

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

St John's: A place of worship where all are welcome

HAPPY EASTER!

Church Services in April

Our Sunday services are now being held back in church but the 10.30 service will continue to be live streamed on our Facebook page for those who cannot, or do not wish to, be with us in person during what remains of this continuing pandemic. Join us here:

www.facebook.com/stjohnashton/

Services in April

4th April: Easter Day

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am All-Age Communion (CW)

11th April:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Morning Worship (CW)

18th April:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Morning Worship (CW)

25th April:

9.00am Matins (BCP)

10.30am Holy Communion (CW)

BCP - Book of Common Prayer

CW - Common Worship (Modern Language)

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A Prayer

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son you have
broken the chains of death and hell:
fill us with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen

A View from the Vicarage

Many people are fascinated by royalty – witness the attention given to the recent interview given by Meghan and Harry to Oprah Winfrey. And did you know that Her Majesty the Queen has over four million ‘followers’ on Twitter, so she must be popular (I’m rather lagging behind on a mere 260!).

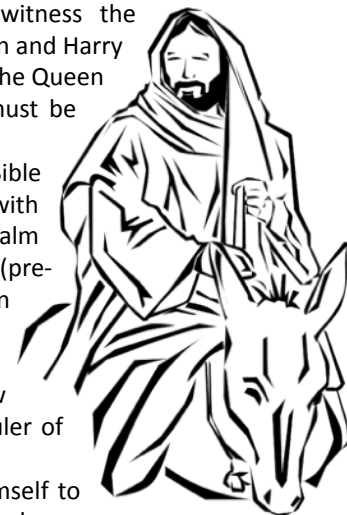
People were just as fascinated by royalty in Bible times too. Because 2000 years ago a crowd walked with Jesus Christ on his journey into Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday. Like a crowd arriving at a football stadium (pre-COVID!) the people around Jesus would have been noisy and excited. They were thrilled to be travelling alongside a man possessing great authority and miraculous power. A man who seemed all set to throw out the Roman occupiers and install himself as the ruler of Israel.

Yet over the following week, Jesus showed himself to be a very different kind of king – a humble ruler who rode on a donkey’s back not in a golden carriage or an expensive limousine. Jesus was a modest monarch, a heaven-sent king who would wear a crown of thorns rather than a crown of gold. Jesus’ journey into Jerusalem was ultimately to a cross, not to a coronation or a celebrity TV interview. He was travelling to a hill outside the city walls where he would suffer and die for the sins of us all. On Good Friday this remarkably different kind of king would shoulder the guilt of the world. As he entered his capital city, Jesus was journeying to a place where he would win a great victory – not over the Romans – but over sin, death and all the forces of evil. A great victory which was made visible when he rose from the grave on the first Easter day.

So this Easter, how will you respond to Jesus, this radically different royal? Well, on this occasion at least, we should follow the crowd! Like those who accompanied Christ into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, we should all make sure we say “Hosanna” to him today. Hosanna is a word which means “Lord, save me”. A word which expresses confidence that the risen Christ can give us God’s forgiveness and life forever.

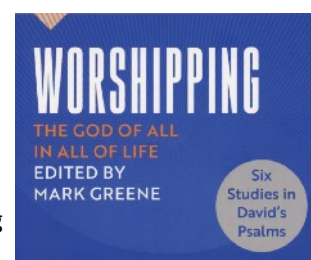
Happy Easter!

Phil Weston



News

- **Dates for your Diary** — Our **Annual Church Meeting** will be held in church after the morning service on Sunday, 25th April 2021. During this meeting we shall be electing our churchwardens for the coming year reviewing the last 12 months. Our **Annual Gift Day** will be held 9th May 2021. It is a day when all community members are invited to make a donation towards the continuing work of the church in our parish.
- **Bible Study** — Our next Bible Study series called ‘Worshipping the God of All in All of Life’ will begin via Zoom on 19th April and will consist of a study of six of the psalms attributed to King David. If you would like more information about this study series please e-mail alan@ashtonhayes.church. These studies are for anyone who would like to have a better understanding of scripture and our group is friendly and welcoming — you don’t have to be a theologian to join in.
- **Prayer** - if you would like someone to pray for yourself or others, please email your request to pleasepray@ashtonhayes.church and a few members of our ministry team will be happy to pray for you. Any information you share will be treated in confidence.



Pause for Thought by Alan Downen



On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

John 20:19-20

We are currently living in hope that, following the successful roll-out of the Covid-19 vaccines, we shall soon be able to live our lives once more free from all restrictions. Shops, restaurants and pubs will reopen; we will be able to visit and spend precious time with loved ones and travel to those places that we have only been able to dream of for the last thirteen months.

For the majority of people joy will be restored but there will be those for whom 'Long Covid' will be a continuing problem and we must never forget that over 126,000 people have died in the UK during the pandemic leaving loved ones who were never able to say proper goodbyes and are left to grieve their loss.

This short passage from St John's Gospel lies at the very heart of the Christian message. Jesus had died a horrible death and the disciples were now locked in a room in fear of losing their own lives but ... the Cross and a locked door proved to be no barrier. When he reappeared in the room with them and they were completely overjoyed: the friend and master they thought they had lost for ever was alive again. Even death was no longer a barrier!

This message of real hope now lives with us: no matter how dark a situation may appear, God is by our side to comfort and restore us, and one day we will be reunited with those whom we too have lost.



Celebrate Easter at St. John's!

Palm Sunday, 28th March	9.00am	Matins (BCP)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (CW)
Maundy Thursday, 1st April	7.30pm	Holy Communion
Good Friday, 2nd April	2.00pm	'An Hour at the Cross' service
Easter Sunday, 4th April	9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.30am	All Age Communion



ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST
ASHTON HAYES

Due to coronavirus restrictions attendance at each service will be limited to a maximum of 40 people. Please wear a face covering, sanitise your hands on entry and observe social distancing between households. A register for NHS track and trace will also be taken.



People usually consider walking on water or in thin air a miracle but the real miracle is to walk on earth. Every day we are engaged in a miracle which we don't even recognise: a blue sky, white clouds, green leaves, the curious eyes of a child — our own two eyes. All is a miracle: be aware and be grateful!

In Memory

The funeral of Gordon Silcock, of Peel Crescent, was held on 3rd March and he was laid to rest in our churchyard. Gordon is survived by his wife Jean and their children, Gail, Steven and Lynne.

Betty Nicholas spent much of her youth living in The Meadows before moving with her husband, John, to Newbank House Farm in Dunham Heath. Her funeral took place on 12th March and she was laid to rest in the churchyard.

Ken Lowe had lived in Brookside for nearly 40 years before moving to the Orchard Manor Nursing Home in Upton. During the war, Ken was a pilot who flew an American B17 Flying Fortress to drop 'Window' or use electronic means to jam the enemy radar. His funeral, on 19th March, was followed by cremation at Chester Crematorium

The cremation of Alan Rodda took place on 25th March. He is survived by his sister-in-law Joan Mansell of Peel Hall Lane

Our thoughts and our prayers are with all those who mourn. May they face each new day with hope and may their memories be joyful, their days enriched with friendship, and their lives encircled by the love of God.



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