

Newsletter

Sunday 24th March



Charity No. 1127144
Serving God, Serving the Community

Dear Friends,

This Sunday we celebrate Palm Sunday. The Sunday on which we remember and rejoice at Jesus being welcomed triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem. It is extraordinary to reflect on the fact that a few days on from this celebration, Jesus was betrayed by one of his closest disciples, interrogated, beaten, disowned, made to carry his own wooden cross and finally nailed to it. He hung there, no longer a hero, but one who was reviled and hated by almost everyone around him. Jesus had been warning those who followed him and specifically the twelve disciples that this would happen, but it was beyond their comprehension. They had a fixed idea of what the rescuing Messiah would do, how he would behave and what the result of that would look like. For many, the goal was to be liberated from the Roman occupying force. They did not fully comprehend the weight of sin that lay on humanity, and those who knew what the scriptures taught, saw punishment as something that happened to others. Stick to the rules and you'd be ok. Except of course, their human nature meant they did not. And even The Commandments and the many extra rules created for them by the religious leaders could not protect people from God's judgement.

For us now, one of the most shocking and difficult to comprehend parts of the whole Easter Story is the resurrection itself. Good Jews would have known about the 3 resurrections in the Old Testament. The resurrection of the widow's son in Zarephath (1 Kgs 17:17-22) the resurrection of the Shunammite's son (2 Kgs 4:18-37) and the resurrection of the man thrown into Elisha's grave (2 Kgs 13:20). Witnesses of the time would have been aware of the at least 7 that take place in the New Testament. Admittedly, these were not quite the supernatural event that Jesus's resurrection was. But the possibility was there for the Pharisees who, unlike their counterparts the Sadducees, believed in resurrection. I should say here, that I am not suggesting that a risen Jesus was anything other than a complete shock to the women who visited the tomb of Jesus early in the morning on Easter Day. He was the one who had breathed life into others and now he was dead and placed behind a huge stone. In this situation, resurrection must have seemed impossible.

The differences in beliefs between Pharisees and Sadducees did not keep them apart at the end. Their alliance with the Roman occupiers was born out of a fear of losing power and control. They had struck a deal with one another to maintain the status quo. Where there is power, there is always a risk of corruption.

In writing as I already have in this article, I could almost be describing our world in 2024. Wherever you find people, you will find those who want power and those that fear it. You will find people who support their enemies when there is a risk of losing what little control they have. You may be thinking about the war-torn parts of the world like Ukraine, Israel and Gaza and Haiti which are currently in the news. But many nations are victim to this kind of behaviour. We live in a time where moral and spiritual integrity are as threatened as I think they have ever been which gives rise to allegiances of most surprising kinds. 'What is in it for me?' could be described as an anthem of our post-modern times. It affects small communities and it affects churches.

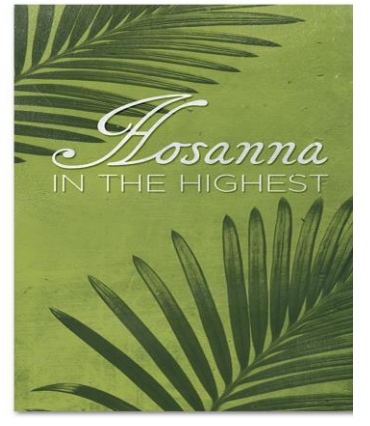
It is not just issues around power that exist now. Those of us who love God and profess to be Christian, can at times also be drawn into creating our own God, in a shape that we understand. I am not saying that there is no room for honourable debate about elements of theology and the interpretation of scripture. At least then we are opening ourselves to one another and to what the Bible has to say. Rather it is those times when we cherry pick the bit of the Bible we like and avoid those we don't. It is the way in which we open our lives to Christ but try to keep some element of ourselves for us alone. We must keep looking to scripture and doing so alongside one another to help us avoid worshipping a God who is only as big as our own thoughts and behaves towards and directs us as we choose. This is hard and is in part why Jesus came. What is God like? Look at Jesus. How should I behave? Look at Jesus. But look at him alongside others so that we can check with each other that we are seeing him clearly. So that we can allow our views to be challenged (the very hard bit) and so that we can learn from one another.

May God be with you as you journey through Holy Week to Easter.

Jenny Gillies

What's on this week

Monday 25th March	The Centre opens weekdays 9.00 am till 2.00 pm 1.30 pm Knit and Knatter in the centre
Tuesday 26th March	12-2.30 pm The Club house In the Village Hall.
Wednesday 27th March	10.30am Holy Communion in the Centre 1.00 pm Gathering to read through Mark's Gospel in the Centre
Thursday 28th March	No Little Church – meet on Friday at Messy Church instead. 12 -2.30 pm 'The Club House' in the Village Hall All welcome 6.30 pm for 7.00 pm Food. Maundy Thursday Meal.
Friday 29th March	10. 00 am Messy Church in Church 1.30 -3.15 Good Friday vigil with words and music. (see below)
Saturday 30th March	9.30 am Flower Arrangers meet in church to decorate (no expertise necessary. Come to join in, clean up, make tea...) 12.30 pm Wedding 6.00 pm Easter Vigil service and lighting of the first candle.
Sunday 31st March	9.15 am Easter Day Holy Communion followed by breakfast and Lynne Whittaker's retirement presentation 11.00 am Easter Day Modern Holy Communion preceded by Lynne Whittaker's retirement presentation.



Sunday 24th March Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50: 4-9a
Philippians 2: 5-11
*Mark 11: 1-11

Wednesday 27th March

Hebrews 12: 1-3
John 13: 21-32

Sunday 31st March Easter Day

Acts 10: 34-43
1 Corinthians 15: 1-11
Mark 16: 1-8

*Denotes 11.00 am Reading

Notices

Reading Through Mark's Gospel – Wednesday 27th March at 1 pm

Have you ever read right through Mark without stopping? It is very powerful and takes around 2 hours so we will be finished in time for tea. Speaking of tea, we will have a drink and biscuit break in the middle. You don't have to come to read, you may prefer to listen but it would be lovely to have a good group with whom to share the experience. No need to book in, just turn up. We will be using the NRSV version of The Bible. If you don't have one, we can lend you one for the afternoon.

Maundy Thursday Meal in Church with a very relaxed Holy Communion during the experience

We are meeting together in church at 6.30 pm for food at 7.00pm. The main meal is fish and chips, but alternative arrangements can be made for you if you let us know. There will be a dessert and some drinks but please bring your own. Alcohol is ok. There is no charge for this meal but if you feel able to donate at the end then that is great. If you can't, come anyway. We ask you to book in either by adding your name to the list at the back of church (we have 29 so far) or by phoning the office number 0151 334 4153 and speaking to Carol Jones.

People who book but don't turn up (as opposed to anyone who can't come and lets us know in advance) will be asked to pay the cost of the Fish and Chips.

Messy Church on Good Friday

We are hoping to have more people than on a usual Tuesday evening and so we need some extra helpers both to butter toast but specifically to help with activities. Everything is provided for you. If you can help please sign up but even if you don't and find you can come, please do. For many of these children and families it will be the one chance to hear about Easter. You may prefer a quiet day but would it be possible for that to start at lunchtime? Please turn up at 9.30 am.

We have purchased 60 eggs to give out at a cost of £60. We have also purchased a similar give away box for the Foodbank. This means it has cost us £86. We are not without funds for such purchases, but any donations for this project would be welcome. Please pop them in an envelope and put them on a plate. If you are able to *giftaid*, please tell us who you are.

Good Friday at the cross 1.30 -3.15 pm

We will, as before take this opportunity to hear the passion story and to listen to music as well as sing some hymns. You are welcome to come for some or stay for all. If you come and go, please try to do that during a hymn which will be sung roughly on the hour or half hour.

Easter Sunday Breakfast in church

Between the services on Easter Sunday we will be having bacon and/or Sausages in bread rolls. We will also be saying a formal thank you on her retirement to Lynne Whittaker, for her years of service as a reader. Do come and join us. There is no cost but we would love your company.

The Electoral Roll

Our huge thanks to Lesley for her work on this (with a little help from Clive). She has kept us up to date and curated the list of names. For health reasons, Lesley is standing down and the PCC have decided that the task will now sit with Fiona Austin. The Electoral roll is a list of the names and details of all those who are eligible to vote at the APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) More practically, it affects the number of people on PCC (Parochial Church Council) and whether you can be on the PCC or not. It also helps me to have your contact details. You are entitled to be on the roll if you are baptised (in any recognised Christian Church) and live within the Parish or attend the church regularly. If you are not on the roll, ask for a form or look on the table at the back of church.

Men's Breakfasts

I love to hear that you chaps are meeting up regularly. I am told that it is very relaxed and a good chat. It starts at 9.00 am at the Royal Oak. Apparently, the breakfast is not costly and tastes good too. All men are welcome, those who attend church and those who don't. If you are a bit worried about turning up on your own, do speak to one of the men who will, I am certain, give you a lift or meet you in the doorway. Future dates are 16th March, 20th April and 18th May.

The Centre Breakfasts

The next breakfast event is on Saturday 13th April 9.30 pm – 11.00 am Just turn up.

Parish Prayers

The next parish prayers will be on [13th April](#) and it will take place in the centre at the slightly later time of 10.30 so that you can eat your breakfast first and then join us. I am sure that if you are not a cooked breakfast type of person they would be glad to let you have a few slices of toast.

We need a name - can you help? We have had a few good ideas.

Thanks to the four people who have come up with ideas for names. Anyone else?

As the work we do to feed and support families in our area grows, we need to have a name that we can call it. Food for Families or Feeding families no longer seems adequate or entirely encompasses all that we do and hope to do moving forward. It could be a title that references a person, event or place in The Bible. It might be a phrase from a prayer – Daily Bread springs to mind but it's common. It could be a mixture of key words connected with what we do e.g. love, serving, compassion, feeding, support, help. I have been looking and

thinking. Sadly there are several Barnabas projects (though we don't have to be original). What do you think? What is God whispering in your ear or shouting in your head? Drop me a text or email. It's fairly urgent as we would like to begin to use the name on our web pages and when we apply for grants. It will operate under our charity number so no change there. Please email me rector@stbarnabasbromborough.org. with any thoughts and ideas.

Narcissis Bulbs

Did you miss out on receiving some bulbs? On Mothering Sunday? Mother Church gave to all households who were present at card and some bulbs. They were purchased with money donated by our Mothers' Union. I know a lot of people were missing for a variety of reasons. Would you like some to take home? The idea is that you either plant them in a pot or in your garden or you have them planted in the churchyard. (You can do it or ask someone else to do it for you in a place you choose.) Next year they will bring a reminder that you are loved and I hope raise a smile when they are looked upon.

Tap to Give

I have created a new slot on the tap to give machine so people can also choose 'Easter flowers' on the tap to give machine to donate by card. Julie

A note about regular donations and Gift Aid

Do you give regularly using a white envelope or by cash into the plate? Would you consider paying by standing order instead? All you need to do is fill in a standing order form (available at the back of the church) and take it to your bank. If you bank online you can set up the payment online direct to the church bank account: HSBC sortcode **40-15-04** account number **10183334** name of bank account: **Bromborough PCC**. You are in control of what you send. You can change the amount, up or down (but we hope up!) You can pay weekly or monthly. If The funds will come straight into the bank account and if you are a Gift Aider, we can automatically tag your donation to claim Gift Aid. If you have made donations on the tap to give device that we could claim gift aid on, please let me know. I need the date and the amount. I don't need to tell anyone else if that is a concern for you.

Thanks all! Julie

Communications and the new website

Andrew Watts is our communications team leader. He will work with Anna and Natalie F. to develop the way that we communicate with those in church and even more importantly, outside of it. This will involve a revision of the logo and a look at what we say, where we say it and how we say it. At the moment, even with the changes we implemented several years ago, designing posters, Facebook posts (mine included) and banners is all a bit haphazard. Andrew and Anna both bring a wealth of professional experience that we can utilise. Remember the website is www.stbarnabasbromborough.org.

Donate to St Barnabas as you shop online!

Sign up with GiveAsYouLive.com and choose 'PCC of St Barnabas, Bromborough' as your chosen charity. If you need help ask Julie Watts or Thelma McGorry.

For our Prayers

We continue to pray for good health and healing for; Jan and Gordon who have both been unwell this week, Hilary Griffiths, Craig Dillon, We pray for our church family at home: Josie Davies, Thelma Williams and Pat Porter. We pray for our link Missionaries Marcio and Noemi and their children in Brazil. We thank God for the work that they are doing in Indaiatuba. They are hosting a huge event 22nd -26th April for missionaries across Latine America. Pray for its success. More info next week. Please also pray for two new churchwardens and the people we need on PCC.

Donate to St Barnabas as you shop online!

Sign up with GiveAsYouLive.com and choose 'PCC of St Barnabas, Bromborough' as your chosen charity.

The Rector Jenny can be contacted at rector@stbarnabasbromborough.org or via her mobile 07806608219

Please send notices for inclusion in the Newsletter to ros.wood@outlook.com by Wednesday at 4pm.

Visit our website www.stbarnabasbromborough.org