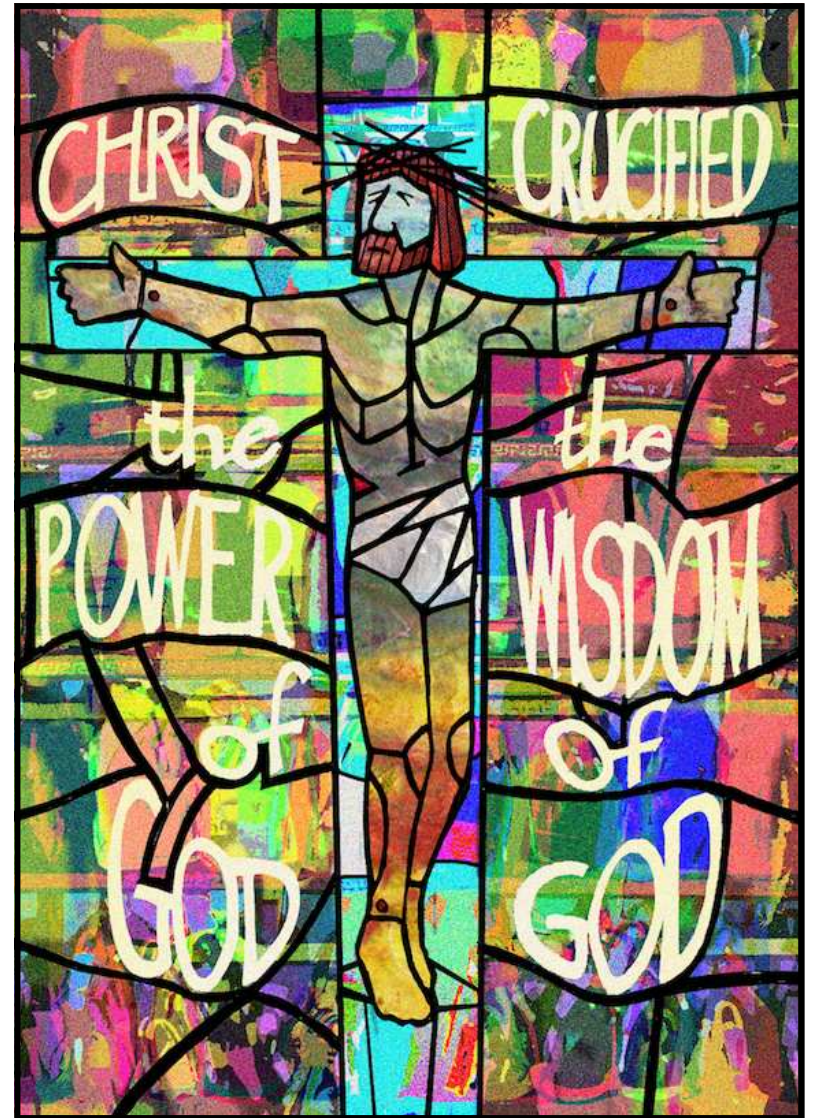


APRIL – MAY 2012

THE MESSENGER



the magazine of

WHITSTABLE BAPTIST CHURCH
MIDDLE WALL

Minister's Letter

April – May 2012

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hope you enjoy it.

Dear Members of Christ's Flock,

***'The reason the Son of God appeared
was to destroy the works of the Evil One' 1 John 3v8b***

This verse comes in a biblical book dominated by the theme of love. John, 'the beloved apostle', is truly enthralled by thoughts of God's love and Christian love. Nevertheless, it should not surprise us that he should write of a vicious foe who is diametrically opposed to God's love for mankind and who is also highly incensed at the fact that the redeemed can work together in harmonious love. Yet this is the reality for those churches that live in step with the Holy Spirit. As the very Spirit of God, He gifts this oneness to us in Christ and He sustains it. Our responsibility is to adorn and enhance it in our outlook, attitudes and behaviour.

At the very core of Jesus' mission was this set purpose of God that the devil be confronted and his works destroyed. Only this divine action could bring about deliverance and transformation for man and woman. Only by virtue of the Cross of Christ would a decisive triumph over Satan and his kingdom of darkness be accomplished. Hence Jesus embraced this strategic mission with full co-operation and with a continuous focus on the joy that lay ahead.

Easter reminds us that evil does not have the last say – the Crucified Saviour has become the Victorious Lord. However hideous and menacing the powers of darkness may be, the glorious truth stands firm, that they have been defeated in Jesus Christ! They remain highly dangerous enemies, especially of the Christian Church, but they have all been defeated: Satan is now chained and his forces are in their death throes. In conversation with some colleagues today a fellow minister described Satan's spiritual accomplices in very vivid terms, as 'a demonic cortege'. Christ has triumphed over the Evil One and these demonic forces by His Cross and Resurrection. Furthermore, He has received from His Father all the required authority, resources and power to bring them to their final end.

Contd.

Let us not fear the Evil One and his hosts; neither let us underestimate his nefarious intentions nor, of course, his ultimate destruction! We share in this final scenario for our accuser will be silenced and our Saviour will declare us innocent by virtue of His blood shed for our sins. We have been raised up together with Christ, we already have a heavenly status and we share in His glory.

*'Let the Church with gladness,
Hymns of triumph sing'*

And so our Easter praise begins: Christ has died!
Christ has Risen! Christ will come again!

Your under-shepherd and friend,

Paul

Rev Paul Wilson



Thank You – 1

I would like to say 'thank you' for all the prayers, cards, flowers and practical help I have received over the past few weeks. This has been very much appreciated in the absence of any local family and I am pleased to say that, with your help, I am now well on the way to recovery.

May God Bless you all!

Lucy Gambrill

Thank You – 2

I would just like to thank Paul and those in the church family who in the past weeks have sent cards, made phone calls, and paid many visits to me while I recover from shingles. I hope to be back in church to see you all very soon.

Nora Baynes

Gideons International

(Canterbury Branch)

"It takes a sprat to catch a mackerel!". Not that our retired schoolteacher members would wish to be referred to as "sprats", but they are so useful in helping us to get into the local schools and speaking to Year-7 pupils. Unlike many areas in the UK, we are still welcomed into all the Secondary and Independent schools – in Sturry, Herne Bay, Whitstable, Faversham and Canterbury. Each year, every 11-12 year-old pupil is offered a Gideon New Testament. Next term we will again be visiting Whitstable Community College and taking part in a series of RE lessons. This gives us a wonderful opportunity to engage with the pupils and encourage them to explore for themselves the Good News about Jesus. There's a lot of "mackerel fishing" going on! (or "seed sowing", if you prefer that metaphor.)

Last year saw us celebrate our 50th anniversary. We estimate that over this time about 150,000 Scriptures have been distributed locally. To God be the glory! We took the opportunity to visit a good number of churches in the area, and to share with them personal testimonies of God's saving power through His Word. Recently, "top-ups" at the Premier Inn and at Strode Park have been placed; and regular visits to HM Prisons continue. We also enquired about providing New Testaments for the local police – only to learn that Gideons from Dover and Maidstone Branches have just presented 3000 to Kent Police & staff!

Further afield, a "London Blitz" took place in September, when 60,000 Scriptures were placed in preparation for the Olympics this summer. Internationally, the Gideon ministry continues with an annual Scripture distribution of about 80 million throughout 192 countries. There are countless wonderful testimonies (like a recent one from an orthodox Jewish Rabbi) from those who have come to faith in The Lord Jesus Christ through reading God's Word. We very much depend on the prayer and financial support of our local churches and individual Christians. If you can help in this way by becoming a Friend or a Member, please do speak to one of us.

Geoff & Jean Rothery, Heywood & Pam Tyler



St. George

St. George is believed to have been born in Cappadocia (now Eastern Turkey) in the year AD 270. He was a Christian. At the age of 17 he joined the Roman army and soon became renowned for his bravery.



He served under a pagan Emperor but never forgot his Christian faith. The Emperor Diocletian gave him many important missions, and it is thought that on one of these he came to England.

It was while he was in England that he heard the Emperor was putting all Christians to death and so he returned to Rome to help his brother Christians. He pleaded with the Emperor to spare their lives. Diocletian did all he could to persuade St. George to give up his faith, but he refused and was finally beheaded on 23rd April 303. In 1222 the Oxford Council named 23rd April as St. George's Day and he was adopted by England as a patron saint around the 14th century. In 1415, April 23rd was made a national feast day.

St. George is patron saint not only of England but also of Aragon, Catalonia, Georgia, Lithuania, Palestine and Portugal, amongst others, although he is celebrated on different days.

St. George is also patron saint of soldiers, archers, cavalry and chivalry, farmers and field workers, riders and saddlers, and those suffering from leprosy, plague and syphilis.

Interesting Facts:



Despite the fact that St. George has been the patron saint of England since the 14th century, only one in five people know that St. George's Day falls on 23rd April.



More than a quarter of people living in England do not even know who their patron saint is!



Shakespeare was born on 23rd April 1564 (and died on the same day in 1616) and he wrote the play 'King Henry V', which contains the following lines spoken at the Battle of Agincourt...

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more;

or close the wall up with our English dead.

In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
as modest stillness and humility:

but when the blast of war blows in our ears,
then imitate the action of the tiger;

stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage;

then lend the eye a terrible aspect;

let pry through the portage of the head

like the brass cannon; let the brow o'erwhelm it
as fearfully as doth a galled rock

o'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.

Now set the teeth and stretch the nostril wide,

hold hard the breath and bend up every spirit
to his full height. On, on, you noblest English.

Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof!

Fathers that, like so many Alexanders,

have in these parts from morn till even fought
and sheathed their swords for lack of argument:

dishonour not your mothers; now attest

that those whom you call'd fathers did beget you.

Be copy now to men of grosser blood,

and teach them how to war. And you, good yeoman,
whose limbs were made in England, show us here

the mettle of your pasture; let us swear

that you are worth your breeding; which I doubt not;
for there is none of you so mean and base,

that hath not noble lustre in your eyes.

I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,

straining upon the start. The game's afoot:

follow your spirit, and upon this charge

cry 'God for Harry, England, and Saint George!'



Because

Because you prayed and sent your thoughts across the air
to ask of God, that every soul who felt despair
would sleep tonight, then find tomorrow's new-born day
had chased their fears and sorrows right away.

Because you prayed that war and earthly strife would cease
that all the nations of the world might live in peace,
the peace of God, the Spirit's highest accolade,
will tranquillise your sleep this night, because you prayed.

Because you smiled to cheer that soul who mourned a friend
then helped her understand that death is not the end,
that life continues on in other spheres,
thus helping her to stem the flow of bitter tears.

Because you smiled when in your own life times were bad
yet rested in God's love though you were sad,
within His special keeping you'll be domiciled
when you pass over from this life, because you smiled.

Because you heard whenever someone called for help, and lent a hand
till they were fit once more upon their own account to stand
then told them that they owed you nought for helping them along,
'twas help someone had given you and said to pass it on.

Because you heard when'er God called, and strove His will to do
and counted it an honour that the one He called was you,
when you return to spirit, God will greet you with the words
'I know you, faithful spirit – you're the one who always heard.'

(Submitted by Kathy Rowden)

The world needs a peace
that passes all misunderstanding

BBC announces its Easter output

BBC1 is to broadcast a live modern adaptation of the Passion story following a string of hit live events on BBC3. The 60-minute programme due to be broadcast on Good Friday follows live event performances including Frankenstein's Wedding in Leeds, the Passion in Manchester and the nativity story from Liverpool, which have all been aired on BBC3.

The Preston Guild is working with the BBC to give a real sense of the City. Over 1,000 local people are expected to take part in a contemporary performance which will draw on the themes from the Passion story.

Three pre-recorded dramas using themes from the Passion story and based on Preston's culture and history will also feature in the programme. The stories will follow a mill owner who has to make a decision that affects the lives of his workers, a woman who looked after some of the 3.5m soldiers who passed through Preston train station in WW1, and a modern story about a care worker.

BBC head of religion and ethics, and executive producer, Aaqil Ahmed said the programme will "form the centre piece of the BBC's religious programming for 2012".



All Fools' Day

In years gone by, the rules surrounding April Fool were this: between midnight and noon on 1st April, everyone is 'fair game' to be made a fool of. It is the morning of the practical joke. But the aim is not just to discomfort the victim: he must be tricked into taking action himself, sent on a 'fool's errand'.

And so children would be sent to the dairy for a pint of dove's milk, or to the bookseller for The Life of Eve's Mother. Practical jokes on a bigger scale were played: in 1860 a vast number of people received an official looking invitation to the Tower of London that read: 'Admit the Bearer and Friends to view the Annual Ceremony of Washing the White Lions.' Precisely the same trick had been played in 1698.

Then, on the stroke of noon, tradition decrees, April Fools is finished. If anyone attempts devilry thereafter, even while the clock is still striking, it recoils on his own head. A child would then race through the sing-song formula : 'April-Fool-Day's-past-and-gone-you're-the-fool-and-I-am-none!'

© Parish Pump

MISSION

The Holders in Mozambique

Our New BMS 'Link' Missionaries

The Holders

Hi and welcome to (*The Messenger* version of) our blog. We are the Holders (Geoff, Christine, Isaac and Naomi) and we've been working with BMS World Mission in Mozambique long-term since June 2011. We're based in the port town of Beira, working alongside the Baptist Convention of Mozambique on community partnership and education development projects.

Geoff is a primary school teacher who has coordinated a school partnership project called 'School Connect' that links primary schools in Kent and Uganda. Geoff has also worked extensively in Uganda through various links at Canterbury Baptist Church. Christine is also a primary school teacher with experience of all year groups, from Reception to Year 6.

Geoff plays bass guitar, follows Hereford United and Arsenal. He enjoys watching Bear Grylls on TV or reading the National Geographic magazine. Christine loves reading a good book, watching repeats of 'Friends' on E4 and growing vegetables. We both enjoy mountain walking and are keen gardeners. Isaac is a bubbly, curious toddler and into everything, especially food! Younger sister Naomi is a smiley, cheerful baby who currently appears to be training her appetite to match her older brother's.

Mozambique

Despite being one of Africa's poorest countries, Mozambique is a land of exceptional beauty and variety, combining soft sand, azure waters, palm trees, unspoilt beaches and coral reefs with lakes, open plains, forests and a rich array of wildlife. Mozambique has a tropical climate, which is hot and humid. The wet season is from November to March, when about 80 per cent of annual rainfall falls. Many sizeable rivers, including the Zambezi and Limpopo, flow through Mozambique to the sea and about half the country is made up of coastal plains.

Mozambique won independence from the Portuguese in 1975 after a hard-fought war. However, it wasn't long before the country was engulfed in a long and destructive civil war that cost the lives of thousands. Schools, health-centres, railways, and roads were destroyed and many people left destitute. Since 1992, when the war ended, the country has gone from strength to strength, but a lot more still needs to be done to repair the damage of colonial mismanagement and war. Despite

MATTERS

all this, Mozambicans are some of the friendliest and most welcoming people you are likely to meet anywhere!

Beira is one of the country's three main cities, but most Mozambicans live in rural areas, following a traditional way of life and tribal religion. Unfortunately, Beira has had a pretty bad reputation as the central region suffered particularly badly during the civil war. However, this reputation is probably very unfair and there is certainly a lot going on in and around Beira. The town remains famous for peri-peri sauce and fantastic seafood, crumbling colonial villas, beautiful beaches and a railway linking Zimbabwe to the sea.

Current Challenges

- ◆ Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world with around 50% of the population living on less than 60 pence a day and a further 70% of the population living in poverty.
- ◆ More than a million of Mozambique's 19 million people are HIV-positive and the adult infection rate is 12% and rising. The virus has orphaned approximately half a million children.
- ◆ Mozambicans rely heavily on agriculture for an income with four out of five Mozambicans involved in subsistence farming. The floods of 2000 and 2001 affected about a quarter of the population and destroyed much of the country's infrastructure.
- ◆ Only 40% of the population is literate and there is a huge need for education initiatives to be set in place.

Support Us

To financially support us in Mozambique you can become a BMS World Mission 24:7 Partner and know that you are continually helping many in the world who are in desperate need. You can choose to become actively involved with BMS World Mission or just make regular donations and have no other involvement – it is up to you!

More details of the Holders via the "People/Missionaries" page of our website or contact BMS World Mission – PO BOX 49, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 8XA
Tel: 01235 517628



I Did It My Way *(and lived to regret it!)*

I know someone who recently had to spend more than £200 to repair a brand-new car. He was not, as they say, best pleased.

It was an unusual and really rather silly problem. The glove compartment – would you believe it – jammed, and try as he might he simply couldn't open it. I don't know what he needed from it, but presumably it was important enough – his wallet or mobile phone, perhaps – for him to feel he had no option but to force it open. Hence the £200 repair bill.

But surely, you will say, if the car was brand new, the job should have been covered by warranty? Well yes, you would think so, wouldn't you? But this is where a little snag arose. When he got to the garage he was told that a feature of the car was that, in the event of the sun-roof being opened, the glove compartment automatically locked. Sensible, when you come to think of it – a good security measure. And, of course, it had been a warm day... (Cue: slow, horrified dawning of light.) Unfortunately for him he had neglected to read the instruction manual to discover this; hence the damage was his own responsibility. (Cue: weeping and gnashing of teeth!)

And the moral of the story? (Cue: roll of drums)... Always read the maker's instructions.

Actually, I'm not really a great one to talk myself. My particular weakness is flat-pack furniture. I stagger into the house with my burden, hot and sticky and in no great temper, having queued at the checkout for at least two and a half hours, knowing that my new set of bookshelves or whatever needs to be assembled pronto. So I set off with the rage of pent-up energy to get the wretched job done as soon as possible.

And you have to admit that those stupid little bits of paper with diagrams and unintelligible instructions really are worse than useless.

It's obvious, isn't it, that this screw goes into that hole, and that dowel (dowel? what's a dowel?) goes into this hole. 'It's perfectly simple!' I say to myself. 'I can't be bothered with squinting at all that paperwork!' Two fraught hours later my bookshelves look like something that should be an exhibit at the Tate Modern – the furniture equivalent of a Picasso portrait, with eyes where ears should be and arms protruding from ankles.

'I did it my way,' Frank Sinatra used to croon. And yes, there is a lot to be said for independence of mind and character. But it doesn't take most of us long to discover that 'doing it my way' can often be a recipe for disaster.

The fact is that in the big and important issues of life there is often a 'God way' as well as a 'my way'.

I suspect that some Christians find talk of the Bible as 'God's instruction manual for our lives' a bit corny and I think I know what they mean. But the facts are that (a) God is our Maker; (b) the Bible is, however literally or liberally we may understand the term, 'the Word of God'; and (c) we all have to make important decisions in our lives.

So while the precise details of those decisions may not be perfectly spelled out, the general principles are usually there. I for one therefore am happy to regard the Bible in this way. When all is said and done, where else are we to go for divine guidance?

One of the things you learn as a pastor talking to troubled souls is the messes people get themselves into through a simple failure to follow the Maker's instructions. How much happier and less complicated things would be if only they had taken seriously the command, say, not to commit adultery, or the warning to be careful with alcohol, or the wisdom that says that material things won't make you happy.

I know someone who embarked on a business venture with a non-Christian. Well-meaning Christian friends drew his attention to Paul's warning about being 'unequally yoked with unbelievers', but he felt it right to go ahead. Whereupon, within a matter of months, everything had gone wrong. They simply didn't see things the same way; there was no meeting of minds.

And so I seriously worry about many Christians' ignorance of the Bible. How can we possibly hear our Maker's loving voice saying 'This (and therefore not that!) is the way, walk in it' if we fail to engage with His Word? Wrecking the glove compartment of a new car is a pretty small matter compared to running one's life aground on the rocks of bad decisions. That sometimes tedious-seeming 'manual' could literally be a life-saver.

© Revd. Colin Sedgwick
Minister Lindsay Park Baptist Church
Baptist Times

Jesus came to earth for us
so we could go to heaven with Him

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Regular Weekly Events

Monday	09:30	Mums (or Dads) and Toddlers
	19:30	Knitting Club – <i>All Knitters Welcome!</i>
Tuesday	17:00	Girls' Brigade – Explorers
	18:00	Girls' Brigade – Juniors
	19:00	Girls' Brigade – Seniors & Brigaders
	19:00	Choral Group
	20:00	Worship Group
Wednesday	09:30	Mums (or Dads) and Toddlers
	17:00	Boys' Brigade – Anchor Boys
	18:30	Boys' Brigade – Juniors
	19:30	Boys' Brigade – Company Section

April

1	Sunday	10:45	Rev Paul Wilson
		18:30	Rev Paul Wilson – <i>Palm Sunday Praise</i>
3	Tuesday	11:45	'Anticipating Easter' – <i>United Reformed Church</i>
4	Wednesday	10:00	Prayer Meeting – <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>
5	Thursday	19:30	Maundy Thursday Service – <i>Harbour Street Christian Fellowship</i>
6	Good Friday	10:00	March of Witness – <i>starts from Tankerton Evangelical Church</i>
8	Easter Sunday	10:45	Rev Paul Wilson – <i>Communion</i>
		18:30	Rev Paul Wilson
9	Easter Monday	14:00	Easter Ramble – <i>meet at the church, Everyone Welcome!</i>
15	Sunday	10:45	Terry Rees
		17:30	Afternoon Tea – <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>
		18:30	Evening Service
18	Wednesday	10:00	Prayer Meeting – <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>
19	Thursday	10:00	Deacons' Meeting – <i>Please pray for your Diaconate</i>
21	Saturday		St. Alphege 1000 years Celebration – <i>see page 17</i>
22	Sunday	10:45	Rev Paul Wilson
		18:30	Rev Paul Wilson – <i>Communion</i>
23	Monday	10:00	'Women at the Well' – <i>All Ladies Welcome</i>
26	Thursday	19:30	Church Members' Meeting
29	Sunday	10:45	Rev Paul Wilson
		18:30	Rev Paul Wilson

MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

May

2	Wednesday	10:00	Prayer Meeting – <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>
6	Sunday	10:45	Rev Paul Wilson
		18:30	Rev Paul Wilson – <i>Communion</i>
10	Thursday	10:00	Deacons' Meeting – <i>Please pray for your Diaconate</i>
13	Sunday	10:45	Rev Paul Wilson
		18:30	Rev Paul Wilson
		19:30	Messenger Deadline
16	Wednesday	10:00	Prayer Meeting – <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>
20	Sunday	10:45	Rev Paul Wilson – <i>Communion</i>
		18:30	Rev Paul Wilson
21	Monday	10:00	'Women at the Well' – <i>All Ladies Welcome</i>
24	Thursday	19:30	Church Members' Meeting
27	Sunday	10:45	Rev Paul Wilson – <i>Church Anniversary & Gift Day</i>
		18:30	Rev Paul Wilson
30	Wednesday	10:00	Prayer Meeting – <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>

Items for the next issue of *The Messenger* must be handed, posted, or **preferably** emailed, to Beryl or Tony by **Sunday 13th May**

Thank you.
messenger@middlewall.co.uk

Thank You – 3

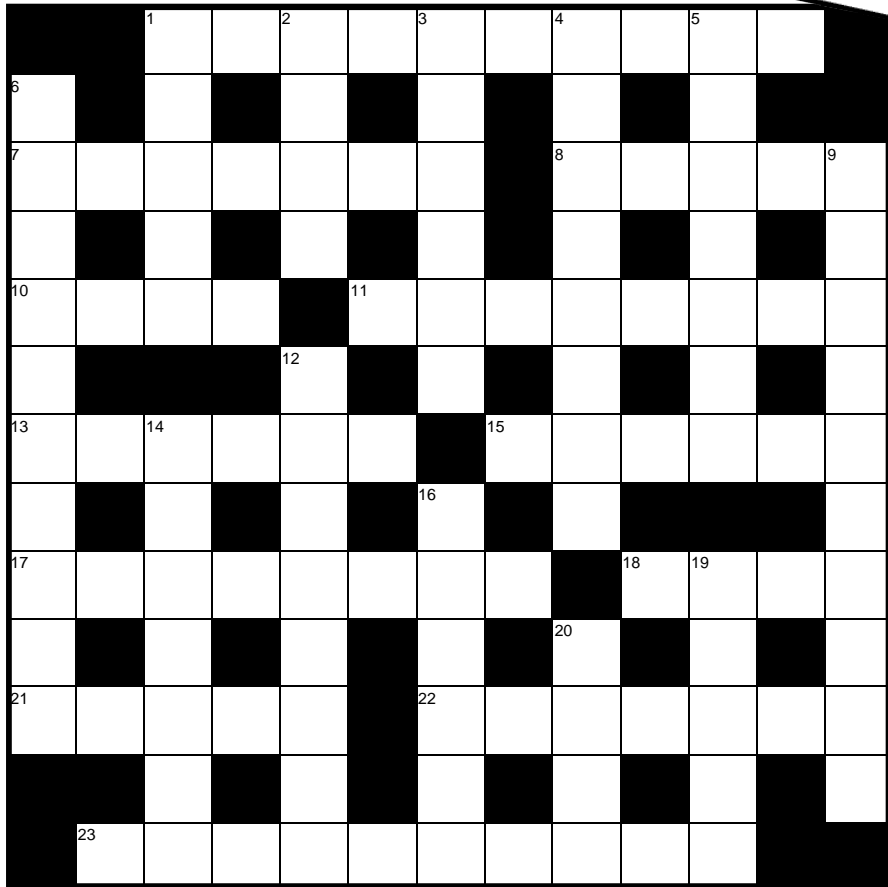
Just to thank everyone who supported our Christian Aid Lenten lunches. I will put the sum raised in the Fellowship News soon. I write this in faith – make the soup and they will come!!

Cheree Moyes



Just for fun!

Bible-Based Crossword!



All Bible references are taken from the NIV

Across

- 1 Paul told the Thessalonians it was God's will that they should learn to control their own bodies in this way (1 Thes 4:4) (10)
- 7 Comes between Amos and Jonah (7)
- 8 Noise made by the house built on sand when it fell during a violent storm (Matt 7:27) (5)
- 10 One of Aaron's sacred garments (Ex 28:39) (4)
- 11 '---- ---- hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy' (Ps 47:1) (4,4)
- 13 Occur (Isaiah 41:22) (6)
- 15 'Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am ----- and humble in heart' (Matt 11:29) (6)
- 17 'Not everyone who says to me, "----, ----" will enter the kingdom of heaven' (Matt 7:21) (4,4)
- 18 Writing to the Corinthians, Paul calls God's surpassing grace his 'indefinable ----' (2 Cor 9:15) (4)
- 21 Engaged in espionage (Josh 7:2) (5)
- 22 '----- love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends'. (John 5:13) (7)
- 23 Proficiency (2 Cor 3:5) (10)

Down

- 1 Share (anagram) (Rev 3:20) (5)
- 2 Town where Jesus raised the dead son of a widow to life again (Luke 7:11) (4)
- 3 Impious (1 Tim 1:9) (6)
- 4 Were prepared to receive (Rom 10:16) (8)
- 5 'So when Jacob came in from the fields that evening, ---- went --- to meet him' (Gen 30:16) (4,3)
- 6 Families (Gen 42:19) (10)
- 9 Workers Ruth joined when she arrived in Bethlehem with her mother-in-law, Naomi (Ruth 2:3) (10)
- 12 'My offences will be ----- -- in a bag; you will cover over my sin' (Job 14:17) (6,2)
- 14 Riot cop (anagram) (1 Kings 6:3) (7)
- 16 How Paul described the light from heaven which flashed around him on the road to Damascus (Acts 22:6) (6)
- 19 '-- --- beginning God created the heavens and the earth' (Gen 1:1) (2,3)
- 20 The second set of seven cows in Pharaoh's dream were this (Gen 41:19) (4)

God & St Francis Discuss Lawns



- God:* Francis, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistles and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, 'no maintenance' garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blooms attracts butterflies, honeybees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colours by now but all I see are these green rectangles.
- St Francis:* It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.
- God:* Grass? But it's so boring, it's not colourful, it doesn't attract birds, butterflies and bees and it's temperamental with temperatures. Do these suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?
- St Francis:* Apparently so, Lord, they go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilising the grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.
- God:* The spring rain and warm weather probably make the grass grow really fast. That must make the suburbanites happy.
- St Francis:* Apparently not, Lord, as soon as it grows a little, they cut it – sometimes twice a week.
- God:* They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?
- St Francis:* Not exactly, Lord, most of them rake it up and put it in bags.
- God:* They bag it? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?
- St Francis:* No sir, just the opposite, they pay to throw it away.
- God:* Now let me get this straight. They fertilise grass so that it will grow and, when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?
- St Francis:* Yes sir.
- God:* These suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.
- St Francis:* You're not going to believe this, Lord, when the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.
- God:* What nonsense! At least they kept some of the trees. That was a stroke of genius, if I say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring

to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and the bushes. And when they rot, the leaves form a compost to enhance the soil – it's a natural circle of life.

- St Francis:* You'd better sit down, Lord, the suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into piles and pay to have them taken away or they burn them.
- God:* No! What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in winter and keep the soil moist and loose?
- St Francis:* After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something called mulch. They bring it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.
- God:* And where do they get this mulch?
- St Francis:* Other people cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch...
- God:* Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What film have you got for us tonight?
- St Catherine:* 'Dumb and Dumber', Lord, it's a story about...
- God:* Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.

(Submitted by Janet Payne)



The Secret To Good Relationships...

If you want your friendships and indeed your romances to flourish, there is a simple secret: show some gratitude for the 'little things' in your relationship. According to recent research, daily kindness and thoughtful gestures have the ability to add meaning to the lives of both you and your friend/partner, and helps keep your relationship warm. Proverbs 11:25 observes: 'A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.'

© Parish Pump

**The birth of Christ brought God to man;
the cross of Christ brings man to God**

This 'column filler' and others throughout this magazine are from a recent edition of "Our Daily Bread" © RBC Ministries

Easter Story Biscuits

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 1 day

Ingredients:

- 1 cup pecan nuts
- 1 tsp. vinegar
- 3 egg whites
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 cup sugar
- Large plastic bag
- Wooden spoon
- Tape
- Bible
- Any number of children



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
2. Place pecans in the plastic bag and let the children beat them into small pieces with the wooden spoon.
Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.
3. Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl.
Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.
4. Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.
5. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.

So far the ingredients are not very appetizing...
6. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to him. Read Psalm. 34:8 and John 3:16.
7. Beat with a mixer on high speed until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the colour white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.
8. Fold in broken nuts.

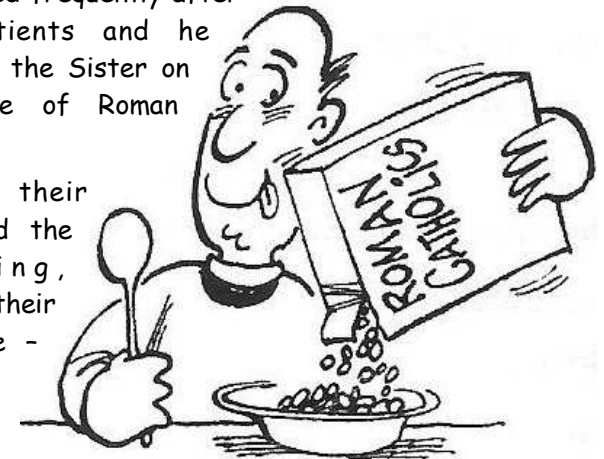
9. Drop by teaspoons onto non-stick baking parchment-covered baking sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matthew 27:57-60.
10. Put the baking sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF.
11. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matthew 27:65-66.
12. GO TO BED!
Explain that they may feel sad to leave them in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers felt despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.
13. On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matthew 28:1-9.

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Breakfast Time

A minister was visiting his local hospital and glanced at the list of patients on display in the Sister's Office. He noticed that the letters "R. C." appeared frequently after the names of patients and he remarked one day to the Sister on the high percentage of Roman Catholics.

"Oh, that's not their denomination," replied the Sister, smiling, "R. C. stands for their breakfast preference - Rice Crispies!"



Lead Me Not Into Temptation

(when you next go away!)

Dear Home Owner,

For many years I was an active burglar in your district. Nothing big, just the small opportunist stuff, but it kept me in beer and baccy for a good number of years. Now I'm reformed and trying to keep to the straight and narrow.

However, it now grieves me to see how easy it is to pick out the empty house as I walk around the streets of our neighbourhood. So many people stuff rubbish through our doors – the ones who are paid a pittance to deliver advertising blurbs to every house on the street. They don't have time to make sure that the leaflets go right through, and mostly leave part of the bumf sticking out for all to see.

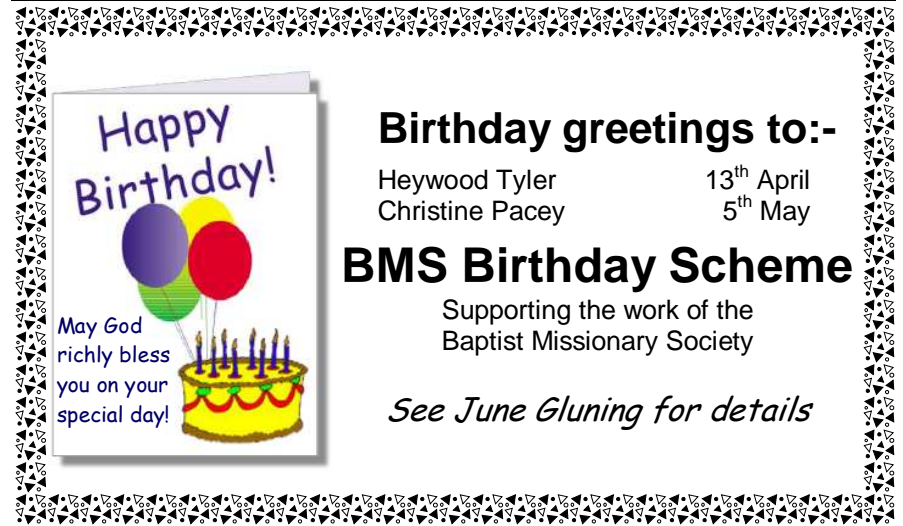
These guys used to be my friends. I would watch them do a street or two and about an hour later, I would walk the same route. I could be pretty sure that where their leaflet was still visible the residents were not at home. So down to the front door, a quick ring, no reply, and then round the back to get in – so easy.

So whenever you go away, please don't tempt me. Please tell those who deliver leaflets advertising pizzas, fried chicken, Chinese cuisine, holidays, insurance and so on, (or even church magazines), to ensure that the items they are delivering are pushed right through the letter box. Or get a neighbour to keep a watch on your front door, and to push everything through. Don't leave those fliers sticking half out – an empty house is just irresistible!

Your reformed neighbourhood burglar.

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*I pray, O Lord, reveal to me
If I have caused disunity,
For You would have Your children one
In praise and love for Your dear Son.*
Dave Branon



Birthday greetings to:-

Heywood Tyler 13th April
Christine Pacey 5th May

BMS Birthday Scheme

Supporting the work of the
Baptist Missionary Society

See June Gluing for details

I'm Awfully Well, Thank You

I'm fine, thank you,
There is nothing the matter with me.
I'm as healthy as I can be.
I've arthritis in both knees,

My pulse is weak, my blood is thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.
Arch supports I have for my feet,
Or I wouldn't be able to walk in the street.

Sleep is denied me, night after night.
But every morning I find I'm alright.
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin.
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

How do I know that my youth is all spent?
Well, my get up and go has got up and went.
But I really don't mind when I think with a grin
Of all the good places my get up has been.

I get up each morning, and dust off my wits,
And pick up the paper and read the obits.
If my name is still missing I know I'm not dead,
So I have a good breakfast – and go back to bed!!

Submitted by Margaret & Paul Stark

Beryl's Back! (page 2)

The Son Reigns

I am writing this in the middle of March - Easter is almost here and we are a quarter of the way to next Christmas! These events seem to come round more quickly as the years go by but what precious reminders they are of God's amazing love for us.

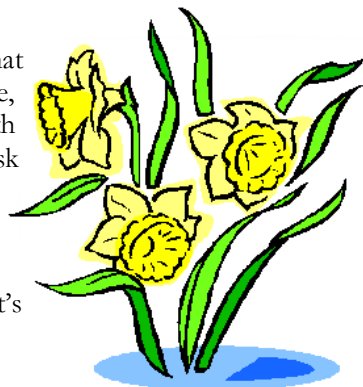
It seems only a few days ago that the snowdrops and crocuses were beginning to dot the countryside with colour and bring with them the anticipation of Spring. Yet I blinked and they faded away and in place of them the daffodils reared their beautiful heads. Occasionally the odd one can be seen standing alone but mostly they stand together in groups of varying types and sizes. Today the sun is pouring down on them, highlighting their beauty, and they look calm and majestic as they sway in the gentle breeze. Tomorrow may well be different. We are apparently in a period of drought but not every day is calm and sunny, indeed our weather can be quite erratic with days of rain and strong winds when very quickly some of the noble daffodils bend and break and the only way they can be rescued is if someone is caring enough to pick them up, put them in a vase of water and watch them regain their poise and enjoy a new lease of life.

It is not hard to relate this scene to our own lives. Indeed, not every day is calm and sunny! We can have a run of good days when life is a breeze and then overnight that all changes and we feel knocked about by the stormy wind and unable to stand. Some of us break at the slightest thing and others are more robust but one thing is sure, if we stand alone, the storms of life can take their toll more easily than if we have others around us. As children of God we are all one family and should each make a point of looking out for our brothers and sisters and help to pick them up and water them with God's love so that they can face the next day with hope and encouragement.

At this beautiful time of year we remember that God sent His Son to bring us hope and love, promise and assurance. Let us start afresh with Him each new day and, whatever the weather, ask Him to use us to bring renewed hope and joy to those we meet. No hosepipe ban can stop us doing that!

Finally, as the daffodils soon begin to fade, let's go looking for the bluebells.

Beryl Harris



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