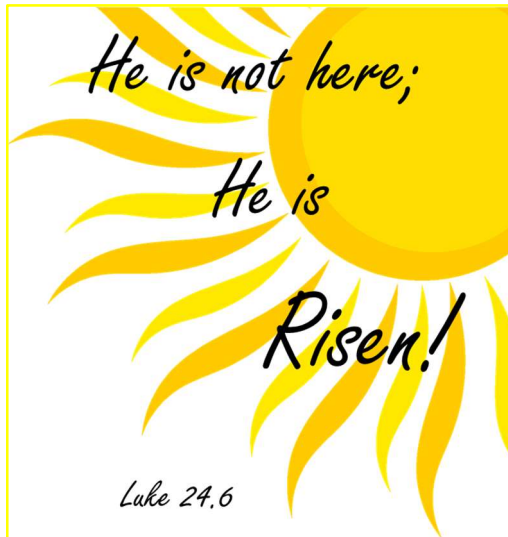


St Mary's, Watford

St Mary's News

April 2023



Includes

Resurrection People

Ring for the King

Welcoming Space

... and much more!

Resurrection People



The two readings set for Passion Sunday are the Vision of the Dry Bones in Ezekiel chapter 37 and the Raising of Lazarus in St. John's Gospel. Passion Sunday is the Sunday before Palm Sunday. In Ezekiel we are given an image of a desolate place, a valley that is

littered with dry bones, presumably the scene of a deadly battle or some other carnage. Here God asks Ezekiel if these bones will live. Ezekiel's reply to God was one of 'You alone will know.' Similarly, in the Raising of Lazarus Jesus arrives at Bethany to discover that his friend Lazarus has been dead. Lazarus' sisters Mary and Martha are naturally distraught, but Jesus promises them that their brother 'will rise again.' He goes on to say that "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die."



In his excellent sermon broadcast on Radio Four's Sunday Worship, Fr Marcus Walker reflects on his own church St. Bartholomew the Great located in the centre of London. It is the oldest church in the City of London and has seen much over the past 900 years. He likens the stones that make up the outer shell of this magnificent building to the dry bones of Ezekiel's vision. Stones that will have witnessed many significant moments in history including the Great Fire of London, the Blitz, the Plague and most recently the Covid

Pandemic. Of course, many churches, including St. Mary's, could tell a similar story.

The bones in the valley remain just bones without flesh and blood, sinews and muscle attached and God's spirit bringing them alive. In the same way our churches are simply a pile of stones unless they are inhabited by flesh and blood,



where worship and other activities take place. It doesn't matter if stones have been repaired, old one replaced by new ones, others added and the building refurbished, it has no right to live on its own. The only thing that will bring life is Jesus, and those who belong there embrace the Resurrection.

As we celebrate Easter perhaps it is worth reflecting on how might Jesus' resurrected life impact on the life of our church?

There are various components of the resurrection that can influence our common life together as a church.

HOPE

The resurrection brings **hope**. St. Paul writes that God raised Jesus from the dead. In raising Jesus from the grave God is vindicating everything Jesus says about himself and all that he promises. Jesus really is the Son of God. All his miracles are signs and wonders that point to the coming of his Kingdom here on earth. Jesus can and will forgive you your sins. He promises eternal life to all that believe. He promises to be with us to the end of time.

Do we trust God enough to place everything into his hands?

REVELATION

Easter is also about revelation. It begins slowly at the break of dawn. The stone at the entrance of the grave has been rolled away. Angels report that Jesus is not here, not to be found amongst the dead. The grave is empty apart from the neatly folded grave clothes. The disciples believe, the body of Jesus has not been stolen or moved away. Jesus has risen and indeed over the next forty days he will appear to his disciples on several occasions.

Are we willing to share the Good News of Jesus with others?

GRACE

There is grace. The disciples had been frightened. Judas has betrayed Jesus. Peter, even Peter had denied he knew Jesus three times. Presumably the other disciples were not immune to weakness and failure. Three times Jesus asks Peter if he loves him. Three times Peter replies yes, I do, and Jesus says feed my lambs, take care of my sheep. Despite Peter's failure he is reinstated and he together with the other disciples are entrusted to build the Church.

Jesus leads by example, and we too must serve others. To love one another as Jesus commanded. To wash feet as Jesus instituted at the Last Supper. To feed the hungry and tend to the sick and dying.

JOY

Lastly but perhaps most importantly the resurrection brings joy. The disciples were fearful and uncertain, and when Jesus stood in

their midst, they are full of joy. The trauma of the last few days melts away. Jesus is alive and is there among his disciples. He appears on several other occasions until it is time for Jesus to ascend into heaven but not without first promising to send his Holy Spirit. Indeed, at Pentecost with all the disciples present, they are filled with the Holy Spirit. This is a new dimension, a heavenly dimension and confirms Jesus' presence among them. The Holy Spirit is God's gift to the Church, and just as the Spirit breathes new life into the dry bones of Ezekiel's vision so the Holy Spirit breathes life into our churches so that the stones echo to the sound of resurrection life.

Will you live as Easter People?

The Revd Tony Rindl



WE ARE AN
Easter
PEOPLE

Report of Parochial Church Council

The following report summarises some of the matters considered at the Council's meeting of 27th March.

Meeting with the Archdeacon: The Vicar, Churchwarden Peter Dean and Council Secretary Marcus Jones had a fruitful meeting with the Venerable Janet Mackenzie, Archdeacon of Hertford, about best practice on the Council. Among other things, she had praised our documentation.

Finance: Our bookkeeper, Jacky Faria, has taken on the task of completing the Accounts up to the end of 2022. It is anticipated that this will be done by 21st April. Based on her work, the Council received a report prepared by the Finance Committee up to 30th September. This showed that the deficit had increased by some £5,000 to £35,000 broadly due to a drop in forecast giving and an increase in energy bills. This trend was likely to continue for the rest of 2022. The Finance Committee will look at ways to better balance the church accounts for 2023 and make recommendations to the Council.

APCM: Given the situation with our financial records, it will not be possible to prepare and present the 2022 annual accounts to the Annual Church Parochial Meeting on 21st May. The Vicar will therefore write to Bishop Alan to seek permission to hold a further meeting later in the year for that purpose.

AV System: The Council approved the Petition for a Faculty for the upgrade of the audio-visual system. Installation will begin on 24th April and is expected to be completed by 7th May.

Climate Change: The Buildings Committee had considered a proposal for photo-voltaic panels on the roof of the Church Centre. Given the estimated cost of £47,000, it is doubtful that the Council

will be able to fund this; but the possibility of grant funding is being investigated.

The Diocesan Advisory Committee had been consulted about the possibility of having a bicycle rack inside the West Door area and was content. The idea is to encourage more of the congregation to cycle into church by providing improved security for their bikes. The Council will take this forward as a temporary trial. Further services on the theme of climate change will be held in the early autumn.

Once approved, full minutes are normally available on the St Mary's website: <https://www.stmaryswatford.org/pcc>.

If you wish to send correspondence to the PCC please send it to the PCC Secretary, Marcus Jones (email: ttekc@aol.com).

Marcus Jones
PCC Secretary

Thursday Concerts – 12.30pm

Just the one in April:

13th April **Soundproof Jazz**

(piano, guitar, bass, vocalist)

Then throughout May:

4th May **David Silver** *(accordion)*

11th May **Friday Singers** *(voices)*

18th May *to be confirmed*

25th May **Veera Piilo** *(pianist)*



Spring **Cleaning?** Decluttering? Generally **tidying up?**

Please remember to collect your old and unwanted tools for **Workaid** - www.workaid.org

They are presently asking for general work tools and haberdashery.

Workaid believes in:

- empowering young people in Africa (and UK) to help themselves;
- the re-use and recycling of the world's resources.

Vicar Tony has offered space in his garage to store items until there is sufficient to warrant a trip to deliver to Chesham.

Please look at the page of 'In Most Need Of' and 'Not Accepted' items on their website - www.workaid.org/donate-tools

We continue to collect unwanted and broken Jewellery & Watches for **Transform Trade**. There is a box at the back of Church for your use.

Why Recycle? Recycling reduces the demand for raw materials, thereby reducing mining and quarrying worldwide.

Read more about this www.recyclingforgoodcauses.org/aboutus



Ring for the King!



The 'Ring for the King' website states:
'Throughout the country plans are being made to *Ring for the King* at the Coronation of King Charles III on 6th May 2023.

'For hundreds of years church bells have rung out, not only to call communities to worship, but also to celebrate special occasions, in remembrance of others and to signify special events. They are part of the soundscape of the UK. In June 2022 we all celebrated Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee with the sound of bells. Bells also rang out with a muffled sound throughout the nation as a mark of respect at her passing in September 2022.

'Following the announcement of King Charles' Coronation, the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers initiated an appeal to recruit more ringers to be trained in time to *Ring for the King*.'

We are very fortunate at St Mary's to have a tower with ten bells; many churches only have six or eight bells and it's often only large churches and Cathedrals which have ten or more. But when you have ten bells you need ten bellringers – well, you can ring fewer bells but it would be good to hear all ten!!

It is probably too late now for you to learn how to ring for the Coronation so we hope experienced ringers will end up travelling from church to church to make sure every community gets to hear the peal of the bells. If, of course, you have learnt in the past and fancy giving it a go again, then please do make contact!

The Bishop of St Albans, the Rt Revd Alan Smith, has lent his support to a campaign for an annual day to promote bellringing. The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers has declared 14th May to be Bell Sunday. Bell Sunday is to be the closest Sunday to 19th May, the feast of St Dunstan, an 11th-century Archbishop of Canterbury who experimented in bell forging.

The Bishop, a ringer for more than 55 years, said that it was a great opportunity to celebrate the part played by bells and ringers. "I hope as many towers as possible will join in. There are plans to open up towers to the public, so visitors can watch the bells being rung – and perhaps even sign up to learn the ancient art of bellringing. With over 6000 rings of bells in the UK, they can be heard in virtually every community in the land."

Details about ringing for the Coronation still have to be sorted but watch this space! Richard Hunt, Tower Captain, says "We are very short of ringers and are presently teaching some new people in conjunction with St James Bushey." That's good news! Practice night is a Tuesday if you fancy giving it a go!



Photo St John the Baptist, Royston

(Copyright Bishop of St Albans)

Wednesday Fellowship

Hello, my name is Val and I joined the Wednesday Fellowship as a member six years ago and am now organiser.

We are a small friendly group, happy to welcome new members or occasional guests. We meet twice a month at 2.00pm. It is only £1 to cover refreshments, which happen following an activity or a speaker.

This month, on 12th April, Dave and Fran Brown will give a talk on 'Sailing'.

On 26th April we shall have a special Quiz Twist?

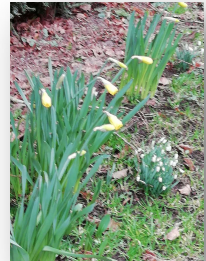
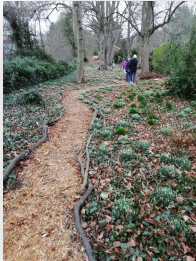
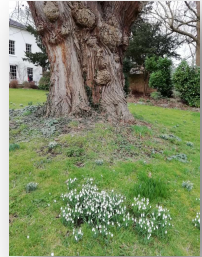
The main event for this year will be on 10th May for the Coronation. We shall have a Celebration Tea with entertainment by Andy Robinson's Ukele Band, starting at 2.00pm. The Special Tea will follow the Band. Last year we invited members of the church family to join us for the Queen's Jubilee Celebration. Those who came really enjoyed the afternoon. I now want to invite, once again, everyone from the church family to our Coronation Celebration if they can make it. I will need to know the names of those coming for catering purposes and to make sure there is enough seating. It will be £5 per head to cover costs. There will also be a raffle. Please come and join us for this celebration. See me in church on a Sunday to book a place!



Val Bordley

Bishop's Garden Open for Charity

Bishop Alan opened his extensive garden in St Albans one Sunday in March for people to view the enormous array of snowdrops (and a few daffs!). In doing so he raised over £2,000 for the Herts & Beds Historic Churches Trust.



Following on from that great success, he is keen for people to see the garden as the seasons change. He will be, therefore, be opening it again on Easter Monday (10th April), after the Easter Monday Pilgrimage, between 2.00 and 4.00pm for people to see the garden in all its spring glory. It is in Abbey Mill Lane, St Albans (AL3 4HD); entrance is £4 per adult, in aid of the Herts & Beds Historic Churches Trust. Please be aware that there is no parking in the grounds or in the Lane.

News from Watford Town Centre Chaplaincy

David Scourfield, Lead Chaplain for WTCC for the last twenty-one months left the post on 31st March to concentrate on his training prior to his Ordination in the summer. Before becoming Lead Chaplain in 2021, David had been involved in the Chaplaincy for a number of years as a Street Angel and also as a Trustee.



A 'leaving-do' was arranged for David a few days before he finished when Trustees, Street Angels and Chaplains came together to say good bye and thank him for his significant contribution to the charity.

As with lots of charities who rely on volunteers, WTCC is short on numbers, but David has been able to entice a few new volunteers in his time as Lead Chaplain. Currently there are Chaplains visiting businesses in the town centre on three or four days a week and Street Angel shifts twice a month on Saturday evenings. A team of Trustees, currently three with two more about to be officially appointed, keep the charity on the right path. But if you fancy volunteering as a Chaplain, Street Angel or Trustee do make contact!

As St Mary's News goes to press, the WTCC Trustees are going through the process of appointing David's replacement and would hope to make an announcement soon.

WTCC is very grateful to everyone at St Mary's for their support both financially and with prayers, and to those individuals who also contribute.

Welcoming Space

St Mary's has opened the Haydon Chapel as a Welcoming Space on Thursday mornings. Following the rise in gas and electricity prices last year churches, community centres and other public buildings opened their doors to allow people to sit in a warm space rather than paying to heat their home, as well as being able to have a chat with a friendly face. Liz Allan started this recently at St Mary's, first as a Warm Space, but as the weather improves hopes to continue it as a Welcoming Space. There is a jigsaw available all week and on Thursdays, between 10.00am and 12.00 noon she adds cards and other table games, as well as offering tea, coffee and chocolate with porridge and fresh fruit. All are welcome - pop in to see her one Thursday - and she can always do with an offer or two of help!



Services

The Church is usually open each week

Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 3.00pm
and on Saturday between 12.00noon and 2.00pm

Sunday

9.00am Holy Communion (said) in church
on 1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday only each month;

10.30am Morning Service in church and via Zoom
every Sunday;

5.30pm Encounter in church
on 4th Sunday of month only
(preceded at 5.00pm with refreshments)

Wednesday

12.30pm Holy Communion in church

(for Zoom links please contact the Church Office)

Thought for the Week

on our website and on Facebook - based on a bible verse or passage,
it is a short reflection by one of the leadership team
for you to think about during the week.
It can be downloaded and listened to whenever and wherever.

Please keep up to date with what is on offer
via our Facebook page, Instagram
or the website www.stmaryswatford.org

Who's Who at St Mary's

Vicar

The Revd Tony Rindl
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Churchwarden

Peter Dean
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Facilities Manager

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Church Office

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Monday and Thursdays

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