PLEASE NOTE - Churches are closed for services until further notice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Service and Note</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun 4th Apr</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>St Mary's, Eucharist of Light on Easter Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 8th Easter</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>St Mary's, Eucharist order 1 with intercessions for the sick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun 11th Easter 2</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>St Mary's, Eucharist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 15th Easter 3</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>Aghancon, Eucharist order 1 with intercessions for the sick</td>
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<td>Sun 18th Easter 4</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>Aghancon, Morning Prayer</td>
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<td>Thur 22nd Easter 5</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>St Mary's, Eucharist order 1 with intercessions for the sick</td>
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<td>Sun 25th Easter 6</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>St Mary's, Eucharist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 29th Easter 7</td>
<td>11:00am</td>
<td>Aghancon, Eucharist order 1 with intercessions for the sick</td>
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From the Dean’s Study

As the traditional Easter story is rehearsed again this month, you may notice that there is one name that frequently occurs. It is that of the ‘other’ Mary - not the mother of Jesus, but Mary of Magdalene, who stood by her at the cross and became the first person actually to meet the risen Christ.

That’s quite a record for a woman who, the Gospels tell us, had been delivered by Jesus from ‘seven devils’ - New Testament language for some dark and horrible affliction of body, mind or spirit. As a result, her devotion to Him was total and her grief at His death overwhelming.

In church history Mary Magdalene became the ‘fallen woman’ a harlot who was rescued and forgiven by Jesus but there is no evidence to prove she was a ‘fallen woman,’ but the contrast is sublime, Mary the virgin mother, the symbol of purity. Mary Magdalene, the scarlet woman who was saved and forgiven, the symbol of redemption. Surely, we all fall somewhere between those two extremes.

The dark cloud from which she was delivered may have been sexual, we are not told. What we do know is that the two Marys stood together at the cross, the Blessed Virgin and the woman rescued from who knows what darkness and despair.
The second great moment for her was as unexpected as it was momentous. She had gone with other women to the tomb of Jesus and found it empty. An angelic figure told them that Jesus was not there, He had risen - and the others drifted off. But Mary stayed, reluctant to leave it like that. She became aware of a man nearby, whom she took to be the gardener. She explained to him that the body of 'her Lord' had been taken away and she didn't know where to find Him.

The man simply said her name 'Mary' and she instantly realised it was Jesus. She made to hug Him, but He told her not to touch Him because His resurrection was not yet complete. She was, however, to go to the disciples and tell them she had met Him. She did - but they wouldn't believe her.

Her words - 'I have seen the Lord' - echo down the centuries, the very beating heart of the Christian gospel.

"So many people right across the world are anxious about employment, anxious about food, isolated from loved ones and feel that the future looks dark." These are words from the Archbishop of Canterbury's sermon on Easter Day 2020. Who would have thought that we are experiencing the same uncertainties this Easter!

Yet the Easter story remains one of hope overcoming darkness and despair. The women arrived at the tomb on Easter morning with mixed emotions, as they came to anoint Jesus' body (Mark 16:1). They were confused, as they tried to make sense of Jesus' death. Their hopes were dashed with an uncertain future. In the current pandemic, we too are left asking: Where is God in all this? Yet the young man at the tomb tells them not be alarmed: "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him."

The women had forgotten Jesus' promise to the disciples that He would die and rise from the dead. Jesus' resurrection is also the sure foundation of hope for us in the present crisis. He turns our confusion and fear into joy and wonder! We can trust Jesus' plan for the future of our world and lives, despite the fact that things can't return to the way they were: "There needs to be a resurrection of our common life, a new normal, something that links to the old, but is different and more beautiful." (Archbishop Justin Welby).

Paul and myself will be taking some time off after Easter. Paul will be on leave from Monday 5th April until Monday 12th April. I shall be on leave from Monday 12th April until Monday 19th April. We will obviously cover emergencies when the other is on leave.

Grateful thanks to the extended Bayly/Parker family for the help provided in taking away the remains of a tree blown down in a recent storm and to Jack for pruning some dangerous looking branches in the church grounds which were in danger of injuring a passing pedestrian should they have come down.

As you may have read in the news, churches in the north were given the go ahead to open from Good Friday, though it is advisory not prescriptive. I fear that in the Republic we are still a little way away from opening, certainly until the roll out of the vaccine gathers a little more momentum. The plan for Easter Vestry meetings is to have them out of the way by the end of June - we shall see.

Your friend and Rector/Dean Rod
Parish Prayer List
Emmett, Clodagh, Lesley, Joan, Philip, Edward, Elspeth, Tom, Brian, Mary, Connor, Mary, Dave, Lynn, Christine, Cheryl, Steve, Violet, Gary

Easter Morning
(John 20:1-18)

Who is it you are looking for?
Who?
Mary,
Looking for her Lord,
Early in the morning,
While it was still dark,
Looking for Jesus,
Expecting His death-wrapped body,
Finding, instead, the stone of surprises and loss.

The men come and go,
But Mary stays and weeps
For the love of her Lord.
Looking, looking into the darkness,
She weeps.

Angels in white turn her to the light,
And the possibility of grace.

And in the speaking of her name, the world changes.
Mary.
Looking, looking no longer,
The Lord lives, gloriously,
For Mary.

He lives for all who look.
Who is it you are looking for?
Who?

By Daphne Kitching
Notices found in church newsletters – that didn’t quite come out right!

• This being Easter day, we will ask Mrs Brown, our church warden, to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

• Ladies are requested not to have children in the church kitchen.

• For those who have children and don’t know it, we have a crèche in the crypt.

• Bring and share church supper: Prayer and medication will follow.

• Don’t let worry kill you. Let the church help.

• The organist invites anyone who enjoys sinning to volunteer for the choir.

• At the church meeting last week, the rector spoke briefly and delighted the audience.

• Remember in prayer the many who are sick both of our church and the community.

And in keeping with our current lockdown baking mode, here’s an idea—

MARS BAR SLICES

This quick and easy cake is a favourite in many families.

Ingredients: 3 Mars bars; 150g butter; 150g rice crispies; 150g chocolate

1. In a pan, slowly melt the Mars bars and butter together.
2. Remove from the heat and add the rice crispies, a little at a time, until they are covered with the mixture.
3. Spread mixture onto a baking sheet and place in the fridge until hard. Melt the chocolate and cover the mixture with it.
4. Return to the fridge for a further half an hour.
5. Cut into pieces.
AN ELEPHANT NEVER DOES – BUT DO YOU?

You know the scenario – you go into the lounge, and then wonder what you wanted. Or you need to make a phone call but can’t find the phone. You go to the cash point and forget your pin number. Or your car keys are lost in the kitchen, but even when you find them and go shopping, you forget stuff on the list. I once stormed into my former boss’s office to tell him something only to utter the immortal words, ‘I have no idea why I am here.’ He just laughed!

If at times you find yourself living in an annoying brain-fog, the good news is that it is not because you are ill or getting old. To varying extents, everyone does it.

A recent study at the University of Edinburgh has found that forgetfulness is as common in people in their 20s as it is in people in their 50s. Although some of the people in the study were worried about getting dementia, a neuropsychiatrist at the university reassured them: “People think that if you are starting to forget things – something like misplacing your keys – that is something to worry about. But it is normal.”

Good reasons for forgetting things range from the fact that too much was happening in your life at the time, you were stressed about something, not paying attention to what you were doing, or just too busy thinking about something else entirely.

A short nap in the afternoon improves your memory and keeps your brain more agile.

People who nap tend to speak more fluently, have greater mental agility, and remember things better than those who do not break up their day with sleep.

Even a five-minute nap can offer your brain a chance to down-time and replenish itself, so that it is ‘good to go’ again.

If you want longer than five minutes, try to stop at 40 minutes, before you enter the deepest stage of sleep. If you do carry on, sleep for two hours, which is a full sleep-cycle.
On the vestry noticeboard of a church in Hampshire: after a Holy Week performance of Stainer’s 'Crucifixion', the choirmaster wrote: "The Crucifixion - well done, everyone!" Later that day, someone had added, 'The Resurrection - well done, God!'  

For the two disciples treading the road to Emmaus, there was no such sense of victory and celebration. Their minds and hearts were numb with the sense of loss and failure. They had seen their Lord tried and crucified. As Luke recounts that walk in his Gospel, he shows how it began with absence and loss, but journeyed to presence. It was a road that took the disciples from blindness and despair to sight and insight. They talked over past events with the stranger who joined them, and Luke uses ten different Greek words to describe that conversation - all stages in their understanding. And when they share a meal with the stranger, who becomes the host, taking the bread and giving thanks, then the understanding becomes vision and insight.

That meal is the theme of Caravaggio's painting of 1601, 'The Supper at Emmaus.' Caravaggio had a reputation for being a violent, irrational artist, given to bouts of anger and forced to spend part of his life in exile in Naples and Sicily. His paintings as well as his lifestyle shocked and provoked comment. This portrayal of Jesus with a plump, youthful face and his depiction of the apostles as ordinary labourers upset the church authorities. But by giving Jesus a beardless face, Caravaggio was trying to show Him in the new likeness of Resurrection - an Easter image of our Lord. The light from that Easter Jesus fills the scene as the two disciples look on, astonished and finally understanding.

When we read the Gospel, we are drawn into the scene. For Caravaggio the movement is the other way: the scene reaches out to us from the canvas. Look at the outstretched hand of Jesus, the elbow of one disciple and the left hand of the other: they are being projected into our world. And that basket of fruit, full of apples and figs and grapes, symbols of the fall and the eucharist: it is about to topple off the table and into our laps. It is an Easter encounter two thousand years ago, reaching out to us through light and shade and the skill of the artist.

In many ways the Gospel story in Luke is of an ordinary encounter between travellers and a stranger. But it is made extraordinary by the transforming power of the risen Lord, talking with the disciples in the open air and then going inside for a meal. However, the doors are not shut to us. For Caravaggio shows how that special moment of encounter for the two disciples can reach out to enter our world. And he shows the hand of the risen Lord beckoning us to step into that Easter world of sacrament and new life.