



st Mary
THE VIRGIN

Good St Mary's/news

Easter 2014



We'll be down your way in Christian Aid Week! (see page back cover)

Easter
services
on page
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The Great North Passion

Passion! Intense feelings of love, desire or enthusiasm! But there's another traditional meaning among Christians, namely the sufferings of Jesus between the night of the Last Supper and his death on the cross.

Churches commemorate the Passion of Christ every year in the run up to Easter, but this year the BBC will re-tell the Passion story in the North East in a very up-to-date way.

At 12.00 noon on Good Friday (18 April), the Passion story will be re-told on BBC1 in a spectacle aimed especially at people who aren't attracted to church services – people of all faiths and none. And it's happening on our doorstep.

Called 'The Great North Passion', the event will feature up to 80 shipping containers which will be positioned in a giant cross the size of a cathedral in the Bents Park, at the seafront in South Shields, providing a walk-through set for an exciting combination of live performance, music and art.

What's got us particularly excited at St Mary's

is that one of those containers is already sitting in North Shields and another at Boldon School, whose Head Teacher is Liz Hayes, a member of our church community. The giant steel boxes, like others dotted round the North East, are being transformed into pieces of art reflecting some specific aspects of Jesus' journey to Easter. Each local community will come up with an interpretation of their allotted theme in association with artists, dancers, musicians, poets and writers commissioned by the BBC to help young people get involved in arts projects.



Sculptor Richard Broderick asks Christians from local churches 'What is truth?', filmed by BBC

The Great North Passion cont...

The Boldon theme is 'Jesus carries his cross', which is being interpreted through dance, around the concept of 'burden'. Some of the students



Retired fishermen drape a net over the North Shields container

commented, "I have enjoyed learning new dance skills and routines. I have learned more about 'burden' and its meaning in the bible. I have loved learning to depict 'burden' in dance form". "I think that doing something for charity and for Easter is an amazing thing to commit to."

The North Shields container is being worked on at the Fish Quay. Sculptor Richard Broderick has been asking local people the question Pontius Pilate asked Jesus at his trial - 'What is truth?'. The answers, coupled with the theme of regeneration of the Fish Quay, have inspired a fantastic transformation of the container.

It's probably too late now to get free tickets for the live event, check www.bbc.co.uk/tickets - but of course you can watch it live on BBC 1. The container exhibition will remain open for the remainder of the Easter holiday weekend.

If you're not sure about the various stages of the Passion of Jesus, our 'Journeying with Jesus' feature on page 5 will help. You can also use it to check out the dates and times of Easter services at St Mary's, and follow the tips on where to read about the Passion of Jesus in the Bible. Our 'Bibleapp' article on page 7 tells you how you can read the Bible on your Smartphone.



Students from Boldon School rehearse for 'Burden'

Looking in, looking out

If you look in on us at any of the Easter services (see page ..) or at any other time, we'll do our best to make you welcome. But you'll find we spend quite a lot of our time and energy looking out.

Being part of a Christian community isn't just about coming to church to worship and learn more about God. We're part of everyday life, on our doorstep and round the world. As this edition of Newsletter illustrates, loving God and our neighbour means being part of what's going on around us - witnessing to what we believe through the Great North Passion, helping with donations to the Bay Foodbank, collecting money to support the world's poorest people through Christian Aid Week, saving with our local Credit Union to help them make more low-interest loans, welcoming and working with local schools. We might also have mentioned the Street Pastors or Whitley Lodge Community Spirit, our regular Traidcraft stall or our financial support for local, national and international charities.

All of this sits comfortably alongside a range of imaginative opportunities to explore and deepen our faith and enjoy one another's fellowship and support. There are so many ways of getting closer to God, other people and the world. Please think about trying us out!

Second birthday for The BAY Foodbank

As demand continues to rise, The BAY Foodbank has just marked its second birthday.

More than 57,000 meals comprising over 400,000 individual items of food have been distributed free of cost to 4,000 vulnerable families and individuals in Whitley Bay and surrounding areas, together with large quantities of clothing, household requisites, cleaning materials, crockery and cutlery, toys, furniture and furnishings.

In February 2012 the food bank began with a small group of Christians seeking to meet some of the needs they saw in their neighbourhoods. Today, more than 80 volunteers from across the churches in Whitley Bay, Monkseaton and Cullercoats and others with no church connection collect, sort, pack and deliver food items. People in need are referred by churches, doctors, social services and other agencies.

There are food donation bins in many local businesses and agencies, including Morrison's and Sainsbury's, whose customers have been particularly generous with their support.



Alan Dickinson (2nd left) and volunteer colleagues

Rev Alan Dickinson, chair of The Bay Foodbank said "Thirteen million people in the UK are currently living below the poverty line. This figure includes almost four million children. We know there will be an increased demand for the services of The Bay Foodbank in the near future, consequent upon recent welfare reforms. We are so thankful for our tireless volunteers and the generosity of the local shopping public, and also to churches



who regularly donate food items; we couldn't do what we do without their support."

What St Mary's means to me...

I'd love to say I was a regular church-goer, but I suspect 'irregular church-goer' is slightly nearer the truth! Not that it matters much how often you go to church because a church like St Mary's is always there for you even if you only visit once in a blue moon.

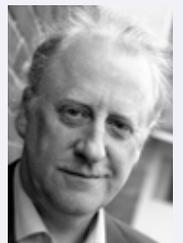
St Mary's has played a central role in my life ever since I married my wife Kath here 27 years ago. Our marriage service was actually conducted by the curate - his first - and the preparations were aided by the fact that he lived next door to Kath's parents. During the service, he even quipped that he was marrying the girl next door!

Both of our sons were baptised here, I myself was confirmed here, Kath runs the Beavers and I'm a member of the PCC, so St Mary's is very much part of our lives.

Coming to St Mary's on a Sunday is that one still point in my week, a time to reflect and put aside the pressures of the 21st century. It's like a long, luxuriant spiritual bath which leaves me refreshed and ready to face the world.

I only wish I could bathe more often (metaphorically, that is...!)

Iain Lynn





We hear claims and stories of 'glory' everywhere.

Recently we learned who'd won 'Oscar-glory'. Not so long ago we marvelled at the 'Olympic-glory' achieved by Team GB and Paralympic Team GB at Sochi. We even live in hope of seeing glory from the Gallowgate end – some day.

We know about this type of glory; we recognise and rejoice in it. So how does this relate to the glory we celebrate in Church through Holy Week and Easter?

Well, on first sight, not at all. The glory of a sportsman, of an actor or celebrity seem a million miles away from the words of that old Holy Week hymn: 'Glory be to Jesus, who in bitter pains poured for me the life blood from his sacred veins'. After all, in Holy Week we tell again a story which might start in glory, but ends in failure.

Why do we decorate eggs at Easter?



How about bringing yours to our Easter competition?

Have you ever wondered what eggs have to do

with Easter? Perhaps you've had to answer a curious child, and mentioned the link between eggs and new life, and the Christian story of Resurrection at Easter. The egg represents not just nature's rebirth, but the rebirth of man.

There's some glory in Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, even if it was on the back of a donkey. There's some glory as he stood up to the power of the money-changers in the temple, but then it all fades away. There's the glory of Easter morning, but we have to pass through inglorious places to get there. Where's the glory in the betrayal by Judas, where's the glory in the crowds baying for blood, where's the glory of dying a criminal's death?

The truth is that real glory comes only when we pass through these places of sacrifice. The examples of human glory – on the screen or sports field – are the result of years of sacrifice and toil by those involved.

The story of Easter-glory isn't one of fleeting, one-off moments of chance. True Easter-glory comes when we follow the path Jesus walked for us all. We find it when everything is offered up for others, going anywhere and to anything, even to death. We discover this glory in the power and depth of God's love for each one of us; only then can we know the true meaning of the new life, the Easter-glory God promises us all.

Through Holy Week and Easter every one of us is invited to walk that path again. It's not always an easy path, but it is the true story of glory. The invitation is there to come to St Mary's this Holy Week and Easter and for each one of us to seek his glory.

Rev'd Benjamin Carter

Historically, when eggs were forbidden during Lent, it was traditional to use them up before Lent began. This established the tradition of pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. New eggs were preserved and decorated for the end of Lent, ie Easter.

If you'd like to continue this tradition, do join us in church on Easter Sunday. After the 10am service we'll enjoy our annual Easter Bonnet and Decorated Egg competition. These activities are not just for the children! Rachel Bainton

Journeying with Jesus to Easter – will you join the journey?

Services during Holy Week follow the journey made by Jesus, from his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, via the last supper with his disciples, his arrest, beating and trial under the Roman Governor, to his crucifixion and his glorious rising from the dead on Easter Day.

Sunday 13 April, Palm Sunday

St Mark's Gospel, Chapter 11

The Passover crowds at Jerusalem, give Jesus a wild reception. They see him as the Messiah, who will overthrow the Roman invaders and establish his reign here, in Israel's capital. He drives the money changers and traders from the Temple, worrying the chief priests who see how the crowd are spellbound by his teaching.

8am: Eucharist with Blessing of Palms

10am: Eucharist with Blessing of Palms

6pm: Service of Healing and Wholeness

Monday 14 April 7.30 pm:

Eucharist *St John's Gospel, Chapter 8*

Tuesday 15 April 7.30pm:

Eucharist *St Mark's Gospel, Chapter 7*

Wednesday 16 April 9.30 am & 7.30 pm:

Eucharist *St Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 27*

Thursday 17 April, Maundy Thursday

St Luke's Gospel, Chapter 22

The priests want Jesus dead. Jesus and his disciples eat the traditional Passover meal together. Anticipating his coming death on the cross, he blesses the bread and the wine, which will forever be reminders of his body and blood. The twelve are shocked when he says that one of them will betray him. He goes to pray in the darkened garden but Judas identifies him to the Roman soldiers, who arrest him and take him to the High Priests and to Pilate, the Roman Governor. The disciples flee, & Peter denies knowing Jesus.

11.00 am: Eucharist with renewal of discipleship and the blessing of oils at St Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle upon Tyne

7.30pm: Eucharist with watch till midnight

Good Friday, 18 April

St Mark's Gospel, Chapter 14

Pilate finds Jesus innocent, but the Chief Priests persuade him that there might be a riot if Jesus is released. They encourage the crowds to bay for his death. He is cruelly beaten and condemned to death by crucifixion. He is nailed to a wooden cross at Golgotha and dies slowly in great agony. His body is taken to a rock tomb which is sealed with a large stone and guarded by Roman soldiers.

9.00am: Antecommunion for Good Friday

10.30am: Good Friday worship for children and young people

12 noon: Church open for silent prayer

2.00pm: The Last Hour

(See also 'Great North Passion', page 1)

Holy Saturday, 19 April

St John's Gospel, Chapter 15

9.30 am: 'Remembering Jesus...'

Easter Sunday, 20 April

St John's Gospel, Chapter 20

Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb before daybreak. The stone has been moved from the entrance. The tomb is empty. Mary sees Jesus standing in the garden. She is overjoyed as he greets her. Jesus, the saviour of mankind, has risen from the dead and the great joy of Easter bursts into our lives.

5.00 am: The Great Vigil of Easter

8.00 am: Eucharist with hymns

10.00 am: Eucharist with Baptism followed by Easter Bonnet and Decorated Egg competitions.

A new 'community room'



What's the room like?

You really need to step inside in person to appreciate how special the space is, but we'll try to describe it...

As you approach the open door, straight ahead is the focal point of the room. It's a low shelf, with a hand-carved Holy Family, placed in front of a figure of the risen Christ. On one side is the Christ candle, on the other an image of the Good Shepherd. As you're drawn into the room, you'll notice that it's full of beautiful story materials.

Building work is now complete on a new room in the corner of the church. It's been sympathetically designed using original oak, as part of the continuing re-modelling of the building.

Regular readers will know that at St Mary's we don't see the church building as a space restricted to church services for a select group. Far from it! We're part of the wider community and, like all Church of England churches, it's there for all who live in the parish. As a community resource, the new room adds to our versatility.

It's a huge milestone in the journey we're on, working with children and their spiritual development. For more than ten years we've been using Godly Play (see the panel) with many children who come to church. We've collected and created a large resource base of materials to be used in the sharing of and responding to bible

stories and stories related to church worship. To really experience Godly Play properly though, it's important to be surrounded by the story materials, and now that dream has become a reality. It's a joy to see the children delight in using the room during Sunday morning worship.

As part of our outreach work, we're exploring how Godly Play works over an extended period within a school setting. Since September we've been running a project with two classes from Southridge First School. Each week, one of these classes comes to church for an afternoon Godly Play session. It's an exciting

project; both children and leaders are greatly enjoying it. The school staff have commented on how absorbed and engaged the children are. For many years we've hosted visits in church, and have made visits to the schools to support their religious and spiritual education, sometimes including Godly Play. Now we want to expand this work. Some grant funding has been allocated to the training of more Godly Play practitioners. We hope this will enable us to expand our outreach work further, to include regular visits from other schools, and an after-school club.

What's Godly Play?

In Godly Play a story is carefully told using models and images. After the story, open-ended questions invite the participants (not necessarily children) to engage at their own level, and put the story alongside their own experience. This is then followed by some creative activity freely chosen by the participants, providing a time for further individual reflection. The session ends with the sharing of a feast!



YouVersion Bible App

If you're Smartphone savvy, why not try one of the bible apps that can be downloaded free from Play Store?

I've been trying out the YouVersion Bible App. It's user friendly, and has a variety of functions. You can use it to download a version of the bible to your phone – there are plenty to choose from, from King James (KJV) to New International Reader's Version (NIRV). Alternatively, it provides a 'verse of the day', or you can choose from a wide range of 'plans' – from a plan called 'Growing Patience', lasting four days, to a more meaty 'Bible in 90 days'. You can even choose to be reminded to read your chosen plan. It's thanks to this that I've now completed my 19th day of consistent Bible reading.

Yet, I'm not a cool iPhone user, so I can only comment on Android apps. I'm pretty sure that there will be some good Bible apps out there for Apple users too. Why not try one out and send in a review? You can contact us at newsletter@stmarysm Monkseaton.co.uk

Rachel Bainton

Personal debt – how can we help?

Have you, or anyone you know, ever been tempted to apply for a loan from Wonga, or one of the other payday loan companies? For many who do, the experience can prove disastrous.

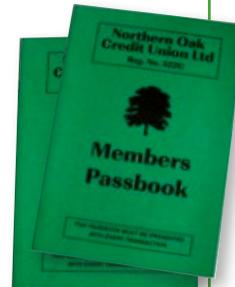
The charity 'StepChange' reports that in 2013 it worked with 66,557 people seeking help because of payday loan problems, up from 36,413 the previous year. The amount of payday debt involved was £110m, up from £60m in 2012. On average, their clients held three payday loans.

Credit Unions are an alternative source of low-cost loans for everybody, not just people who might find it difficult to get a bank loan. Think of them as 'savings and loan societies', owned by their members. They encourage people to save before applying for a loan, but in an emergency they will waive that rule.

Members of St Mary's and other local churches have been opening savings accounts with Northern Oak Credit Union in North Shields, serving the whole of North Tyneside. The Church Council has also opened a corporate account to hold some reserves. All this gives the Credit Union more funds to offer as loans.

They also welcome loan applications. The interest on bigger loans, even with the relatively low rates, will help NOCU run and develop their services.

If you'd like an information pack, ring the Parish Office (251 4216) or e-mail us at newsletter@stmarysm Monkseaton.co.uk We'll be happy to enrol you into NOCU with the minimum of fuss.



Christian Aid Week



I told the guy who came to the door that I'd called to collect his Christian Aid envelope. He looked a bit puzzled and said he didn't know what it was all about. I explained that households throughout the country were being invited that week to give money via the charity Christian Aid to support the poorest people in the world. 'Ah', he said 'and presumably you're some kind of agent who's paid a commission on what you collect?'

I tried to disguise my sense of shock. 'No, I'm from your local church, St Mary's, and together with people from other churches we're volunteers who between us try to cover every house in the patch. Last year this collection, across the country, raised £12m. Whitley Bay churches collected £11,222 (including Gift Aid), of which £3,896 was collected by the team from St Mary's.

He didn't succeed in disguising his surprise. He went away and came back with a substantial cheque and started filling in the Gift Aid section of the envelope.

Our team of volunteers will be putting red Christian Aid envelopes through doors across the Parish in anticipation of Christian Aid Week, which this year is from 11-17 May. Christian Aid's theme for 2014 is 'Give people

Could you help towards the gift of hope?

£15 could provide blankets for refugee children to protect them from bitter night-time temperatures.

£40 could provide enough good quality and nutritious food for two refugee children for a month.

£150 could help provide specialist emotional support for a child deeply traumatised by the horror of war that they've witnessed or experienced.

a future without fear. War tears lives apart. You can help put them back together'. You can find out about some of the incredibly successful ways Christian Aid works to develop projects which respond to the precise needs of local people. See their website at www.christianaid.org.uk



Please give generously, and if you're a UK taxpayer, by filling in the Gift Aid section of the envelope you will enable Christian Aid to claim from the Government a further 25% of what you give.

Our weekly services

Sunday: Eucharist 8am and 10am; Evening Prayer (Healing Service on 2nd Sunday of month) 6pm

Monday – Friday: Morning Prayer 9am

Wednesday: Eucharist 9.30am (Book of Common Prayer, first Wednesday of the month)

Each week's services are shown on the parish website, see right.

St Mary's parish office is open, Monday – Friday 10am - 12 noon.

Tel: 0191 251 4216

Email: newsletter@stmarysm Monkseaton.org.uk

Web: www.stmarysm Monkseaton.co.uk

We're at the junction of Claremont Gardens and Davison Ave.

Registered Charity no. 1131532

You are always welcome!