



# KINGSDOWN MESSENGER



*April 2013*

## SERVICES FOR APRIL



- 7 Apr 10.30 Mrs Regina Prempeh  
6.30 Mrs Esther Ackah
- 14 Apr 10.30 Rev Peter Catford, Holy Communion/Family/Parade  
Service - followed by AGM  
6.30 Local Arrangement
- 21 Apr 10.30 Deacon Richard Goldstraw  
6.30 **CIRCUIT SERVICE** at Greenford
- 28 Apr 10.30 Local Arrangement -  
Worship Leader: Rekha Cheriyan  
6.30 Rev Suva Catford



## EASTER OFFERING 2013

Each year the Methodist Church holds an Easter Offering dedication service. The tradition of the Easter Offering dates back to 1883 when women in Manchester collected £32 at Christmas for Missionary work overseas. In March 1884 the London districts distributed Easter envelopes and collecting bags asking for a penny a head, with just over £100 collected. The theme of Easter Offering 2013 is 'Beyond The Harbour Wall' and focuses on setting out on a journey into the unknown with God drawing us further on and with Jesus Christ travelling with us.



Envelopes will be in the pews until after Easter and all donations will go to the Methodist Church World Mission Fund. Donations may be Gift Aided if required.

**Olwen Britton**

### The KINGSDOWN MESSENGER

Copy deadline for the May 2013 issue is Friday 19 April 2013

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The news of changes in the responsibilities of the circuit staff after only a few months in the circuit has taken a lot of our thoughts and conversations. The arrival of new staff had shaken off the usual gloom of talking about decline in the church figures. Comments have been voiced ... We were hopeful ... We have had the carpet pulled under our feet..... Why does it always happen to us?

These real feelings and more need to be voiced, heard and respected.

Our culture, media, has sensitized us to depression and decline; we fight to maintain the status quo at all cost. The line in "Abide with me", which interestingly I have never sung in church other than at a funeral,

*"Change and decay in all around I see..."* seems to be echoed all around us

In this light it is tempting just to pull up the draw bridge of the castles of our lives as individuals and even communities, barricading ourselves in for a long siege; seeking to secure ourselves against all comers.

This fear filled living is evident and challenged by the story of Easter told by the Gospel writers. The fear filled disciples huddle after Jesus' death, afraid of the changes and decay that were taking place impacting the fabric of their lives. Jesus had given them their identity; his death meant they were looking to each other to maintain some normality.

Is that how we are?

John Wesley wrote, "I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out."

In the season of Easter the disciples met the risen Jesus on many occasions and they had a choice to remain huddled together comfortable with the painful status quo that Good Friday had brought

or

to move on in faith celebrating what they experienced of the risen Christ. His presence meant they saw in a new light the past, the pain, the joy, the mystery and the wonder as they had followed Jesus throughout Galilee.

The disciples on meeting the risen Christ and being blessed by the Holy Spirit chose not stay locked in a group that remembered and kept alive a past that was once good. They chose to move out and believe in Jesus in His teaching.

They no longer just belonged to Jesus but believed in Him.

As Methodists we need to not fall into the trap of belonging to a society rather than believing in the faith of Jesus who trusted God. We have in the circuit exciting opportunities to reach out with the Good News of Jesus that life in all its fullness is for all when they put their faith in Jesus. There was hope and there is still hope. We have been led and are being led by the Holy Spirit to build on and explore what it is to be called Methodist, people of faith in this place and at this time.

At the Resurrection the disciples were challenged, as we are, to believe and to step out into a world of change with not a dead religion but a living message of love and hope for the world. May we all know God's gracious and loving power that promises to overcome that which we fear and renew us and all creation life in all its fullness.

**Peter Catford**

## **Kingsdown Family News**

It is good to learn that **Kathleen Jarrett** has at last had a successful knee operation and all good wishes are sent for a speedy recovery.

We send all good wishes to **Pearl Pike** who is due to go into hospital on Tuesday for further treatment and hope her stay will be short and her recovery swift.

Some of our congregation will have heard of the death of **Alf Edmonson** who died on 8 March at Hammersmith Hospital , following a long battle with cancer. His funeral was held at Mortlake Crematorium on Thursday 21 March. Alf joined Kingsdown two years ago from the Mission in South Ealing. He enjoyed singing and sang with the choir at Sunday morning services. He was a loyal member of the Tuesday Kingsdown Club and a long time member of

the singing group 'The Caroliners'. He will be sadly missed by all those who knew him.

Many of our congregation will have been saddened to learn of the sudden death of **Bill Lovell**, husband of **Deborah Lovell** (known to many of us for her cheerful and efficient response to our requests for Traidcraft products). Bill was a secretary and senior steward at Ealing Green Church where the funeral service took place on Tuesday, 26 March. We send Debbie and family our sincerest condolences and ask you to remember them in your prayers. *(There is a notice in the Kingsdown Church foyer from the Rev Jen Smith in this respect.)*

## **Lenten Experience**

We would like to say how stimulating the Sunday evening Lenten study has been this year, and what a range of topics have been covered. Rather sorry for those who missed out!

We are also grateful to Les Goodchild who made the five lovely crosses that have been introduced, and to those who contributed to the People's Crosses display.

**Kathleen & Peter Loveridge**

**CONGRATULATIONS** to our **Boys Brigade** for its recent successes in the London Band Competition (read the details on p.9).



## **Perivale**

In early February, the congregation at Perivale took a decision to 'cease to meet'. This follows the loss of various members of their congregation who have moved away from the area. The decision received the consent of the last Circuit Meeting (14<sup>th</sup> March) and is being reported to the London District Synod who must also give their Consent.

The final service at Perivale will take place on 19th May, which is Pentecost Sunday, at 10:30am and will be led by Rev. Suva Catford. Although this is not a Circuit service, everyone is invited to attend. The service will be followed by a meal.

*With acknowledgement to HMC News*

*To all the churches and congregations of the Ealing Trinity Circuit, to be read out after worship on Sunday 17 March and Sunday 24 March, displayed on an internal notice board, and circulated as needed.*

Dear Friends,

From 1 June 2013, the pastoral sections within the Circuit will be amended as follows:

Acton Hill Church, and Ealing Green Church - Jennifer Smith

Pitshanger Church, and Hanwell Church - Suva Catford

Kingsdown Church, King's Hall English-speaking Church, and King's Hall Urdu-speaking Church — Chrissie Howe, and Deacon Richard Goldstraw at the King's Hall churches

Northolt Church, and Greenford Church - Peter Catford

Deacon Richard Goldstraw will also take up a Circuit brief for mission, welcome, and wellbeing. This will include supporting pastoral care and carers, encouraging church hospitality and outreach, and a Circuit strategy for health and healing.

In addition Chrissie Howe will move to the manse at Elers Road, Ealing.

This follows discussion and consultation with Circuit staff, the Circuit Policy Committee, the relevant District and Connexional Probationers' Oversight bodies, the Diaconal Order, senior stewards, and groups in individual churches. On Thursday 14 March 2013 the Circuit Meeting considered the proposal and its background, and gave broad endorsement. Pastoral sections in Methodist discipline are the responsibility of the Superintendent, with consultation.

It is not possible to give the background in this notice, but those for whom further information would be helpful are encouraged to speak to their Circuit meeting representatives or senior steward.

With thanks for our partnership in the Gospel,

**Jennifer Smith**  
**Superintendent Minister**  
**Ealing Trinity Circuit of the Methodist Church.**

## **CHURCH STEWARD - IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK IT IS**

Becoming a Methodist Church Steward is not what most people think it is. For many people in the worshipping congregation, the work of the Church Stewards is only apparent in what they are seen to do before, during and after occasions of public worship. While these duties are important — a primary duty of the Church Stewards is to ensure that public worship is led appropriately on those occasions when it has been announced it will be so — the first duty is to act with the minister 'for giving leadership and help over the whole range of the church's life and activity' (Methodist Standing Order 633).

This is why the role of Church Steward involves membership of the Church Council, and responsibility for ensuring that the decisions of the Church Council are implemented. But the Standing Order —these are the rules which govern our Methodist procedure and practices —goes on to say that the Stewards should encourage other members 'with appropriate gifts and skills' to share with them in exercising leadership. This is why at Kingsdown the Stewards share the roles of Vestry Duties at morning services, counting the collection, and a number of other administrative tasks, with other volunteers.

But the leadership role — held jointly between the Stewards and with the Minister — is most important of all, and demands of Stewards a high level of engagement with reflection, forward planning, liaison with others within the church and in the Circuit, alongside an awareness of the pastoral needs of the people and attention to the relationship of the church with its local community.

Having said that, there is scope for Stewards to offer more or less of their time, according to their other commitments and responsibilities. At Kingsdown we would like to invite those who have a genuine interest in helping the congregation move forward in its mission and service to contribute their gifts and skills, and some of their time, to these leadership roles.

During the next few weeks, Peter Catford will be approaching some members with a challenge as to whether this role is the one for them for the immediate future. But he is also very interested in hearing from anyone who believes they have something more or different to offer the Kingsdown church than they have done in the past, whether that be a role as Church Steward, or something different entirely.

## **All Shall Be Well**

Amongst the current hurt, anger and disappointment over the future Ministerial changes to Kingsdown and other Circuit Churches perhaps we should reflect on the words of Mother Julian of Norwich:

All Shall Be Well  
And All Shall Be Well  
And All Manner Of Thing  
Shall Be Well

**Submitted by June Thompson**

## **Housekeeping Rules**

As our Church, Hall and various rooms are being used more frequently by outside groups, it is imperative that we all take responsibility for keeping the premises clean and tidy.

Recently, a paper was issued, on behalf of Kingsdown, to the various User Groups, outlining the rules that we expect them to follow and to be aware of.

Equally, there is the expectation that Kingsdown adherents will also do the same.

This is not an onerous exercise, simply to "be responsible". For example, putting away chairs; keeping the kitchen clean and tidy; seeing that windows and doors are closed; a general tidying up.

The comprehensive list of Housekeeping Rules will be placed on the Notice Boards. If, in doubt, please have a look.

With thanks

**Janet Smith**  
**On behalf of the Property Committee**

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## **HISTORICAL FACTS...**

**Henry V** was crowned King of England 600 years ago in 1413. Look out for events at English Heritage sites.

The original Globe Theatre went up in flames 400 years ago during a performance of Henry VIII when a stage cannon misfired, igniting the wooden structure and an audience member's breeches - the latter extinguished by liberal quantities of ale!

The **10th Ealing BB** enjoyed another great night at the London BB Band Competition.



To add to our victories in the previous two years we now have:

- a) the trophy for Best Drum Team in London
- b) the trophy for Best Musical Accuracy
- c) second position (by just three marks) for Best Traditional BB Band - the team that beat us fielded a band of 20 Boys and they are able to practice for two hours a week (we fielded a band of 9 and we practice for just 30 minutes a week).

It was a fabulous evening and the Boys were brilliant!

A big thank you to Bandmaster David Lane and Bugle Instructor Mark Tobias - good job, chaps.

Younger band members take note - you'll be in the running for next year's competition: start practising!

## **ANNUAL DISPLAY**

Our Annual Display will take place on Friday 17th May beginning at the earlier time of 7pm. This is the biggest date of our year and all parents and friends are invited to attend.

**Tony Plews**

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## **IF YOU MISSED**

### **the Good Friday Radio Broadcast catch up on BBC i Player**

Friends may be interested in a recent collaboration between BBC Radio 2, The Bach Choir (including Annegret and Derek Matthews) and Central Hall, Westminster, to be broadcast on Good Friday. A sequence of readings from the Gospel of St. Mark and Easter poems, by Penelope Keith, and of selected movements from Handel's Messiah, performed by the Bach Choir and soloists, was introduced by Ken Bruce and recorded before a live audience at Central Hall.

The programme 'At the Foot of the Cross' was broadcast on Radio 2 at 8.00pm on Friday, 29 March.

INSIDE-OUT DISCIPLESHIP - A TEACHING RETREAT DAY  
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL RETREAT DAY, GILLINGHAM, KENT

SATURDAY 27TH APRIL, 9.30-4.15

I am writing to invite you to join us for this day to hear from God away from everyday responsibilities. There will be worship, teaching, space for personal reflection and small group interaction.

We will explore how the inner landscape of our hearts, determines the nature of our engagement with everyday life, and affects our ability to share our love for God with those we meet.

This teaching retreat day is being run by the Inspire Network : an ecumenical network, rooted in the Methodist tradition, forming the spiritual lives of mission-shaped disciples.

The venue will be Gillingham Methodist Church and all are welcome. If you are not able to attend, please do forward this information to any others who may be interested.

There is no charge for this retreat.

More information can be found, and bookings made at:  
<http://www.inspire-network.org.uk/node/164>

Contact David Lawrence with any enquiries about the day:  
[d.lawrence@inspire-network.org.uk](mailto:d.lawrence@inspire-network.org.uk)

With very best wishes

**DAVID LAWRENCE**  
*Inspire Project Development  
Discipleship & Ministries Cluster  
The Connexional Team  
Phone: 01454 310713  
Mobile: 07704 625178  
Skype ID: davidl2007*

*“Learn to listen - opportunity sometimes knocks very softly.”*



## THANKS

We are so grateful to God for his love and protection during the current season of Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter. And we are so grateful to all the churches and volunteers who have supported in so many ways - praying, volunteering, and giving etc

### SERVICE OF THANKS!

With this in mind there will be a Service of Thanksgiving on Wednesday 3rd April at 7.30pm.

We appreciate this is in the Easter holidays, but we wanted to have the service fairly shortly after the end of the shelter so that our guests would be more likely to come.

**Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter  
Service of Thanksgiving Wednesday 3rd April at 7.30pm  
at St Mary's Church, The Mount, Acton W3 9NW  
(just off Acton High Street near Morrisons)**

All welcome! An opportunity to thank God for his goodness and to pray for those who continue to be homeless. Please bring some refreshments to share. More information CALL 07930378263

Many thanks for your partnership in this project - however large or small!  
Blessings,

**Liz Moody (Chair of Ealing Churches Winter Night Shelter Steering Group)**



The children were lined up in the dining hall of a Catholic primary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted it on the apple tray:

"Take only ONE. God is watching."

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A child made a note, and posted it on the cookie tray:

"Take all you want. God's watching the apples."

*Sent in by Rekha John*

## **BITE BACK AT HUNGER**

Arrangements are now well in hand for Christian Aid Week. Some of you who have helped with the House-to-house collecting or Flag Day in previous years have indicated without any 'arm twisting' that you are willing to help again! Very many thanks. I hope to contact all previous collectors soon, but if you have never helped before, why not try this year? If you decide to do so, please contact me immediately.

The dates for all our 2013 events can be found on page 20 of the March Messenger. I know of three collectors who will not be able to help this year. Unfortunately, two were House-to-house collectors and, if we are unable to replace them, then we have to 'drop' a road.

Do look out for the Christian Aid Church magazine article in this edition of the Messenger and the poster in the Church Foyer.

### **A Christian Aid Week prayer, included in the Christian Aid Service**

Bread-making God  
Mixing new technologies  
of text messaging and weather forecasting

Kneading alongside farmers  
building sand dams  
and community gardens

Raising hope in communities  
to claim land rights  
and protect forests

May your bread be shared fairly,  
So all can eat and have enough. AMEN

**Ruby Warne**



## ***Bite Back at Hunger***

**Christian Aid Week 12–18 May 2013**



**'It's very rewarding to know that Christians of different traditions are working together for one common aim during Christian Aid Week.'**  
**Christian Aid Week volunteer**

Thousands of churches will stand together this Christian Aid Week to speak out for change. Some 100,000 committed volunteers will go out and put their faith into action, raising funds to help some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people.

This includes Britain's largest house-to-house collection, an extraordinary act of witness – demonstrating to our communities that we care about ending poverty and injustice.

There is enough food for everyone in the world, but one in eight people will go to bed hungry tonight.

This year's Christian Aid Week tells the story of how Christian Aid is helping communities to bite back at hunger through the lens of land rights in Bolivia, new technology in Kenya and innovative agriculture in Zimbabwe.

You can support Christian Aid Week by looking out for local events, and discover how you can be involved by contacting your local Christian Aid Week representative or by visiting [www.caweeek.org/article](http://www.caweeek.org/article)



## **Methodist Identity and the Role of Women**

An Interactive Retreat day on 4 May 2013, facilitated by Rev Bonni-Belle Pickard and Rev Jennifer Potter. Details on notice board.

## **'Because You're Worth It'**

A weekend away has been arranged by the London District of Methodist Women in Britain. It takes place at High Leigh Conference Centre from Friday 19 to Sunday 21 July. Details are on the notice board; bookings need to be made by 15 April.



MRDF's six charity places in the popular British 10k London Run are now filled for 2013, but there is still time to register for your own place and run for MRDF!

In 2013, the run takes place on Sunday 14 July, and MRDF's runners will be raising money for our life-changing work. If you secure a place in the run and want to support MRDF, please let us know and we will send you:

A free MRDF T-shirt

Information about MRDF

Fundraising tips

A guide to training for a 10k run

Personalised sponsorship forms

A personalised 'guess my time' sheet

Assistance from MRDF in promoting their run

Regular contact with MRDF

A certificate of thanks on receipt of sponsorship money



The British 10k Run is the UK's most sought-after 10km race and has historical landmarks such as Big Ben, St Paul's Cathedral and Tower Bridge along its route. But it's much more than a fun run – it's a great way to raise money, through sponsorship, for MRDF's work with some of the world's poorest communities.

Interested? Apply for a place in the British 10k London Run 2013

**Find out more about how to fundraise for MRDF go to  
<http://www.thebritish10klondon.co.uk/charity/list/M#>**

## **MRDF welcomes Budget aid commitment**

Responding to the announcement on aid expenditure in the Budget, Simeon Mitchell, MRDF's Director of Fundraising, Marketing and Campaigning, said:

*'We are pleased that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced that 0.7% of national income will be spent on overseas aid and applaud the government for being the first in the G8 to deliver on this 43 year old promise, especially in these tough economic times. We hope that this will set a precedent and that other G8 countries will follow suit.'*

*'However, aid alone will not solve the grinding poverty that causes nearly 1 billion people to go hungry. We also need to tackle the injustices which skew global financial and trade systems, and perpetuate poverty and marginalisation; which is why MRDF is a member of the IF campaign.'*

### **IF....**

**The** world produces enough food for everyone, but not everyone has enough food. IF we all get together, we can make world leaders change the future.

MRDF is working together with other agencies this year to press our leaders to make four big IFs happen:

**IF** we give enough aid to stop children dying from hunger, and help the poorest people feed themselves.

**IF** we stop big companies dodging taxes in poor countries, so that millions of people can free themselves from hunger.

**IF** we stop poor farmers being forced off their land by corporations.

**IF** governments and big corporations have to be honest and open about their actions that stop people getting enough food.

...THEN we can create a world with enough food for everyone. These changes will only happen IF millions of ordinary people in the UK join us in calling for change.

MRDF sees the '**Enough Food for Everyone... IF**' campaign as a valuable way of putting the spotlight on food issues in 2013, but recognises it will just be the start of ending hunger.

## Lord, Teach Me to Pray



I cannot pray '**Our**', if my faith has no room for others and their needs.

I cannot pray '**Father**', if I do not demonstrate this relationship to God in my daily living.

I cannot pray '**who art in heaven**', if all my interests and pursuits are in earthly things.

I cannot pray '**hallowed be thy name**', if I am not striving, with God's help, to be holy.

I cannot pray '**thy kingdom come**', if I am unwilling to accept God's rule in my life.

I cannot pray '**thy will be done**', if I am unwilling or resentful of having it in my life.

I cannot pray '**on earth as it is in heaven**', unless I am truly ready to give myself to God's service, here and now.

I cannot pray '**give us this day our daily bread**', without expending honest effort for it, or if I would withhold from my neighbour the bread I receive.

I cannot pray '**forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us**', if I continue to harbour a grudge against anyone.

I cannot pray '**lead us not into temptation**', if I deliberately choose to remain in a situation where I am likely to be tempted.

I cannot pray '**deliver us from evil**', if I am not prepared to fight evil with my life and prayer.

I cannot pray '**thine is the kingdom**', if I am unwilling to obey the King.

I cannot pray '**thine is the power and the glory**', if I am seeking power for myself and my own glory first.

I cannot pray '**forever and ever**', if I am anxious about each day's affairs.

I cannot pray '**Amen**', unless I honestly say, 'Cost what it may, this **is** my prayer.'

*With acknowledgement to All Saint's and St John Churches, Hove*

## **Telling Stories: 13<sup>th</sup> —14<sup>th</sup> April at Greenford and Ealing Green**

'Telling Stories' is a weekend event organised by the Leaders of Worship & Local Preachers Trust (LWPT) for our Circuit to look at how we can use the art of storytelling to illuminate our worship. Everyone is welcome, not just local preachers and worship leaders! Led by Joyce Pipet, on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April sessions will be at Greenford and will run from 10.30am — 4.00pm.

Book your place with Christina Tom-Johnson on 07972 542353 or 020 8423 9501 by 1<sup>st</sup> April. Drinks provided, but please bring your own lunch. There is no charge for the day, but a donation of £10 towards Circuit training funds would be appreciated.

On Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April, Joyce will lead worship at Ealing Green at 11.00am.

For full details, go to [www.ealingtrinity.org.uk/notices](http://www.ealingtrinity.org.uk/notices) where you can download the full programme.

## **Pitshanger Church - Centenary Celebrations 9 & 10 March**



No doubt a number of people from Kingsdown visited during the two days of festivities at Pitshanger to celebrate the church's Centenary.

There were beautiful floral displays displaying different seasons of the year, as well as contributions from organisations using the church premises, and also local churches and businesses. Such a wealth of talent and ingenuity was shown in the various approaches - which included interesting historical items.

Welcome refreshments were available for much of the time, and there was a real buzz of excitement during the time we visited.

The weekend was opened by the Mayor of Ealing, Councillor Mohammad Aslam. There was an evening concert on the Saturday and special services on the Sunday.

## Lentern Crosses

### First Sunday of Lent: The Trefoil Cross



See the small buds at the end of each arm of the Trefoil Cross? They help many people remember God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. When I look at this cross, I wonder if I should be like a bud on a bush or a tree in early spring—quiet, waiting, wondering, praying, and getting ready to burst open on Easter Sunday morning. Then maybe I will be like a beautiful flower. I will grow and serve in God's kingdom. I will praise God. That's what the Trefoil cross makes me think of.

### Second Sunday of Lent: The Tau Cross



In the Bible, in the book called Numbers, we read about a time when God's people were wandering in the desert. They complained to Moses and to God. God sent poisonous snakes, and the people cried out to God for help. Then God told Moses to make a snake and raise it up on a staff or a pole for all the people to see. If the people were bitten by a snake but looked at the bronze snake on the pole, they would not die, but live. It is said that the Tau cross is in the shape of the staff Moses raised in the desert for all to look at and receive life. As I look at this cross I wonder how this story of Moses and the bronze snake is like the story of Jesus and his death on the cross.

### Third Sunday of Lent: The Cross Crosslet



Look carefully. Can you find the four crosses joined together to make the Cross Crosslet? This cross helps us to remember that Jesus died for all people. So we bring the good news of Lent and Easter to all those who live to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south. And the whole world will praise his sacred name.



## **Fourth Sunday of Lent: The Passion Cross**

This is the Passion Cross or the Cross of Suffering. We remember that when Jesus died on the cross, he suffered for us. See the five circles or holes on this cross? What do they help you remember? They remind me of the wounds of the cross Jesus' hands, feet, and side. They remind me that Jesus loves you and me so much that he suffered for us.



## **Fifth Sunday of Lent: The People's Crosses**

Some of us have made or brought crosses to hang on our Cross Tree

Now look at it! So many crosses

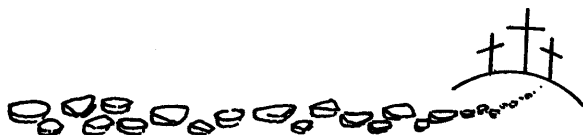
My friends, remember that the cross is the most loving thing that God did for you...for you...for you...for you.



## **Sixth Sunday of Lent: The Cross of Triumph with Palm Branches**

There is so much to look at in this cross. The circle reminds us of the earth. The cross of Jesus rises up over the earth to show that Jesus has triumphed over the sin of the world. Jesus is stronger than sin. The palm branches remind us of Jesus' journey into Jerusalem. The gospel of John tells us that the people welcomed Jesus by laying palm branches on the road in front of him. They shouted "Hosanna in the Highest!"

*Crosses made by Les Goodchild and displayed in Kingsdown Church during Lent*



## **A Prayer for Easter-tide, by Daphne Kitching**

Dear Father, Life can be difficult. Sometimes it feels as though the sun has stopped shining, just as it did on that first Good Friday. Sometimes it can feel as though we are stuck in the darkness and it seems impossible that the light will ever shine again. And yet the reality is that Friday did move on, into the most glorious Sunday. The Son did rise - and his light shines on, transforming the darkest of times, holding out hope and peace and life to all who will turn and look into his face.

He is alive. He will help us. Thank you Father, for Jesus.

**Amen.**

\* \* \* \* \*

## **Watch Les Miserables to learn of God's grace and redemption, says priest**

Watching the film *Les Miserables* is an ideal way to learn of God's grace, redemption and mercy, says the priest-in-charge of St Mary the Virgin, Ewelme, in Oxfordshire, where one of the film's most important scenes was filmed.

The Revd Jonathan Meyer recalls: "It was almost a year ago that I was approached and asked about filming part of *Les Miserables* in the church at Ewelme. Filming took place on 21st March, when the south porch was transformed into the residence of the Bishop of Digne. The convict Jean Valjean emerges from the door, singing the words 'and now let the story begin'.

"We saw this on a crisp March day, repeated over and over again with numerous cameras, film crews, lights, gantries and a churchyard full of sound technicians. On screen we saw the contorted face of Valjean rushing forward, and the camera showing us our church digitised on to a promontory in Provence.

"Most important to me was that this is the nub of the film. The Bishop's act of kindness, like the grace of God, is poured out in such a way that Valjean's life is transformed and transforms others."



## **\*23 St George - our patron saint who isn't English by David Winter**

It's perhaps typical of the English that they should have a patron saint who isn't English, about whom next to nothing is known for sure, and who may not have existed at all. That didn't stop him being patriotically invoked in many battles, notably at Agincourt and in the Crusades, and of course it is his cross that adorns the flags of English football fans to this day.

It's most likely that he was a soldier, a Christian who was martyred for his faith somewhere in Palestine, possibly at Lydda, in the early fourth century. At some point in the early centuries of the Church he became associated with wider military concerns, being regarded as the patron saint of the Byzantine armies. There is no doubt that he was held as an example of the 'godly soldier', one who served Christ as bravely and truly as he served his king and country.

The story of George and the dragon is of much later date and no one seems to know where it comes from. By the middle ages, when George was being honoured in stained glass, the dragon had become an invaluable and invariable visual element, so that for most people the two are inseparable. Pub signs have a lot to answer for here: 'The George and Dragon'.

However, it's probably more profitable to concentrate on his role as a man who witnessed to his faith in the difficult setting of military service, and in the end was martyred for his faithfulness to Christ.

The idea of the 'Christian soldier' was, of course, much loved by the Victorian hymn-writers - 'Onward, Christian soldiers!'. The soldier needs discipline. The heart of his commitment is to obedience. The battle cannot be avoided nor the enemy appeased. He marches and fights alongside others, and he is loyal to his comrades. In the end, if the battle is won, he receives the garlands of victory, the final reward of those who overcome evil.

St George's Day presents a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to distance the message of his life from the militarism and triumphalism that can easily attach itself to anything connected to soldiers and fighting. The opportunity is to celebrate the ideal of the 'Christian soldier' - one who submits to discipline, sets out to obey God truly, does not avoid the inevitable battle with all that is unjust, wrong and hateful in our world, and marches alongside others fighting the same noble cause. Discipline, obedience, courage, fellowship and loyalty - they're not the most popular virtues today, but that doesn't mean that they don't deserve our gratitude and admiration.



## SIGN OF THE FISH

In the early days of Christianity it could be very dangerous to admit that you were one of Jesus' followers. You could be arrested, imprisoned and killed, simply for your beliefs. Christians had to meet in secret - but how could you tell if a stranger was a Christian or not? Who could you trust? Christians used secret signs to recognise one another. And one of these was the sign of the fish which could easily be scratched on a wall or drawn in the dust of the road. If the other person wasn't a Christian they'd just think you were doodling.

The fish was used as sign because, in Greek, the first letters of the words 'Jesus Christ God's Son Saviour' spell 'ichthus', the Greek word for fish.



How can you show other people today that you are a Christian? If you have the joy of knowing Jesus in your heart then it should show on your face!

## SECRET WRITING

The fish was a secret sign. If you would like to send someone a secret message, you can do it with 'invisible ink'.

You need a lemon or an onion. Squeeze the juice of either into a small bowl. Using the juice as ink, with a clean nib in a proper pen, write your message on a piece of paper. Leave it to dry and as it dries the message will disappear.

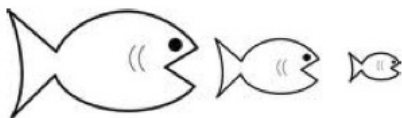


To make it reappear, hold the paper over a lamp or radiator. This is a very easy way of sending secret messages ... but you have to be sure that the person you are writing to knows the secret of how to make the message reappear!



**Where does seaweed look for a job?**

In the 'Kelp-wanted' ads!



**What game do fish like playing the most?**

Name that tuna.



## **EVENTS AT KINGSDOWN**

### **APRIL**

- Tue 2    2 pm Kingsdown Club - Music-Go-Round with Alan Smith  
Fri 5    10.15 am Coffee Morning in Foyer - Everyone welcome  
Sat 6    10.30 am Coffee & Chat in the Foyer - Everyone welcome.  
Mon 8    8.00 pm Guides (most Mondays throughout the month)  
Tue 9    Liz & Steve Palmer's Home Group  
Fri 12    10.15 am Coffee Morning in Foyer - Everyone welcome  
          BOYS BRIGADE 6.30-7.30 pm Anchor Boys, 6.30-8.00 pm Junior  
          Section, 7.30-10.00 pm Company Section (most Fridays  
          throughout month)  
Tue 16    2 pm Kingsdown Club - AGM and Bingo  
Wed 17    1-3 pm Babies & Toddlers Group (term time only)  
Mon 22    2.30 pm Ivy Hanson's Home Group

### ***Advance Dates***

***Sun 5 May - 2013 Christian Aid Sunday***

***Sat 11 May - CA Annual Book Fair - Proceeds to Christian Aid***

*(Books, cakes, plants, raffle, nearly-new, bric-a-brac & Traidcraft)*

***Fri 17 May - 7 pm BB Annual Display***

## **DEC APPEAL - SYRIA REFUGEE CRISIS**

The church is planning to hold a retiring collection on Sunday April 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> in aid of the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) which has announced an emergency appeal in response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

Three million people in Syria have fled their homes and are in desperate need of food, shelter and medical care. I know there are always demands on our money but if you can spare something to help people in this desperate situation I would be most grateful.

**Olwen Britton.**