



Sunday 24th April 2022
Second Sunday of Easter



1. Readings & prayers
2. Church diary & communion update
3. Thank you...
4. A Last Beatitude for 'hidden workers'
5. Good Friday Messy Church
6. Monday Reflections – last one this week
7. Easter Cross
8. AGM Update
9. Peace Garden dedication
10. Marquee needed
11. Lent Appeal – last call
12. Revision of Electoral Roll
13. Church Directory
14. Pond Problems by Joy

Readings for 24th April

Exodus chapter 14 verses 10-end

Acts chapter 5 verses 27-32

John chapter 20 verses 19-end



PRAYERS:- From Churches Together in Hitchin - Wymondley Baptist Church

ask that we continue to pray with them that God will provide the person of His choice to be their new Church Leader. We pray that God will make it clear to them if there are other doors they need to push open to find that person. We give thanks to God for His financial provision for PHASE and for the encouragement of a couple of successful grant applications. PHASE ask for

wisdom in the stewarding of these resources

From St Mark's Prayer Cycle:- We pray this week for St Mary's church leaders and members. We also pray for Hitchin Foodbank, Food Rescue Hub, Feed Up Warm Up, Hitchin Pantry, Christians against Poverty debt help and job club.

This week please pray for the residents of Spellbrooke, Berkeley Close & Fosman Close.

CHURCH DIARY

Links for online services will be sent by email on Saturday morning.

Thursday 21st April – 6.30pm GWNN

Friday 22nd April - 9.30am Little Lions baby & toddler group.

Sunday 24th April – 8am Communion service in church led by Rev'd Chris Bunce. **10am Communion service** in church led by Rev'd Chris Bunce and livestreamed on Youtube. Children's groups and activities will be in the hall. **4pm Travellers group**

We have now reintroduced the common cup during communion but do want to emphasise that no-one should feel under pressure to partake of the wine. If only one element (bread or wine) is taken, it is still regarded as a full communion, and it is the communicant's personal preference as to whether they receive the wine. If you do not wish to receive the wine, simply indicate that with a shake of the head and then leave the altar rail when you can do so without disturbing the person on either side of you.

Please also note that there should be no intincting (dipping the bread/wafer into the wine) as this is against the guidance from the Bishop due to hygiene/allergy concerns.

Monday 25th April – Reading & reflection with Andrew on Youtube*

**This will be the last Monday reflection - please see notice below.*

Wednesday 27th April – 9.15am Morning Prayer service in church. 7.15pm Choir Practice.

Friday 29th April – 12.30pm Church Lunch – please sign up at church.

Sunday 1st May – 8am Communion service in church led by Rev'd Austin Smith

10am Family Communion with Baptism led by Rev'd Kate Peacock and Marie Polley.

HALL DIARY – these are the non-church groups hiring the hall this week.

Monday 25th 8.30am-2pm Signing Group

Tuesday 26th Jo Jingles 9.30am-12.30pm; Rainbows 5-6pm; Antenatal Yoga 7-9pm

Wednesday 27th Home Education Hub 11am-4.15pm; Yoga 5.15-7pm

Thursday 28th Childminders Group 9.30-11.30am; Dorothy Wells Violin Group 4-5.30pm.

CHURCH & COMMUNITY NEWS



THANK YOU... to everyone who helped with our services during Holy Week and Easter in any way, behind the scenes or up at the front, there are too many to mention everyone, but special thanks must go to...

...the Flower team for the beautiful Easter decorations, and St Mark's Rainbows who made the lovely Easter garden in front of the altar (see photo above).

...Andrew and the choir for the wonderful music on Easter Sunday – what a joy to have the choir back in church again!

...the leaders, readers, cleaners, servers, prayers, welcomers, preachers...

Ann passed on this poem/prayer which she saw in the Tilehouse Street Baptist Church magazine. It seems appropriate to include it now for all the "hidden workers" at church.

A Last Beatitude by Malcolm Guite

*And blessed are the ones we overlook;
The faithful servers on the coffee rota,
The ones who hold no candle, bell or book
But keep the books and tally up the quota,
The gentle souls who come to 'do the flowers',
The quiet ones who organise the fete,
Church sitters who give up their weekday hours,
Doorkeepers who may open heaven's gate.
God knows the depths that often go unspoken
Amongst the shy, the quiet, and the kind,
Or the slow healing of a heart long broken
Placing each flower so for a year's mind.
Invisible on earth, without a voice,
In heaven their angels glory and rejoice.*

GOOD FRIDAY MESSY CHURCH. Many thank-yous to all who helped at this event. About 70 people came and enjoyed the crafts, the story and songs. It was wonderful to see families enjoy their hot cross buns in the sunshine. The new pop-up covers, purchased for outdoor activities on rainy days provided perfect shade for the hot sunshine! A great start to Easter.

MONDAY REFLECTIONS - It has been decided that the recorded reflections, currently going out every Monday, will come to an end this month. The one by Andrew on the 25th will be the last.

The reflections were started in February 2020 when lockdown meant it was not possible to meet for worship in church. At first, there were five each week, recorded mainly by Andrew and John, with contributions from other members including Gail and Tricia who regularly led Wednesday Morning Prayer. We scaled this down gradually and now have one on a Monday. This has been led by Andrew, John and Nick but we have also been glad to have them from Melanie Crowley and Martha Inch from the parish team, Archdeacon Jane, Jane Robson from Tilehouse Street Baptist Church, Val Reid from Christchurch and Trish Bonnett from Our Lady's. The reflections have been based on the appointed Bible readings, the saint being remembered that day, or simply something that was on the speaker's mind. Numbers watching have ranged from 20 to 100, including members of the St Mark's congregation and some from elsewhere, and there have been many appreciative comments.

As those leading them have many other commitments, it is becoming increasingly challenging to prepare, record and produce them, the last task undertaken by Andrew who finds the illustrations and music to go with the themes. Happily, it is now more possible for most of us to get to church. For all these reasons, we feel the time has come to stop, with some regret but also with thanksgiving for what they have meant to so many.

Just to add that our main Sunday communion services will continue to be live-streamed on YouTube and a recording available to watch thereafter.

Do have a word with Andrew or John if you would like to know more.

EASTER CROSS – as you know our wooden cross at the front of the car park sadly had to be taken down as it had rotted away at the base and was dangerous. We had hoped to have it reinstalled for Easter, but unfortunately this was not possible. Thankfully Michael came to the rescue and at short notice made this beautiful cross which was put up in time for Easter. When the original cross is reinstalled in the ground, we will relocate the cross which Michael has made to the Memorial Garden.



ST MARK'S AGM UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who took part in our AGM on 3rd April.

Thank you too to those who have served in various capacities but have stood down this year. We are very grateful to have so many people willing to serve in various roles. Below is the list of people elected to these roles; this list is also on display on the noticeboard in the porch.

Assistant Wardens: Debbie Dunz, Samar Daher, Melvyn Redd, Sandra Stokes, Louise Wills

Fabric Officer: Kevin Banks

Keeper of the Electoral Roll: Maggie Mellersh

Treasurer: Jim Weist will be co-opted at the first meeting of the new DCC on 24th May

DCC Secretary: Deirdre Parr

DCC Members to serve until 2025: Beckie Barlow, Melvyn Redd, Ann Wakefield

Churches Together in Hitchin (CTH) Representatives: Helen Richardson and John Skeeles

Joy Bennett and **Edward Stone** were nominated as **Churchwardens** and will be formally elected at the Annual Parish Church Meeting on 25th May.

Since the meeting, Shirley Goldsmith has offered to fill the one vacant place remaining on the DCC and, like Jim, will be co-opted at the May DCC meeting.

There are still two vacant places for CTH reps. Do speak to Helen or John Richardson if you are interested in knowing more about this particular role.

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE - PEACE GARDEN - Over recent years, Hitchin Quakers have been establishing a Peace Garden around their Meeting House in Brand Street. Churches Together in Hitchin has contributed a sundial with the words 'Blessed are the peace-makers', inscribed by Michael Walters of St Mark's, and this will be dedicated in a simple ceremony at 11.00 am on Saturday 30th April. There will be some words about Quaker peace witness, and Father Tom of Our Lady's, the Chair of Churches Together, will offer a blessing. All are welcome to attend, to see the other features of the garden, and to join in a cuppa and chat afterwards. More details from John Richardson on 07505 426876

MARQUEE NEEDED! - Zeo is taking a group of young people to Satellite Youth Festival this summer and we wondering if anyone had some stuff that would be helpful for camping with big groups e.g. particularly a marquee/s for us to eat in etc. There's 30 of us going so far, so any help appreciated AND if you'd love to join us with some of your young people then come back to me as we'd love it to be a group of young people across churches.

Any help appreciated, Thanks Matt matt.summerfield@zeochurch.com

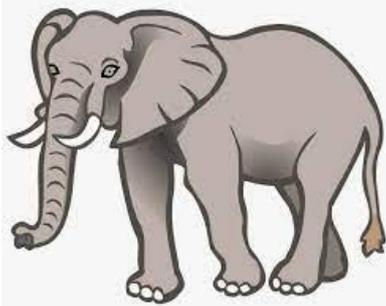
2022 LENT APPEAL – Thank you to all who have contributed to our appeal for the Red Cross this Lent. This Sunday 24th April will be the last day for cash donations in church and Saturday 30th April will be the last day when online donations can be made via the St Mark's website. We will be announcing the final amount raised as soon as we can after the appeal has closed.

REVISION OF ST MARK'S ELECTORAL ROLL 2022

Our Electoral Roll (a kind of church membership list) is being revised between 24th April and 9th May. Anyone can be on the Roll who is over 16 years old, and baptised, and either lives in the parish or has worshipped at the church (or with the church online) regularly for at least six months. If you're not on the Roll and would like to be, or if any of your details have changed (name or address) since last year please let Maggie know on admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk

A copy of the names of those currently on the Roll can be found on the noticeboard at the back of church, for you to check if you're on it.

CHURCH DIRECTORY – If anyone's contact details have changed, or if you would like a hard copy of the 2022 Directory please let Maggie know by 24th April.



POND PROBLEMS

Hi folks well here is a conundrum for you all to consider, thinking caps on please. Our bottom pond, for reasons unknown, seems to randomly decide to lose its level every now and then. We can go for several days everything being fine then for no apparent reason we wake up in the morning to find it has dropped down by 4/6 inches below the optimum level. We have of course checked the stream that delivers the water for the bottom pond from the top stream for leaks, none apparent. One occasion last week the pond water was so low that the pump was exposed and making strange noises whilst floating on the top of the very low water. All avenues of possible causes /issues have been explored. An extensive amount of head scratching and pondering and probing has happened so far to no avail. When you have eliminated the probable and logical reasons with no answers your thoughts have to turn to the totally improbable and impossibly illogical. So here is the answer we have come up with There is obviously an Elephant who resides down the stream at the back of our garden who, when he gets thirsty of an evening, lowers his trunk over our bottom fence and drinks his fill. If any of you have any more sensible answers or practical experience of why we have this pond problem please feel free to enlighten us. Love Joy, The Husband and some perplexed fish XXXXX

If you would like to have a notice included please email notices@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk

Please send notices by 7pm on the preceding Wednesday.