'Ivor the Engine' and 'Bagpuss'. His was literally the voice of our childhoods:

# The Magic World of Oliver Postgate Born 12/4/1925 - Died 8/12/2008

The Clangers on their planet, the Pogles in their wood In Oliver's bright kingdom we children had it good! Smallfilms brought us joy, and spoiled us all for choice With ev'ry charming tale told by Oliver's fine voice.

In Wales' top left corner a small green engine puffed And Ivor was the engine's name, he whistled and he chuffed. He kept a dragon's egg within his fire so hot Which Jones the Steam his driver never seemed to spot!

A stuffed cloth cat called Bagpuss still figures in our dreams; He was pink and baggy, a bit loose at the seams! We met the king of the Northmen - Noggin the much-loved Nog, And the Pogles were a family who lived in a hollow log.

Green soup and blue string pudding which all the Clangers eat Provided by a soup dragon who lives beneath their feet! So thank you Mr Postgate for all that you have done To bring such joy into our lives and fill them full of fun!

By Nigel Beeton



Bagpuss



The Pogles

NoggiN THE NOG



The Clangers



Ivor The Engine

# 24TH APRIL - MELLITUS, THE SAXON PAGANS, AND ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

Our present bishops have big troubles within the Church. Mellitus had big troubles outside the Church.

It all began quietly enough in Rome, where Mellitus was born into a noble family, and became abbot of a monastic community. Then in 601 Pope Gregory the Great sent him to help Augustine, who had arrived in Canterbury in 597.

In 604/5 Augustine consecrated Mellitus to be first Bishop of the East Saxons. Mellitus settled in the capital, Londinium (London), and his wooden cathedral stood on the site of what is now St Paul's.

Mellitus began to evangelise but struggled to make any progress. The Anglo Saxons were very attached to their pagan temples and celebrations. Then Pope Gregory had an inspiration: he told Mellitus not to destroy the pagan temples and banish the pagan feasts. Instead, he should adapt them.

So, Mellitus simply cleansed the Saxon temples and removed the Saxon idols. He then re-dedicated the buildings to God and re-directed the pagan Saxon feasts towards Christian feast days.





Bede reports that Pope Gregory had reasoned: "If the people are allowed some worldly pleasures ... they will more readily come to desire the joys of the Spirit." The Pope was right - the new approach certainly transformed and spread missionary endeavour throughout the Saxon kingdom.

But then, in 616, Kent and the East Saxons had two new kings. These new rulers reverted to paganism but demanded that Mellitus still give them the Eucharist.

Mellitus refused, was banished, and then fled to Gaul for safety. When it was safe to return, he got as far as Canterbury, where in 619 he was chosen to be the third Archbishop of Canterbury.

The shortest distance between a problem and a solution is the distance between your knees and the floor. The one who kneels to the Lord can stand up to anything. - Anon



If your troubles are deep-seated or long-standing, try kneeling. - Anon

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Give God what's right - not what's left. - Anon

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Joy is the serious business of heaven. - C S Lewis

## **SMILE LINES**

## Good Friday

I was standing in line at the bank when there was a commotion at the counter. A woman was very distressed, exclaiming, "Where will I put my money?! I have all my money and my mortgage here!! What will happen to my mortgage?! You can't do this to us!"

It turned out that she had misunderstood a small sign on the counter. The sign read: WE WILL BE CLOSED FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

## Why Easter

A Sunday School teacher had been explaining why Easter should matter to us, and wanted to make sure her group understood. So she asked, "Can anyone tell me what you must do before you can obtain forgiveness of sin?"

There was a short pause and then, from the back of the room, a small boy spoke up. "Sin?"





## Easter chocolate dilemma

364 days of the year we tell our kids: "Do NOT eat anything you find on the ground, or anything from strangers!"

On Easter morning we tell them: "Why don't you go outside and search in the dirt for chocolates that a strange giant bunny has left for you?"

#### Mr Bones

The orthopedic surgeon I work for was moving to a new office, and we, his staff, were helping transport many of the items. I sat the display skeleton in the front of my car, his boney arm across the back of my seat. I hadn't considered the drive across town. At one traffic light, the stares of the people in the car beside me became obvious, and I looked across and called, "I'm delivering him to my doctor's office."

The other driver leaned out of his window. "I hate to tell you, lady," he said, "but I think it's too late!"



#### The taxi

The passenger tapped the cab driver on the shoulder to ask him something. The driver screamed, lost control of the car, nearly hit a bus, went up on the pavement, and stopped inches from a shop window. For a second everything went quiet in the cab, then the driver said, "Look mate, don't ever do that again. You scared me half to death!"

The passenger apologised and said he hadn't realised that a little tap would scare him so much. The driver replied, "You're right. I'm sorry. Really, it's not your fault. Today is my first day as a cab driver. I've been driving a hearse for 25 years."

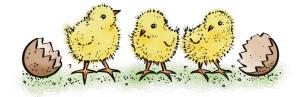
# **PUZZLES**

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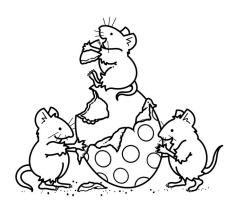
Sudoku

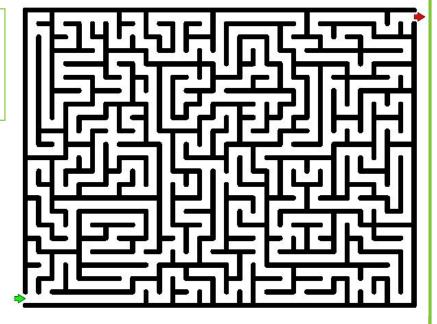




# MAZE

Starting at the green arrow, can you work your way around the maze exiting at the red arrow?





#### WORDSEARCH

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! April brings us to Easter - the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ - the triumphant highlight of the Christian year. As St Paul pointed out, unless Jesus really did rise again, our faith is useless, and we may as well forget any hope of heaven or eternal life. But because He does live, we have a sure and certain hope for our future.

ANGEL	CRUCIFIXION	MARY	STONE
BETRAYAL	CURTAIN	NAILS	TEMPLE
BLOOD	GARDENER	PASSOVER	TOMB
BODY	GETHSEMANE	PILATE	TRIAL
BREAD	JERUSALEM	RISEN	VINEGAR
CROSS	JUDAS	SOLDIERS	WINE

Can you find the words shown in bold capitals above in the grid?

They can be found in any direction.



What do rabbits say before they eat? "Lettuce pray."

What do you call an Easter
Bunny wearing a
kilt? Hopscotch

What do you call a bunny with fleas? Bugs Bunny



#### BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Can you unscramble the following anagrams to discover books of the Bible?

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1.		いりつし	O D

9. YMOTTHI

2. RAZE

10. MSAJE

3. KBAKUAKH

11. EJDU

4. BRVERPSO

12. AASHII

5. SHRETE

12. ////01/122

13. ABDIAOH

6. NIDLEA

14. SLHCORECIN

7. CMLIAAH

15. MHNAU

8. NRMOAS

16. RTPEE



# ANSWERS FROM LAST NEWSLETTER

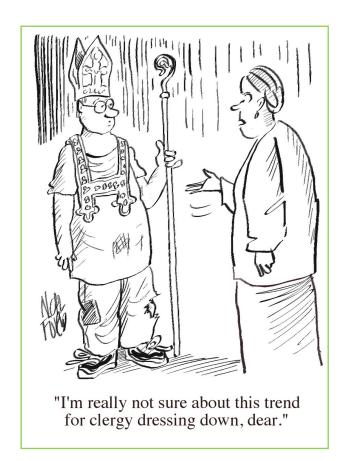
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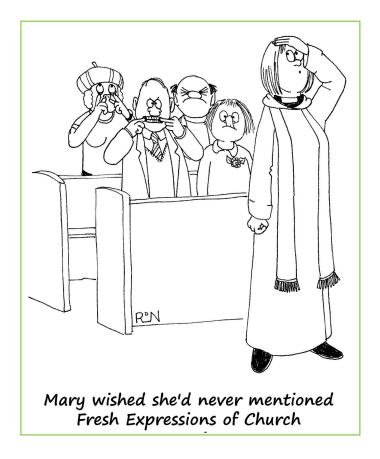




#### SUDOKU ANSWERS







What do you need if your chocolate eggs mysteriously disappear? An eggsplanation

What kind of jewellery does the Easter Bunny wear? 14-carrot gold

Thank you to Parish Pump who provide some of the articles and artwork