

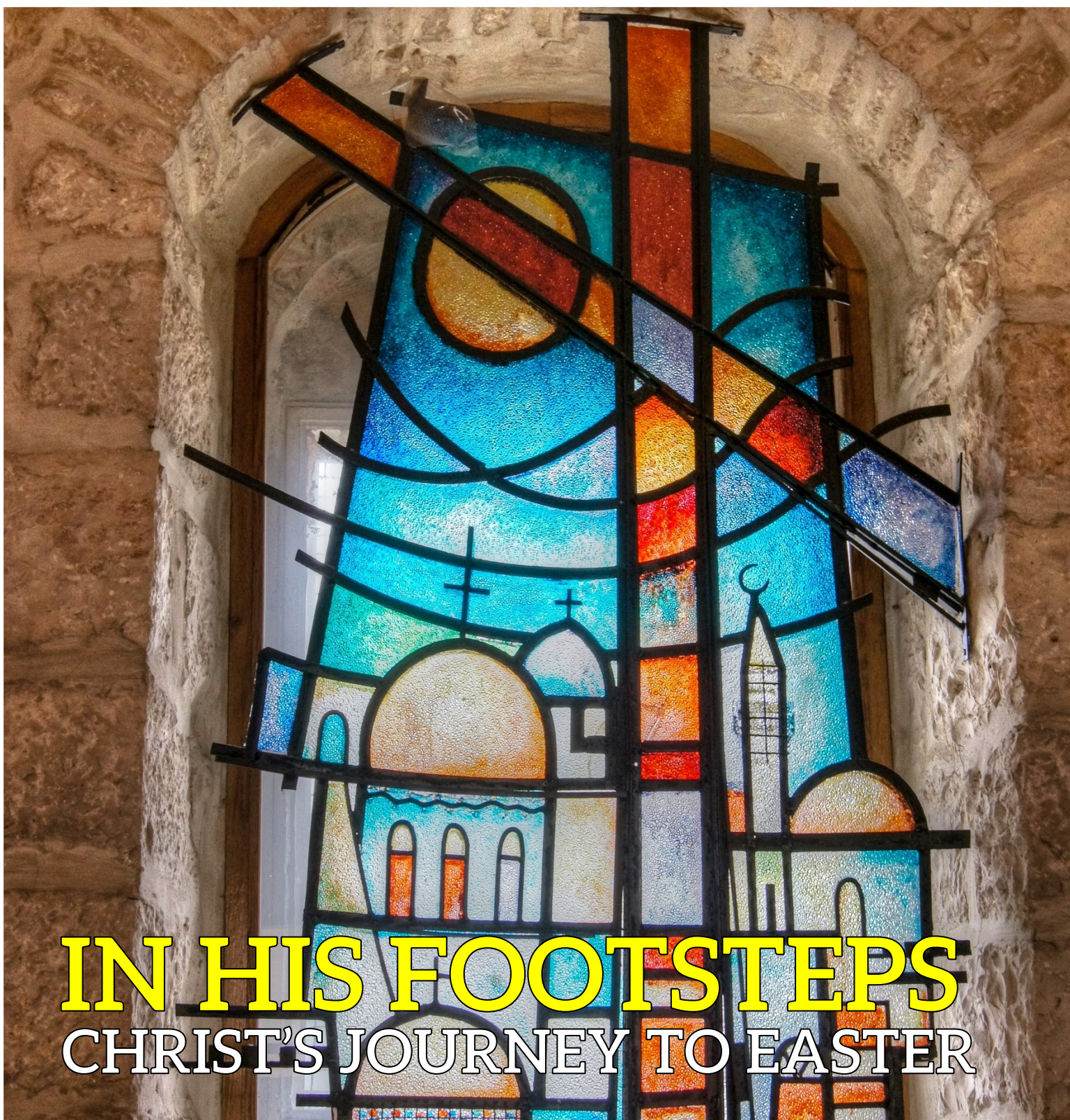
MARCH/APRIL 2024 EASTER

SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

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IN HIS FOOTSTEPS
CHRIST'S JOURNEY TO EASTER

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THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Meet the clergy



VICAR Rev Derek Winterburn

Derek was born in Orpington, Kent, and ordained in 1986. He served in several diverse London parishes before becoming vicar here in 2016. He is married to Sandra, a teacher, and has two children. A keen photographer, he posts a picture online every day, combining it with a daily walk or cycle ride. He can be contacted at any time other than on Mondays (his day off).

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ASSOCIATE PRIEST Rev Jacky Cammidge

Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales, and ordained in 2015. She is a self-supporting minister, married to Alan, and has three children. During term-time she runs Hampton Hill Nursery School, based in the church hall, with her family.

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Supported by

ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Tim Marwood

Tim taught in London primary schools for 36 years. He was ordained priest in 1996 and was parish priest at Petersham for 13 years, retiring in 2021. He is now a part-time Chaplain at Kingston Hospital. Tim is married to Jane, a former headteacher. He supports Harlequins RFC, England cricket and walks his brown labrador, Ruby.

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ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Julian Reindorp

Julian was born in Durban, South Africa, and ordained in 1969. He has worked in parishes in East London, Chatham and Milton Keynes, and was Team Rector in Richmond until retirement in 2009. He continues to lead a busy life, is married to Louise and has four children, three stepchildren, and nine grandchildren.

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Nick Bagge

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FROM THE EDITOR

This is a double issue covering Lent and Easter and much of the content features the events and services surrounding this key period for the church.

I know many people will have visited the Holy Land.

Derek knows it well, and in the centre pages he gives us an insight into the places mentioned in the Bible leading up to Easter. It is a troubling time for this part of the world.

One problem we all face is the cost of living. We know how much it costs to heat our homes, so imagine what it costs to heat the church, particularly when the boiler fails!

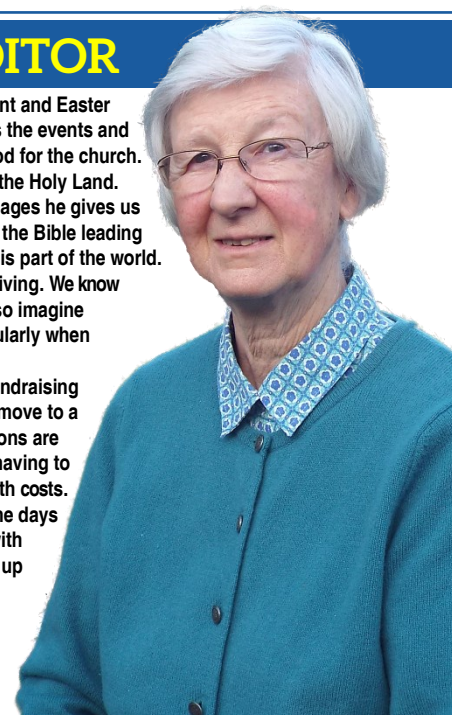
The other problem charities face is fundraising and the church is no exception. As we move to a largely cashless society, street collections are mostly a thing of the past. The PCC is having to look at new ways to fundraise to help with costs.

One thing we can all depend on are the days getting longer. We must look forward with hope and optimism in the days leading up to our celebrations on Easter Day.

Best Wishes

Janet

Editor



Cover photos: A window in St George's Anglican Cathedral, Jerusalem (see pages 4 & 5)

SPIRE

The Spire is published nine times a year for the Parochial Church Council of St James. We make no charge for this magazine, but if you enjoy regularly reading it, we hope that you will contribute towards printing costs. Bank transfers to: 40-52-40, 00032595, Use Ref SPIRE. Cheques payable to the PCC of St James's Church, Hampton Hill, and sent to the Spire Appeal c/o the

I cost



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PRODUCTION

Design Nick Bagge

Proof readers Catherine Gash, Susan Horner

PRINT

Peter James Printing Limited 01932 244 665 or PJP123cards@aol.com

NEXT ISSUE / COPY DATE

The May Spire is published on Fri 26 April.

Copy deadline: Thu 4 April.

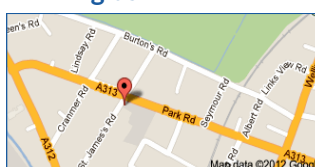
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St James's Church is a charity registered in England and Wales (1129286)

Printed on paper sourced from well-managed forests.



Finding us



The church is on the corner of St James's Road and Park Road. The hall is between the church and vicarage. There is ample unrestricted parking. Buses stopping nearby include the R68, R70 and 285.

Follow us

For the very latest news go to our website or follow us on social media:

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Clerical Capers



'The vicar's really cool, Dad. Did you know that God emailed the Ten Commandments to Moses as he had a Tablet?'

So which one do you think looks like Jesus?



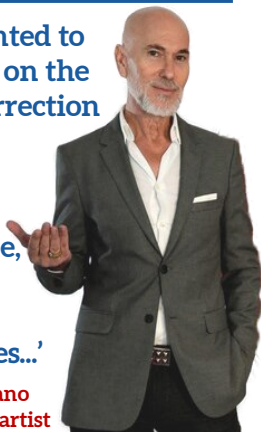
DEREK WINTERBURN

work with people, with living beings and not copy images.'

There have been two trends over the past decades. Firstly to consciously portray Jesus as someone who looks like us. This is what Garcia is doing. But the trend is natural enough and churches in different parts of the world naturally portray Jesus to reflect their ethnicity. The second emphasis is to try to recreate the original face of the 'historical Jesus'. Most noteworthy is the scholar Mark Goodacre's work with the BBC: in this computer-generated portrait

'I wanted to focus on the Resurrection and work with people, not copy images...'

Salustiano Garcia, artist



Jesus (top left) has olive-coloured skin (and shorter hair than in many other pictures).

The doctrine of the incarnation teaches that Jesus Christ is 'God With Us'; God became human. That's not to say that he is like us in each and every way. And it certainly does not mean that he looked like us. I entirely understand that in reaction to the 'pale Galilean' — for example Robert Powell (seen above on the right) in Franco

Zefferelli's *Jesus of Nazareth* — we need art showing a range of different ethnic Jesuses. (For example, I regularly use a range of images depicting gospel events in the context of West African village life.) But we should be wary of making Jesus in our own image.

Recognise but not understand

As we read the Gospels and hear the stories of Jesus's ministry, (particularly in Lent) we learn that people might recognise him, but not understand who he really was. For example, his fellow villagers in Nazareth knew his face and his family; many of them had seen him grow up. But they could not grasp that he was more than their fairly low expectations. Elsewhere, at other times his appearance and his background count against him.

Our temptation, if we think we can recognise Jesus by his face, is to assume that we could so easily describe his character: to mould him into someone like us. The people who knew Jesus best by sight were constantly surprised by his words and actions. This went on throughout his ministry and beyond... Even after the resurrection the disciples needed explanations about what Jesus meant (and they found it harder to visually recognise him too!)

For us, it is by thoughtful reading and reflection, not least through Lent, that we understand more of who Jesus was and is 'in the round'. Saying Jesus is God incarnate is not an invitation to trim him to our size.

Rather, it is an encouragement to open up our understanding of who Jesus is, and learn who we can be. As it is said, 'Discipleship is spending time with Jesus, learning to be like him.'



Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am **Not 31 Mar**
Parish Communion 9:30am **Not 10 Mar**
Livestreamed on Facebook.

Together 3:30pm Not 10, 31 Mar; 7, 14 Apr
Our shorter, all-age service, making way for Messy Church once a month.

Messy Church 3:30pm 24 Mar, 21 Apr
Compline 8pm 3, 10, 17, 24 Mar

Mothering Sunday

All Age Service **10 March 10am**

Mondays

Ark Playgroup 10am-12pm
£3 for the first child, £1 for any others.
(**Not 1, 8, 15 April, or 6, 27 May**)

NHS Hearing Aid Clinic 1-3pm
Free service (**4, 18 Mar, 15 Apr - but not 1 Apr**)

Tuesdays

Connections Café 10:30-12:30 (Not 2 Apr)
Join us for coffee, cake and conversation.

Wednesdays in Lent

Way of Life — Listening 2pm
Wednesdays 6, 20, 27 March

A Beautiful Friendship 7:30pm
Wednesdays 6, 13, 20 March

Songs of Love & Hope

Saturday 16 March 7:30pm
Richmond Chamber Choir £15

Spring Concert

Sunday 17 March 3pm
Middlesex Yeomanry Concert Band £15

Petite Messe Solennelle

Saturday 23 March 7:30pm
Hampton Choral Society £15

Holy Week 26-28 Mar

Sung Compline 8pm Mon-Wed

Maundy Thursday 28 Mar

Holy Communion 8pm
including *Washing of Feet* and *The Watch*

Good Friday 29 Mar

Messy Church 10am
Family-friendly stories, crafts and food
At the Foot of the Cross 2pm

Easter Day 31 Mar

Dawn Service 6am
Parish Communion 9:30am

Pop-up Cinema

Saturday 20 April 3:30pm (Doors open 3pm)
Disney's Wish (2023) (U) FREE entry

All the Classics

Sunday 28 April 3pm
Kingston Chamber Orchestra in aid of
Crosslight Advice. Tickets FREE, donations
welcome **Book:** <https://bit.ly/Crosslight28Apr>

How we can walk

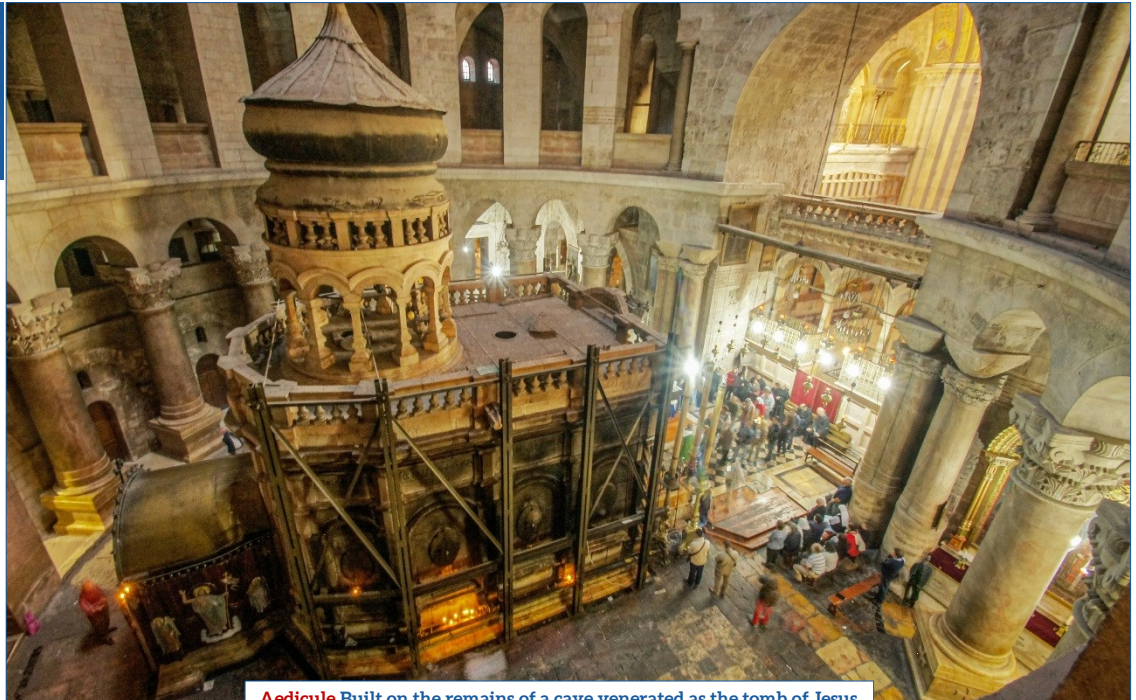


DEREK WINTERBURN

As I write this, the conflict between Israel and Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza shows no sign of ending. Anyone who has visited the Holy Land will have a heavy heart.

In writing about how Jerusalem is experienced by a visiting pilgrim, I am conscious that people have suffered for centuries in this place, and continue to do so. Whenever I visit, coming into the City, I read Psalm 122 and 'pray for the peace of Jerusalem'.

The great value of going to a place is not only seeing it with your own eyes, but getting a sense of scale and distance. Israel is not a large country, and pilgrims who want to visit the key places don't have to travel very far. Bethlehem (for the Nativity stories) is only five miles from Jerusalem (the events of Easter). Many pilgrims 'cover' Easter in a day or two, mostly walking.



Aedicule Built on the remains of a cave venerated as the tomb of Jesus

Historical accuracy

There are some key locations that take us back to the time of Jesus in the first century. Some are certainly correct historically, because they are defined by the geography. Others have very good historical grounding because the Christian community, which survived the destruction of the City in AD 70, kept the memory of places alive until Queen Helena visited around AD 326 and the key sites were recorded. Others, as we shall see, are more imaginative than historical.

In our churches Holy Week begins with the humble arrival of Jesus at Jerusalem, via Bethany, on the road from Jericho. Sadly, one can no longer walk from Bethany to Jerusalem as the Israeli Security Wall divides the two places. Along the road there is a 19th century chapel at Bethphage, built on a 12th century Crusader church, this commemorates

The Holy Land is complicated. Today, as in Christ's time, it is a place of suffering and conflict. But it is also the land of the Resurrection, where Jesus proclaimed the victory of God's sacrificial love. Derek Winterburn knows it well. Here, he takes us on the Easter journey to the Cross. The people who call the Holy Land home are witness to that Christian hope of everlasting life each and every day.

when Jesus began to ride the donkey. It is from here that there will be a great procession on Palm Sunday.

A visitor quickly grasps that the procession starts on the Mount of Olives, goes down a steep path into the Valley of Kidron and then climbs up the other side to enter Jerusalem through a gate in the wall, on Temple Mount. On the way down there is the most remarkable stopping place, the Dominus Fleuit (Jesus wept) chapel. It is shaped by the

architect Antonio Barluzzi to be like a teardrop. And behind the altar table there is a dramatic view across to the Temple Mount. Although it is the golden Islamic Dome of the Rock that catches the eye, the window is lined up to put the Church of the Holy Sepulchre exactly in the centre.

Only foundations remain

Jesus spent the first part of the week coming and going from Bethany to the Temple where he taught and debated. The Romans

left nothing 'above ground' of the Temple in AD70, but the enormous foundation stones remain, and form the 'Western Wall' where Jews gather to pray. It is now hard for non-Muslims to access the precinct above the wall.

Although pilgrims might be shown a place that stands in for the Upper Room (or the Cenacle), where Jesus shared the Last Supper with the disciples, it is not authentic. However, the location is a reasonable guess.

John's Gospel tells how after the meal, they all went out across the Kidron valley. This is now a lovely public garden that makes a good walk across to the Mount of Olives.

Prayers in Gethsemane

Jesus prayed with the disciples in a garden in Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives. Gethsemane means 'oil-press' and there are olive trees at the foot of the hill that are plausibly 2000 years old.

As before, the modern church is on the site of older churches, reaching back to the fourth century. The present church here (the Church of Nations) is designed by Barluzzi to evoke the darkness of the nighttime experience of Jesus, and silence is enforced. Outside, the

little olive grove helps visitors feel they are in a garden (despite the traffic noise).

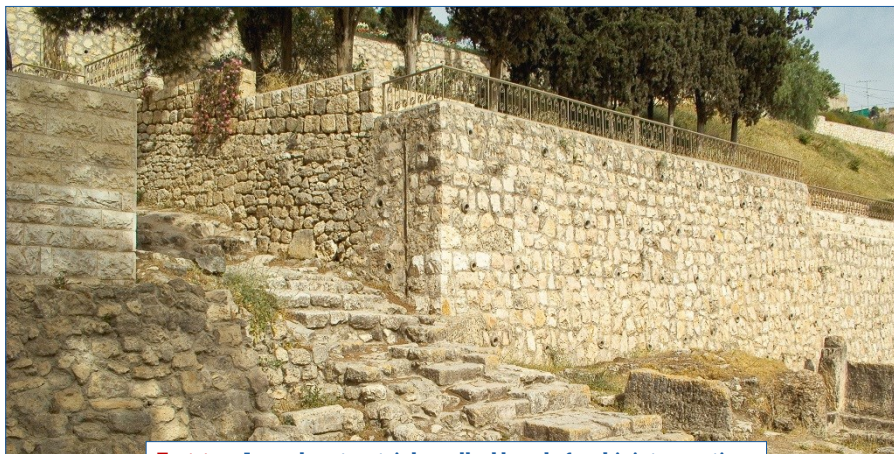
Path to interrogation

After Jesus is arrested in the garden he is taken to the High Priest's house, back along the valley. Just short of the church that remembers Caiaphas' house, there are stone steps that have been reliably dated to the first century; almost certainly Jesus walked up here to his interrogation, (wherever that exactly was) in this part of the city.

Perhaps the most moving part of this place is the large water cistern in the basement. Pilgrims squeeze into it, and are told that this might have been a holding place for Jesus. Often the lights are dimmed and Psalm 69 read: 'Do not let the flood sweep over me...'

The walk of Christ to the cross is commemorated by the *Via Dolorosa*. This is a devotional route to the place of the crucifixion, not accurate historically. Various paths have been followed over 2000 years, and the now settled route is unlikely to be correct. From the starting place in the NE of the Old City, pilgrims walk along the busy streets of the Muslim Quarter along a path that bends, winds and climbs, perhaps stopping at various points to remember Jesus carrying the cross.

The New Testament is clear that the site of Jesus's death, Golgotha, was outside the walls. It is confusing to the 21st century visitor that they are taken to a church inside the city, but the line of the walls has changed!



Footsteps Jesus almost certainly walked here before his interrogation

with Jesus



Around the Spire



Holy Sepulchre An ancient church used by many different churches

Hotly-debated church

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, now within the Christian Quarter, is one of the most ancient of churches, extraordinarily confusing and perhaps unsurprisingly controversial. If visited when it is busy, it is also very difficult to like. But go early on a Sunday morning (as I have) when a variety of different churches take turns to worship, and it is entirely different and wonderful.

Just inside the main door people are herded up some steep steps and presented with three altars in alcoves. The central one has a hole in which one can put one's hand to touch the bedrock, where the cross supposedly was planted in the ground.

Walking down and around one comes to the *Aedicule*, under which is said to be the limestone base of Jesus's tomb. As elsewhere it is impossible to say that 'X marks the spot.' Nevertheless there are good

reasons to think that this is the general area in which criminals were executed and that people were buried nearby (there are some intact first century tombs a few paces away in the Syrian chapel).

However, many people (and I think, particularly, British people) prefer the experience of visiting *The Garden Tomb* - with the emphasis on garden. This green oasis was described by General Gordon as the true site of Golgotha. (He found an ancient tomb nearby.)

The Times crowdfunded the purchase of the land and it is now looked after by a Christian charity. The guides are less dogmatic about the garden being in the right site, and it is offered rather as a place of inspiration. Groups from around the world hold services there.

Having taken many groups to these places I know that it can be hard to imagine what it was like originally.

Not so different from then

The Old City is a tense, busy, loud, even smelly place. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the antithesis of what many people hope for when they go into a place of worship. But perhaps this is not so different to the Jerusalem of Jesus's time, when the city was packed with Passover pilgrims, with people sleeping in the open air in the surrounding fields and gardens.

We should not prettify Holy Week, but there is something else — the deep-rootedness of our faith. These places are shared with a galaxy of different denominations and traditions, and then it goes back in this place through 2000 years of the Christian Era and then another 1000 years to when King David founded it.

Yet the centre of it all is the singular death of Jesus on the cross, and his rising on the third day.

Complex process to get approval

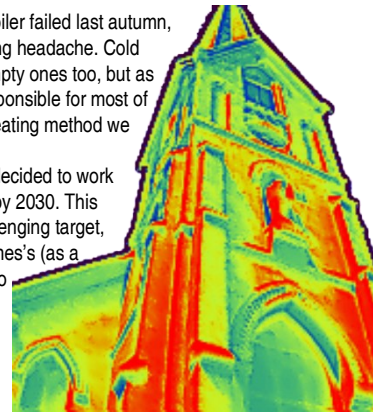
Church ponders what heating option to choose

WHEN the church's gas boiler failed last autumn, it left the PCC with a heating headache. Cold churches soon become empty ones too, but as energy consumption is responsible for most of our carbon footprint, the heating method we choose matters.

The Church of England decided to work towards Net Zero Carbon by 2030. This was designed to be a challenging target, but an ambition that St James's (as a Silver Eco Church) wants to support. It is not simply a case of replacing one gas boiler with another (even if we wanted to). We must consider non-fossil fuel sources of heat, which means electrical, which offers a golden opportunity of moving to net zero carbon in a single jump.

But this comes at a cost. Whereas a commercial gas boiler might cost £20-30,000, a heat pump or an infrared system usually costs considerably more. And electricity costs three times the price of gas.

A small group has looked into this



matter at some depth — all of which takes time. It has become apparent that while there may be obvious solutions for homes, for larger buildings the way forward is not quite so clear.

Meanwhile we have experimented with some electric heaters and through the winter months hired a temporary gas boiler. The PCC faces a hard choice.

Bible stories brought to life for schoolchildren

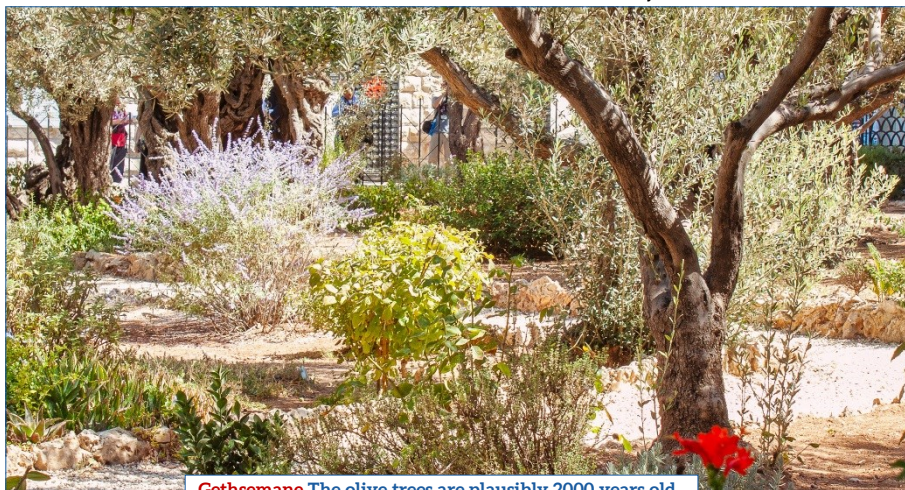
SOME of the happiest events we hold at St James's are the *Experiences* we offer to schoolchildren. At Christmas and Easter we invite a year group at Carlisle Infants to visit and be guided through the Nativity and Holy Week. Members of the church are spread around the building and small groups of children move from point to point being involved in a bite-sized story and reflective activity.

For Easter, Year One children will be transported to Jerusalem for Jesus's entry to the city on Palm Sunday, experience a little of the Last Supper, reflect on the harder sides of life and God's love in the Garden of Gethsemane and at Calvary, and finally celebrate the resurrection — with Easter Eggs! These occasions are enjoyed by the children, our volunteers and the teachers. Result!

Meal that's better together

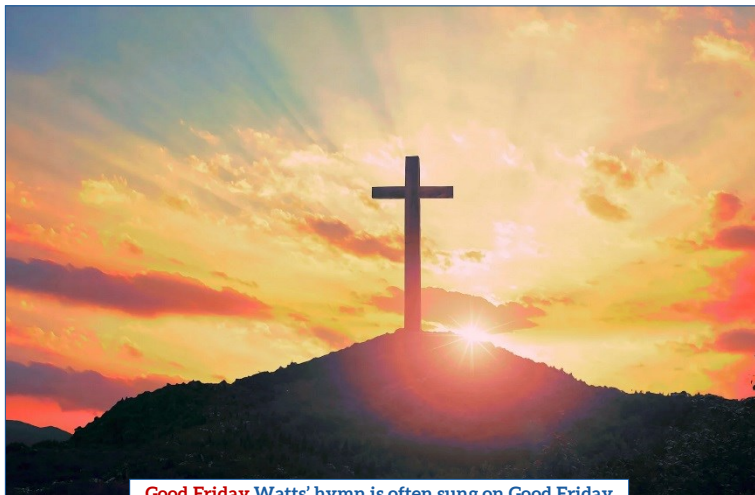


SHROVE Tuesday was our first *Better Together Meal* and more than 50 people gathered for two courses, including cottage pie and pancakes. The meal was cooked and served by our men's social group The Good Guys, who also bought the food, enabling more than £1000 raised from tickets and a raffle to go our Lent Appeal, divided between Christian Aid's Middle East Crisis Fund, supporting Palestinians and Israelis, and St Luke's Hospital, Milo, Tanzania, paying for vital dental equipment.



Gethsemane The olive trees are plausibly 2000 years old

An end to boring hymns!



Good Friday Watts' hymn is often sung on Good Friday



TIM MARWOOD

Often sung in Holy Week

In the Church of England, the hymn is sung at services that take place in the Holy Week before Easter, often as part of a Good Friday service of *Meditation on the Crucifixion*. For many Christians this is the hymn that best describes the redemptive power of the death of Jesus for us on the Cross.

In British churches the hymn is usually sung to the tune *Rockingham* by Edward Miller. All five verses of the original text are included below, although the fourth is often omitted.

Although we might not describe this hymn as our 'favourite', many would say that it is the hymn which engages us most powerfully through the combination of wonderful words enhanced by a great tune.

As saying that we are hearing rather a lot of at present, in this year of elections, is 'Be careful what you wish for!' When 18-year-old Isaac Watts complained to his father about the 'boring music' he had to sing in church, his father told him to 'write something better'.

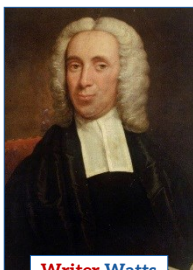
The young man accepted the challenge and within a few days he wrote the words to a hymn that so impressed the congregation that he was asked him to write another.

Prolific writing

In fact, Watts wrote a new hymn every week for 222 consecutive Sundays, despite a crippling illness that left him an invalid.

In total, Watts wrote over 600 hymns. At the time, many of them were dismissed as 'outrageously contemporary music', but they are still being sung 300 years later!

When *I survey the wondrous Cross* marked a real change from the hymns that were in use before 1707. It was one of the first to speak of a personal experience of the divine and to use the pronoun 'I'. The Biblical text on which the hymn is based is Galatians 6: 14 — *But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*



Writer Watts

Watts' famous words

*When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the Cross of Christ my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.*

*See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

*His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er his body on the Tree;
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*



Resting place Watts is buried in Bunhill Fields, Islington

No Sunday golf for Lent!



Golf 'ban' Harry Vardon winning the Open in 1924



RICHARD MELVILLE

Continuing our historical 'dig' into the magazine archives, we find that the season of Lent is, quite rightly, an important subject, though one wonders if calls to abandon the golf course would have the same impact now!

Sacrificing golf Dear friends,

We are busy making our plans for the keeping of the solemn season of Lent in such a way as will be most profitable to our spiritual welfare.

The most important thing is to use the season for our spiritual life. Let us then make up our minds to give up much of our amusement and give the time to spiritual endeavour. Would it not be possible to make it a rule that there should be no Sunday golf or motor car expeditions, and that bridge parties, dances, and all other such amusements should be given up during these six solemn weeks?

I am also anxious to create a greater and wider interest in the work of the church overseas. At present, interest in foreign missions is confined to a mere handful of parishioners. All who call themselves Christians are bound by Christ's command to go and preach the Gospel to every creature.

It is with much sorrow that I'm continually hearing from those whose relations lie in the churchyard that the flowers they put on their graves have been stolen. It is a piece of wanton desecration, and those who are guilty of such a crime must have lost all sense of moral fitness.

Frederick Harvey

Concert by Band of Hope

The concert to be given by the children of the Band of Hope commends itself to the support of all. We hope to make the group self-supporting, besides assisting other funds. The price of the seats is so reasonable that we look forward to a 'bumper house'.

Lantern Lecture

On 11 April we are to have another Lantern Lecture. This time we shall go to the Boys' School where appliances for operating the lantern are more convenient. The subject will be *The Wonderful Story of Zionism*, and it will be given by the Rev A J Culwick, one of the secretaries of the Church Missions to the Jews.

School football

Our lads defeated Strand-on-the-Green School, Chiswick, 5-1. In the next round of the Middlesex County Cup Competition they will meet Woodhouse Central School, Finchley. We have to cover our opponents travelling expenses, as well as ground and referee's fees. May we ask for the support of all parents and friends by the purchase of tickets to help swell the amount raised by the lads' own halfpence so cheerfully given.

Society for Propagation of the Gospel

The Annual Meeting will be held in the Royal Albert Hall. The Society is arranging a fleet of buses to take people from the suburbs. It is hoped that a Hampton Hill contingent will go. In order to get a bus, 40 fares must be guaranteed. The price is 1/6 all in.

IN THE NEWS 100 YEARS AGO



■ Imperial Airways began operating from Croydon Airport, serving British Empire routes to South Africa, India, Australia, and Far East.

■ The British Empire Exhibition, below, opened in Wembley to showcase the empire's achievements, attracting 27 million visitors.





OPINION

Rev Canon Julian Reindorp

OUR POST OFFICE

Our banks have deserted many a High Street, forcing us to go to places like Richmond! All we have left is our Post Office for so many transactions. Fortunately the couple who have run our Post Office for 18 years are a reminder of what a key role a local branch plays in the life of our country.

The scandal of 4,000 sub-postmasters and mistresses being prosecuted, nearly 1,000 convicted of crimes, and a few going to prison, the fault of the Fujitsu computer system, the Post Office, and indirectly successive governments, has shamed many. The ITV drama *Mr Bates vs the Post Office* reduced many to tears.

Our Post Office couple come from a part of NE Sri Lanka that I have visited. So I am doubly grateful for their commitment, efficiency and good humour. I remember the long queues that formed outside during the Covid lockdowns. Thank you Kumar and Vijaya.

BANKRUPT COUNCILS

In late January more than 40 Conservative MPs, including ex-cabinet ministers, wrote to the Prime Minister to demand extra funding for local councils to avoid further cuts to frontline services. Councils have faced dramatic inflation and funding reductions, particularly affecting housing, the care of the elderly, children's services and adult social care. The MPs have threatened to vote against the government unless more cash is made available. It is suggested that without change in their funding up to half of all councils will declare themselves bankrupt by the end of 2025.

The latest figures suggest that councils' debts are £97.8 billion, i.e. £1,465 per resident. The government is proposing tax cuts with their estimated £20 billion 'head room'. This will benefit the better off disproportionately. Helping local councils with their services would help those most in need — polls suggest this is what people would choose. Which will the Government choose?

COURTS CRISIS & RWANDA

British justice, until recently widely admired internationally, is in crisis. In the past ten years, 150 of the 550 courts in England and Wales have been closed and the Justice Ministry budget has been cut by a quarter. Some 28% of Crown Court cases are delayed by at least a year, 10% by more than two years, and 150 rape cases were abandoned in 2023 — victims unable to cope with the delay. Suddenly, in January, the government announced 150 new judges would be appointed, working by June, and new courts created, all to try possible cases of people crossing the Channel in boats! The Lord Chief Justice, Susan Carr, pointed out that the appointment of judges was the constitutional responsibility of the judiciary.

JEWISH/MUSLIM DIALOGUE

The Woolf Institute in Cambridge has long been a centre of Jewish/Muslim dialogue. Its director, Ed Kessler, said recently, 'It is striking how many emotions Jews and Muslims share, not only worry and fear, but anger and powerlessness...both recognise there is fear, grief and suffering not only in their own community but in the other.' One Rabbi commented, 'There is no calculator of pain,' bringing nods from Imams and Rabbis in the room. But he admitted how difficult it was to be both pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli. This year, Holy Week in Jerusalem will be particularly testing. This city is so central for Jews, Muslims and Christians, all 'Faiths of the Book', seeing their roots going back to Abraham. *Shalom* (peace), the frequent greeting of Jesus to his disciples, is so crucial for today.

HOUSING NEEDS

Walking home from a nativity service in Chiswick, Anna, three, said, 'Grandpa, you know Jesus was born in a stable?'

Worldly-wise Alexander, seven, replied, 'Yes, but that's better than being born outside.'

Help for Gaza crisis and Milo



DENNIS WILMOT

It is our custom to look beyond our immediate horizon in Lent and commit our giving to causes that we believe in wider afield. Sometimes the Diocese of London directs our charity, but not this year. Instead, we have chosen a twin

focus. First we are responding to the desperate situation that has dominated our news: the conflict in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. Secondly we continue with our long-term support for St Luke's Hospital, in Milo, Tanzania.

The innocent suffer the most

Since 7 October tens of thousands have been killed in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. Civilians are being held hostage and there seems no end in sight.

Airstrikes have caused widespread destruction of homes, schools, and hospitals. As is often the case in war, it is the innocent civilians, including women and children, who are suffering the most.

We are channelling our gifts through Christian Aid to their established partners on the ground. They are responding in a variety of ways:

- Building mobile bathrooms in four shelters and working with local farmers to get fresh vegetables to families that have left their homes to escape air strikes.

- In southern Gaza, providing mattresses, medicines for the chronically ill, and emergency food.

- Elsewhere there is medical relief and community initiatives providing food, shelter, sanitation and cash.



Gaza Crisis Christian Aid will support Palestinians and Israelis

■ At the same time, Christian Aid is also supporting Israeli civilians who have been impacted by the violence. Donations to this appeal make a huge difference to the conditions of those affected.

Milo's dental service

In our February magazine Ann Peterken described the improvements she found at St Luke's Hospital while visiting Milo last September. Many of these have been paid for, in part or in whole, through the generosity of St James's parishioners.

We are now being asked to help buy dental equipment. The only piece of equipment which Neema Muhuru, the government-funded Dental Therapist, currently possesses is extractor forceps!

She has had three years' training, can do extractions, scaling, drilling and filling, but desperately needs a dental chair, light, drill and filling materials if she is to do her job.

The Charities Team had no hesitation in recommending that half of our Lent Appeal should be donated to this excellent cause.



Milo Dental services are very basic

A prayer for Easter

When everything was dark and it seemed that the sun
would never shine again, your love broke through.
Your love was too strong, too wide, too deep
for death to hold.
The sparks cast by your love dance and spread
and burst forth with resurrection light.

Gracious God,
We praise you for the light of new life made possible
through Jesus. We praise you for the light of new life
that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.
We praise you for the light of new life that continues
to shine in our hearts today.
We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy,
will live in us each day; and that we will be
bearers of that light into the lives of others.
Amen.



REGISTERS

JANUARY

FUNERAL

30 Jonathan Guy Roper Appleton, 60,
Twickenham





SIMPLE PLEASURES

The things we do when we take time out

My elemental living



Jon Holloway

SAIL MAIL

Back in the 1990s, in a time of no email and exorbitantly-priced satellite phone calls, letter writing was the primary method of communicating with home while away for months on end in the Merchant Navy. Everything was usually hugely out of date, as time between ports could be weeks (and the mail didn't always turn up!), but the anticipation of receiving letters from loved ones, and waiting to be alone in my cabin to read the 'latest' news, always helped the time on watch to fly by.



CAMP FIRES

Sitting around a campfire conjures up the memories of numerous cub and scout camps, sometimes with a shaggy dog story or a song, or at other times in quiet contemplation at the end of a long day and a chance to reflect. Above all, it's always time to bond and be together with friends, and I'm often the first to find the matches when the sun sets.



the wordplay involved, including Cacaphonix the tone-deaf bard and Getafix - who else but the much revered Druid! Every now and then I'll reach for an old favourite; it never fails to raise a smile.

MAKING A PLAN

Perhaps from my time in the Scouts, being prepared has always been a way of life, and served me well for an early career at sea where, as part of a small engineering team, there wasn't much room for error.

It's not to say that I can't be spontaneous, but I find there's a great satisfaction in seeing a project working out efficiently and with everything going nicely to plan.



VISITING OTHER CHURCHES

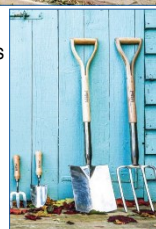
When my job or a holiday takes me away over a weekend, I occasionally like to try to find an Anglican church on a Sunday morning. The familiarity of the service is a bonus, be it Singapore, the USA or Peru, but being with so many others and sharing the peace within the comfort of strangers is always a joy, and really helps to strengthen my faith.



THE ALLOTMENT



A recent addition to my life, and although historically not known for my green fingers I have been surprised at how much an allotment has to offer. The combination of fresh air and a bit of exercise, the slow pace of life (you can't rush plants), and sometimes just leaning on a rake and soaking up the beauty of it all creates a high degree of contentment.



BACON & EGG SANDWICH

Served in toasted white bread, ideally with a runny yolk, and a dollop of brown sauce. There's not much more to say about this, simple food, simple pleasures.

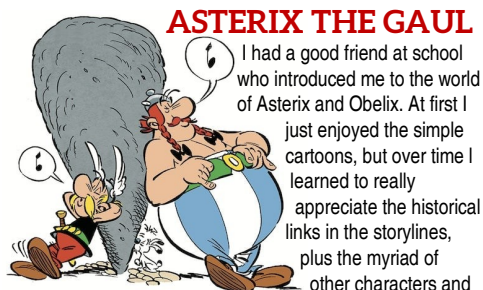


TRAINSPOTTING



I don't recall exactly when I became obsessed with trains, but by the age of 16 I'd seen over 90% of all of British Rail's diesel and electric locomotives in service at the time (and a significant number of carriages), and neatly underlined the numbers in my Ian Allen trainspotting books. I still like to take a pen and paper with me on a rail journey to note down numbers. It generates considerable happiness for me, although I don't underline them like I used to.

ASTERIX THE GAUL



I had a good friend at school who introduced me to the world of Asterix and Obelix. At first I just enjoyed the simple cartoons, but over time I learned to really appreciate the historical links in the storylines, plus the myriad of other characters and