

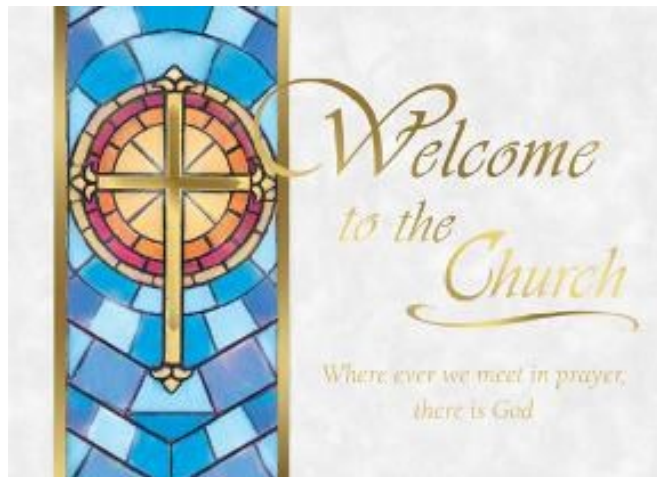


MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE  
PARISH CHURCH OF  
St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, RUNCORN.  
[www.runcornstmichaels.org.uk](http://www.runcornstmichaels.org.uk)

ISSUE 170

MARCH 2024

# Growing Together



In GROWING TOGETHER THIS MONTH:  
HUMOUR NEWS

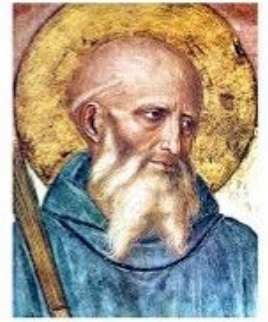
PUZZLE PAGE

SERVICES FOR MARCH  
CELEBRATIONS

## Vicar's Message

### 1 Kings 19:12

After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.



I wonder if you have ever given any serious consideration to the noise around us. Where it comes from and how it affects us all? The Oxford English Dictionary defines noise as..."sound or sounds especially when it is unwanted unpleasant or loud." Unfortunately, noise is almost always associated with the negative, loud noises mostly that can audibly be heard.

But noises also come in other forms too, which don't have to be audible. The media can cause noise in many ways, ways that fill our heads with distractions and worry. Social media seems to be the basis of noise in the form of socially accepted image and in turn this causes stress as we see those with "the perfect life" or those organisations which portray that they have it all right. Truth be told, neither of these examples "have it right".

Then there is the noise that the world around us gives in the form of financial pressures, rising utilities and the ever-increasing costs of food. Again, not audible noise but rather noise that is unwanted and does cause us discomfort, stress and distraction.

As you know we are in Lent, and one of the key markers I am trying to get across to you is the need to escape the worldly noise and retreat often into places of silence and if possible, solitude. Silence and solitude are keys for the Christian walk in the wilderness around us. Without silence we simply cannot hear God's word to us unless you are very proficient in blocking out that noise that is. Unfortunately, very few people can exist in the noise around them day in and day out and still maintain that spiritual awareness of God's peace. It is a journey and a commitment, and one that the desert fathers, mothers and saints knew only too well.

St Benedict of Nursia (image above) is widely considered the Father of western monasticism, and he made it the very foundation block of his rule for Monks which you can find in the Rule of St Benedict's prologue where he says, "Listen my child to the words of the master and tend to them with the ear of your heart." Notice the key words here...**LISTEN, TEND, EAR of the HEART.** In other words, it is only through deep listening can we hear God, and it is not the physical ears that cause us to hear, rather the ear of the heart, it is a depth of listening that penetrates the soul and once penetrated we must then tend to what it is God is telling us. Furthermore, the fact this is in the very prologue on the very first line says how important listening and silence is to monastics in order to be able to live a life as close to God as possible.

So how can we foster this silence deeper? Well step one is of course sidelining a set time in your diary for silence. Not weekly, not monthly, not every so often when the vicar says to *be still* but daily. Start off by spending **15 minutes** in complete silence then work in further time as your practice goes on. Also, meditation can be immensely beneficial and is suitable for all Christians. Contrary to belief within certain Christian groups, meditation will not call-in demons, will not cause you to become a follower of Hinduism or any other nonsense, meditation at its basic is simply quieting the mind completely whilst maybe having a candle lit in front of you and a verse from scripture. You may wish to join our new sacred space meditation group beginning on the **3<sup>rd</sup> of March** in the hall?

We live in a world of ever-increasing noise; noise naturally affects us in such a way that it fills our minds and hearts with distractions and discomfort. This Lent, try and cultivate silence in you daily habit and see how this causes you to grow closer to the Lord.

*wishing you blessed lent,*

*Revd George*

# MARCH CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 3rd March (3rd Sunday of Lent)

9.00am Holy Communion  
10.30am Café Style Church



Wednesday 6th March

10.00am Holy Communion



Sunday 10th March (Mothering Sunday)

10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 13th March

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 17th March (5th Sunday of Lent)

10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 20th March

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 24th March (Palm Sunday)

10.30am Holy Communion



Monday 25th March

3.00pm Meditation Service

Tuesday 26th March

3.00pm Meditation Service

Wednesday 27th March

10.00am Holy Communion



Thursday 28th March (Maundy Thursday)

7.30pm Holy Communion & Vigil

Friday 29th March (Good Friday)

3.00pm Stations of the Cross

Saturday 30th March (Easter Eve)

8.00pm Service of Light



Sunday 31st March (Easter Sunday)

10.30am Holy Communion

## BIBLE READINGS FOR MARCH

Sunday 3rd March

Exodus 20: 1-17  
John 2: 13-22

Sunday 10th March

Psalm 127: 1-4  
Luke 2: 33-35

Sunday 17th March

Jeremiah 31: 31-34  
John 12: 20-33



Sunday 24th March

Psalm 118: 19-end  
Mark 11: 1-11

Wednesday 27th March

Psalm 118: 19-end  
Mark 14: 1-15

Sunday 31st March

Acts 10: 34-43  
Mark 16: 1-8

### Sacred Space Meditation Group

You are warmly invited to our lent meditation group here at St Michael and All Angels, Runcorn.

Come and join us in the church hall for silence, reflection and peace every Sunday afternoon at 5.30pm on the 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th of March.

No equipment needed other than comfortable clothing and maybe your favourite blanket.

Tea and Coffee served afterwards!



St Michael and All Angels, Greenway Road, Runcorn, WA7 - 5BS

# APRIL CHURCH SERVICES

Wednesday 3rd April

**NO SERVICE TODAY**

Sunday 7th April (2nd Sunday of Easter)

9.00am Holy Communion  
10.30am Café Style Church



Wednesday 10th April

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 14th April (3rd Sunday of Easter)

10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 17th April

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 21st April (4th Sunday of Easter)

10.30am Holy Communion



Wednesday 24th April

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 28th April (5th Sunday of Easter)

10.30am Holy Communion



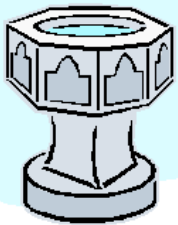
## We have welcomed the following into the Church Family through Baptism



Recently we welcomed **one child Hollie Josie Hall (11th February)** into the Church Family.

Please pray for Holli that she may grow up to love and follow Christ. Please pray for their parents and Godparents, and pray that they may seek to know Christ and to worship.

This is the baptism from 11th February



## Baptism 11th February

The baptism on Sunday 11th February was special one for the family of Hollie, as one her parents is deaf and the other is partially deaf. So we made a piece of history at St Michael's, as we had a young gentleman, Jason who signed the whole service for the family and congregation.



## Easter Prayer 2024

Almighty, God,  
You hold all things in Your hands. You make sense of everything!  
So often we only see where we are now, what we feel now, in this moment – but You know the end from the beginning.  
In all our troubles, our assurance is in Your sovereignty, in Your mighty act of salvation.  
Thank you that, just as after winter comes spring and after night comes morning, so, most gloriously, after death on Good Friday, comes resurrection on Easter Day!  
Christ is Risen – and we can know, by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit, that He is risen indeed!  
We can know, in our real and every-day lives, where our help comes from.  
Hallelujah! Thank you, living Lord,  
In Jesus name.  
Amen.

*By Daphne Kitching*



## 30 years since the ordination of women

It was 30 years ago this month, on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1994, that the first 32 women were ordained as priests in the Church of England. The service was officiated by Bishop Barry Rogerson at Bristol Cathedral. Bishop Rogerson ordained the women in alphabetical order, so Angela Berners-Wilson was the very first woman to be ordained. She was a university chaplain. The youngest woman to be ordained that day was aged 30. The oldest was 69. By 2004, ten years on, one of the women priests had died, and 14 had retired. Bishop Rogerson reckoned it would take 10 years before the first woman would be ordained as a bishop. In the end, it took 21 years. Then Libby Lane was ordained the first female bishop in the Church of England. She became Bishop of Stockport, a suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Chester. The first woman to be ordained a diocesan bishop was the Rt Revd Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester, appointed on 26 March 2015. There are currently 25 women bishops in the Church of England.

## What's the Big Idea? –

### An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament: Leviticus & Numbers

These books are concerned with Israel's wandering in the desert, on their journey from slavery in Egypt to the promised land of Canaan. Leviticus focuses on the regulations about worship, ceremonial cleanness, moral laws and holy days. The key theme is that of *holiness*, as every detail of our lives is affected by the presence of a holy God. The aim of the sacrifices, feast and Sabbaths was to enable the people to enter God's presence. We should see the instructions and practices in Leviticus as pointing to Jesus. He totally fulfilled the law through the sacrifice of His life, as Easter reminds us. He demonstrated the love and holiness of God, so that we can share His life: *'Be holy, because I am holy'* (1 Peter 1:16, cf Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7). The book of Numbers tells the story of Israel's journey through the wilderness. The people were coming to terms with their *identity* as God's people and the *call* to serve Him. They didn't always respond with faith, gratitude and obedience, but with unbelief, ingratitude and rebellion. As a result of their refusal to enter Canaan (ch 14), they were condemned to spend the rest of their lives in the desert. However, God in His grace allowed their children to enter the Promised Land. The book reminds us that the Church is called to be a community that honours God, learns how to deal with sin in ourselves and others, and lives out love and justice in daily life.

*'The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.'* (Numbers 6:24-26).

## Thanking two kinds of Mother on 10<sup>th</sup> March

Mothering Sunday, the fourth Sunday in Lent, is the day for honouring our Mother Church, and has been celebrated since the Middle Ages. Mother's Day is an annual day to honour our mothers, and it began in America in May 1907. In the US, Canada, Australia and Mexico, Mother's Day is still held in May. In Britain, Mothers' Day is held on Mothering Sunday, so the two days are often merged in people's minds. If you ask Google for ideas of how to be nice to your church on that day, you won't find much. But if you want to be kind to your mother that day, you will be spoilt for choice. High on all the lists are suggestions for taking her to lunch, giving flowers, a card, or paying for her to have a day doing something she loves. Whatever you choose to do, probably the best thing to give your mother must surely be yourself: some time and some love. Remind her of the funny and touching stories of your childhood and thank her for all the things that she did for you. Give her some good company and show her some gratitude. Let her know that you love her and appreciate her.



*Remember that the Commandment 'Honour thy father and mother' was the first commandment that came with a promise of blessing on you, if you obey.*

## Activities at St Michael's Church

### St Michael's Maintenance Appeal Committee

Tea & Toast in the Meeting Room

Next Tea & Toast is on 6th April & 4th May

@ 10.00am to 12.00 noon Admission: £2.00

### Crafters Group

Crafters Group meets in the Meeting Room every Tuesday from 10.00am to 12noon.

Everyone welcome, especially newcomers.



### VML

Sing-along sessions on Tuesday nights @ 7.00pm in the Meeting Room. So come along have a cuppa and a sing-along for just £2.



"The new vicar is really cool, Dad. Did you know that God emailed the Ten Commandments to Moses' Tablet PC?"



## The story behind the hymn: 'Christ Arose!'

This Easter marks the 150<sup>th</sup> birthday of this much-loved hymn, sung each year by millions of Christians worldwide. It all began on a little pump organ in the living room of a college professor in Pennsylvania, back in 1874. Robert Lowry was professor of literature at Bucknell University, and pastor of a nearby church. He had a passion for poetry and music, and explained his 'muse' this way: "I watch my moods and when anything strikes me, whether words or music, no matter where I am, at home, on the street, I jot it down. My brain is a sort of spinning machine, for there is music running through it all the time. Sometimes the words come, and the music follows." Easter 1874 was approaching, and on this particular day Robert Lowry had been meditating on the gospel narratives of the Passion and Resurrection. The angel's words at the empty tomb, 'He is not here, but is risen' kept running through his mind. There was something there... Lowry moved to the little pump organ in his living room and gave himself up to the moment. Soon the words and the music for this joyous Easter hymn just fell into place.

### *Christ Arose*

Low in the grave He lay  
Jesus my Saviour!  
Waiting the coming day,  
Jesus my Lord!

*Up from the grave He arose,  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign,  
He arose! He arose!  
Hallelujah! Christ arose!*

Vainly they watch His bed,  
Jesus my Saviour!  
Vainly they seal the dead,  
Jesus my Lord!

Death cannot keep his prey,  
Jesus my Saviour!  
He tore the bars away,  
Jesus my Lord!

*By Robert Lowry (1826-1899)*

### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

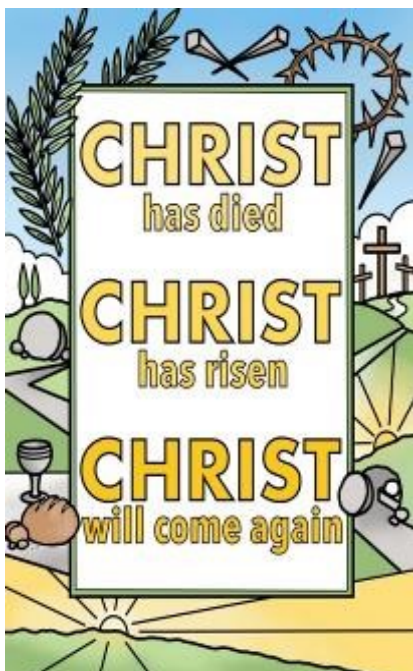
#### March Birthday



Congratulations Stephanie Ashley, Lizzy Ratcliffe and George Done who celebrate their birthdays on March 1st, to Rhi Lawton who celebrates her birthday on 2nd March to Joan Clare who celebrates her birthday on 15th March, and to Barbara Houghton who celebrates her birthday on March 30th.

#### **Palm Sunday visit**

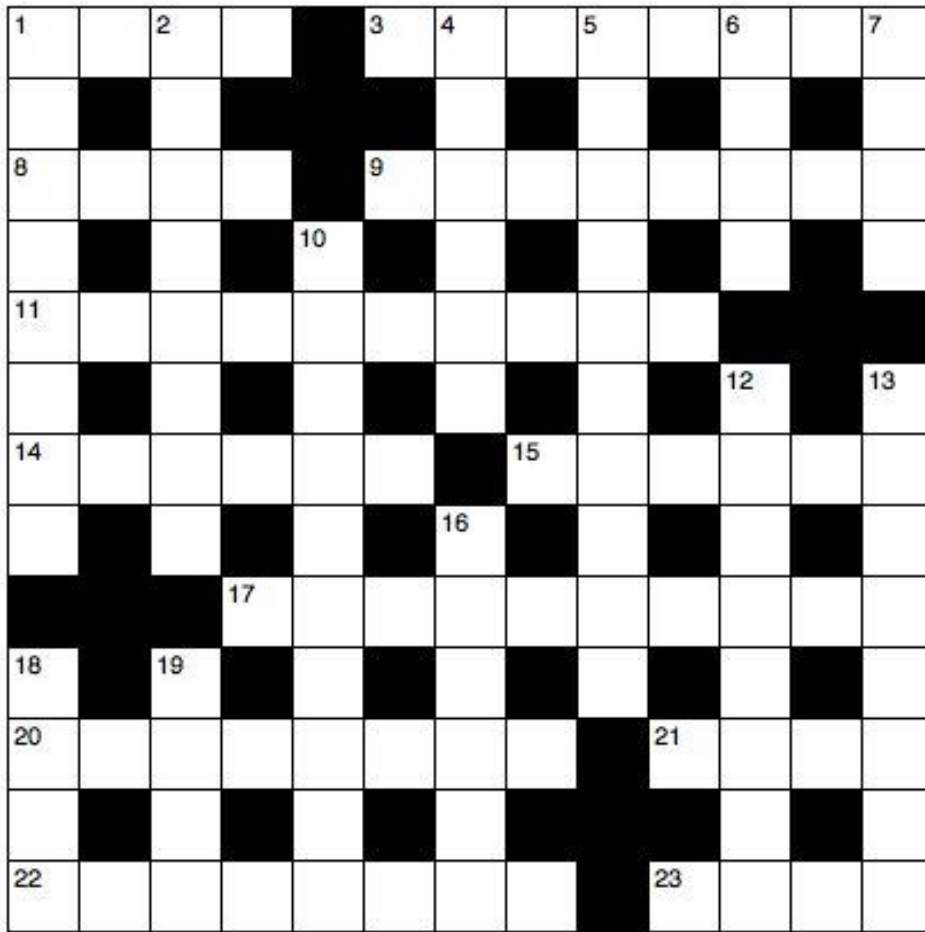
It was Palm Sunday, but because of a sore throat, five-year-old Bobby was kept home from church with his grannie. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds and Bobby asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by," his father explained. Bobby was aghast. "I don't believe it! The one Sunday I don't go, and He shows up!"



## Good Friday, the day the Son of God died for you

Good Friday is the day on which Jesus died on the cross. He was crucified at 9 a.m. in the morning, and died six hours later, at 3pm. It is the most solemn day in the Christian year, and is widely marked by the removal of all decorations from churches. In Lutheran churches, the day was marked by the reading of the passion narrative in a gospel, a practice which lies behind the 'passions' composed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750). Both the St Matthew Passion and the St John Passion have their origins in this observance of Good Friday. The custom of observing a period of three hours' devotion from 12 midday to 3 pm on Good Friday goes back to the 18th century. The 'Three Hours of the Cross' often take the form of an extended meditation on the 'Seven Last Words from the Cross', with periods of silence, prayer, or hymn-singing.





**CROSSWORD CHALLENGE**

See how you get on with this crossword. There is no prize, but whoever gets it back to the Editor by March 22nd will be entered on a Roll of Honour in the next edition of *Growing Together*.

**Across**

- 1 Made from the fruit of the vine, symbol of the blood of Christ (4)
- 3 'You are to set an ambush behind the city. Don't go very far from it. All of you be on — — ' (Joshua 8:4) (3,5)
- 8 Seep (4)
- 9 Celebrated by Jesus on the night of his betrayal (Luke 22:15) (8)
- 11 One of the supposed sites of Christ's burial place in Jerusalem (6,4)
- 14 'A city on a hill — be hidden' (Matthew 5:14) (6)
- 15 He inherited Elijah's mantle (2 Kings 2:12-13) (6)
- 17 Where Jesus prayed 'Not as I will, but as you will' (Matthew 26:36, 39) (10)
- 20 'Only in his home town and in his — — is a prophet without honour' (Matthew 13:57) (3,5)
- 21 Sail (anag.) (4) 22 How Jesus was punished before his crucifixion (Matthew 27:26) (8)
- 23 Eye sore (4)

**Down**

- 1 Can't grow (anag.) (5,3)
- 2 A servant girl to Peter, 'You also were with that — , Jesus' (Mark 14:67) (8)
- 4 Well-being (Proverbs 3:8) (6)
- 5 Pentecostal denomination, — of God (10)
- 6 One of the 'obvious' acts of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:19, 21) (4)
- 7 'I preached that they should repent and — to God' (Acts 26:20) (4)
- 10 ' — — , the world will not see me any more, but you will see me' (John 14:19) (6,4)
- 12 He betrayed Jesus: Judas — (Luke 6:16) (8)
- 13 Jesus to Peter: ' — — of my sheep' (John 21:16) (4,4)
- 16 The centurion said, 'Surely this man was — — of God' (Mark 15:39) (3,3)
- 18 Baked bread (Mark 8:14) (4)
- 19 'Blessing and honour, glory and power, be — Him' (Handel's Messiah) (4)



**February  
Crossword answer**

**ROLL OF HONOUR**

Two people got the crossword answer and they were Jim & Shelagh Goffin, & Wendy Sefton



March  
2024



## Please Pray



Please remember the following people in your prayers throughout this month.

Graham & Nicola Aylett      George Done

Gerald Cook      Helen Browne

Also please remember in your prayers anyone that you know who are home housebound or in hospital.

If you would like us to pray for someone close to you let the Pastoral Care Team know and they could visit someone at home don't hesitate to let them know.

....and the recently bereaved, especially any families known to you

Malvena Marion Mitchell

Helen Dean      Norman Kneale

Alan Horabin      Yvonne Astrid Garster



## Bereavement Café

Davis McMullen in Runcorn and St Michael's Church in partnership with VML will be running a Bereavement Café on **Friday at 12.00noon**, initially once a month with a view to going weekly as the need grows. The idea is to provide a safe and secure space for people recently bereaved or grieving the loss of a loved one. Often it is hard for others to understand what the loss can do to people individually so this Café will be a place of support for anyone who needs it.

This year's café dates are as follows

9th February	9th August
8th March	6th September
12th April	4th October
10th May	8th November
7th June	13th December
5th July	

## INFORMATION

Revd George Roach  
01928 832734

Email: vicar.smaaruncorn@gmail.com  
Not on a Friday

### Churchwardens

Chris Challoner 01928 715830  
Rosemary Lunt 01928 569863

e-mail:

warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk

If you want to book a wedding, baptism or funeral please phone this number **07722470940** and ask for Robbie

## VML



If you have some time to yourself on a Tuesday afternoon, why not tune into the VML Radio Show on HCR 92.3 FM.

## LENT LUNCHES and PRAYER TIME 2024

During Lent we will be holding Lent prayer times and lunches on Fridays in the Meeting Room from **until 22nd March**. The prayer times will be half an hour of creative prayer, easy to join in with, **starting at 12.00noon**. The prayer time will be followed by a bread and soup lunch, kindly provided by Robbie and VML helper's at **12.30 p.m.** Donations this year will be sent to the British Red Cross which will be used to help with the help in Gaza.



**ALL WELCOME, WHENEVER YOU CAN MAKE IT**

**DON'T FORGET TO PUT YOUR CLOCKS FORWARD**

**ON SUNDAY 31st MARCH**

