

FOREST EDGE NEWS

THE PARISHES OF LEAFIELD WITH WYCHWOOD, FINSTOCK WITH FAWLER,
RAMSDEN AND WILCOTE

April 2021

www.forestedgebenefice.co.uk

Issue 271



Ripon Cathedral above and Leafield Church right

*“See the land, her Easter keeping,
Rises as her Maker rose.
Seeds, so long in darkness sleeping,
Burst at last from winter snows.
Earth with heaven above rejoices;
Fields and gardens hail the spring;
Shaugh and woodlands ring with voices,
While the wild birds build and sing.”*

Charles Kingsley (1819 - 1875)

Forest Edge Benefice Church Services

April 2021

Friday 2nd April Good Friday

12:00pm, Service at St Michael's Church, Leafield
2:00pm, Service at St James' Church, Ramsden

Sunday 4th April Easter Day

10:30am, Holy Communion, CW, Ramsden
10:30am, Holy Communion, CW, Leafield

Sunday 11th April

10:30am, Holy Communion, CW, Ramsden

Sunday 18th April

10:30am, Holy Communion, CW, Leafield

Sunday 25th April

10:30am, Holy Communion, CW, Ramsden

Sunday 2nd May

10:30am, Holy Communion, CW, Leafield



The Vicar writes



In this edition of the Forest Edge Newsletter we bridge the gap between Passiontide and Easter. With Easter day celebrated this year on Sunday 4th April, all our preparation for the Newsletter is completed under the auspice of the solemn season of Passiontide. So why does this make any difference? To answer this question, it's worth saying a few words about Passiontide.

During the season of Passiontide, the Church of England uses the following prayer, known as a Collect. This prayer helpfully gathers the major themes associated with Passiontide, namely the suffering and death Jesus went through before he came back to life and appeared to his followers.

*Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of
your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered
on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his
victory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.*

Over the last twelve months many people have suffered terribly as a result of this pandemic. People deal with suffering in different ways and there are so many contributing factors.

It maybe we suffer directly, through contracting this awful virus within our own body. But we may also suffer because someone we love has been infected. We are not physically weakened, due to our own body being directly infected, but we agonise over the effect this awful disease is having on the life of someone we love.

It is often difficult to know what to say or how to help someone who is particularly struggling. I remember a hospital chaplain speaking about a consultant oncologist who contracted cancer. It turned out the tumour was inoperable, and the consultant would not survive. He told the chaplain, "As a Physician, I know how to treat other people, but I don't know how to die".

The chaplain was a wise man. He understood the physician was a practical man. All his life he had worked successfully in treating others suffering from the disease he was now having to endure. Anything the chaplain could helpfully say would have to embrace the practical world this oncologist had always inhabited. The chaplain spoke to the oncologist of the Muslim faith. "Go out fighting", he told the physician, "with a sword in your hand."

And so that's what the oncologist did. Until he was unable to help others in his oncology wards, he kept going, he kept fighting. Although he was often in great pain and suffered terribly, this was the way he lived through the last months of his cancer. At his bedside, in his final hours, the oncologist thanked the chaplain for all his help, and he died peacefully.

In our lives, most of us have experienced tragedy in some form. Unless we are completely lacking in empathy, it is impossible not to be changed through witnessing the suffering of others.

The hospital chaplain had witnessed great suffering and many deaths. As a Christian, he spoke of his faith in Christ. His faith had never been diminished as a result of all he had witnessed. He gave himself completely to his work and remained fully present in his ministry of those he knew in that hospital.

The truth, that is so compelling in the story of this hospital chaplain, is not upheld by argument. It is grasped inside of ourselves and experienced through faith. As we journey with Christ through his Passion, his resurrection seems distant and vague. The suffering is too overwhelming. But Easter will arrive on 4th April. Perhaps it is only through knowing something of the pain of his passion can we know a little more of the joy of his resurrection.

With every blessing,

Paul

Rev'd Paul Mansell

Vicar, Forest Edge Benefice.



IN OUR FOUR PARISHES

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Football is coming home to Leafield!

We currently have 2 men's teams, a ladies' team and an academy of boys and girls.

New players welcome.

For more information on times and training call Mike Ody 07928722367 or Jo Williams 07891074375



Car Destroyed by Fire in Fawler

Firemen from Charlbury were called last week to attend to a car which had been engulfed in flames in Fawler. High powered hoses and breathing apparatus were used to put out the fire which destroyed the vehicle.



The (once) silver Audi was seen being driven recklessly by two men along the Charlbury road, crashing through the barriers erected recently by the bridge, and then crashing into a wall near Fawler Mill. Plates were removed and it was torched.

A great deal of damage was done to nearby walls and verges and petrol spilt on the road. Police are investigating.

Although not as a result of this, the repair work on the bridge is now likely to last until April 18th.

Litterless Leafield, well almost

Thanks to the commitment of several ardent resident litter pickers, and to others who volunteered in late February for the 3rd annual Leafield Litter Pick, the main roads leading into Leafield, and the smaller lanes which connect different parts of our village, are looking much tidier. Please save the date for the 4th annual Leafield Litter Pick: Sat 26 Feb 2022. In the meantime, when taking short walks around the village, why not (from time to time) bring along a pair of gloves and a bag and pick litter as you go. Many hands make light work! Special thanks to Cllr Liam Walker for again supplying litter picking kit and taking part, too.



Around Finstock too, socially minded folk collected 14 bags of rubbish. Well done everybody.



One day you will wake up and all of a sudden the weight of the last few weeks, months or even years will be lifted off your shoulders. You can't control when that day comes, all you can do is stay strong and trust that it is coming.



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New Committee members needed for Leafield Village Hall

The Hall is managed by a small committee made up of representatives of the groups using the Hall plus other volunteers from the village. In normal times when the hall is open committee meetings are held every couple of months plus a mandatory AGM. The commitment is not large or difficult but many hands make light work so a larger committee with more people able to give a little would spread the load and make the role more manageable for all. New members are needed and welcome.

For more information contact 07964 059666 or email: Leafieldvillagehall@yahoo.co.uk

New High Sheriff of Oxfordshire



The next High Sheriff of Oxfordshire will be Imam Monawar Hussain. Mr Hussain is a Muslim chaplain at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, a tutor at Eton College and founder of the Oxford Foundation, a charity which promotes religious and racial harmony through educational and arts activities.

Mr Hussain will take up his position on April 8th after his appointment was announced at a recent ceremony at Buckingham Palace. He said, "This is a huge honour and I am thrilled to have been appointed by Her Majesty The Queen to a role which dates back nearly 1,300 years. Although I won't be invoking old powers to tackle lawlessness or raise taxes, I will be seeking to support the judiciary, the police, emergency services and all our communities of faith or no faith, in the county."

He has written several books on spirituality and theology and says of his work, "I am interested in the promotion of religious harmony by educating young people and the wider public in different religious beliefs and cultures to deepen their understanding of distinctive features and common ground in order to promote good relations between persons of different faiths and to challenge extremism in all its manifestations."

May Peace be upon you.*Ed*

**As-Salaam
Alaikum !**

Celia Haddon and Toads

Many people across the benefice will remember Celia who often worshipped with us before she moved to Cirencester. She particularly enjoyed BCP services. One of her great passions has always been cats and she has written extensively about them. She is fond of all animals and concerned for their welfare. She recently shared her interest in amphibians on Facebook, pointing out that it was World Frog Day on March 20th. (<https://www.arc-trust.org/news/world-frog-day-2021-celebrating-the-uks-rarest-amphibian>)

At this time of year she is busy saving frogs and toads as they try to cross the roads near her home.

In Wilcote Lane, where I live, it is still a little early for the frogs and toads to start mating (They cross roads to get to water which is all where the action is!) Once the warmer evenings arrive there will doubtless be dozens in the Lane and I will do my best to save as many as I can.

Celia recently referred me to another interesting link: www.froglife.org She posted this photograph last week and called it 'Tonight's Toads'.



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A MAN went to the movies and was surprised to find a woman with a big collie sitting in front of him. Even more amazing was the fact that the dog always laughed in the right places through the comedy.

"Excuse me," the man said to the



woman, "but I think it's astounding that your dog enjoys the movie so much."

"I'm surprised myself," she replied.
"He hated the book."

—Graham Foster in *Tonawanda, Wis., Leader*, quoted by Debbie Christian in *Milwaukee Journal*

Women's World Day of Prayer Build on a Strong Foundation

On the other side of the world in the South Pacific, 2000 miles east of Australia, lies an archipelago of 80 islands called Vanuatu.

With black and white sandy beaches, beautiful coral reefs, tropical coloured fish, forests full of lovely birds, abundant flora and fauna, and spectacular cascades these are wonderful islands.

There are no large mammals, poisonous snakes or poisonous spiders. The climate is temperate and the soil fruitful, but this region is prone to natural disasters including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and many destructive cyclones in the hot and humid season from November to March.

To the Ni-Vanuatu, the people of Vanuatu, land is very important. It is not viewed as a thing to be owned, but as vital to the existence of humans as a mother is to a child.

The traditional Vanuatu family took care of each other and was self-sustaining, and respect was shown for the environment. Modern technology is changing life – although the internet is scarcely available in the outer islands, mobile phones are almost universal. But the islands, which vary greatly in songs, dances and customs, are proud of their cultural identity.



Dog Mess

This is a problem which, it seems, is not going away. It may have got worse recently because so many more people are walking dogs around the benefice during this lockdown. Finstock and Ramsden residents are particularly angry about it and implore all dog walkers to clear up after their pets and, if bins are full, to take the poo home.

If you are concerned about bins being full or any other aspect of 'street life' from dead animals to litter here is the link to West Oxfordshire District Council:<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/litter-street-cleaning-and-dog-fouling/>



Ramsden Gardens Open 2021

Ramsden has, for many years, held its Gardens Open Day Once every two years. It is always a delightful opportunity to visit this pretty village, explore a variety of gardens meet other gardeners and raise funds for the Church and Memorial Hall.

Once again, Helen Pennant-Rea has kindly offered to coordinate the event which is provisionally planned for Sunday June 13th.

At the time of writing about a dozen gardens have agreed to open and we are hoping to have a plant stall. Other attractions are being considered, all very much in the spirit of what the law is likely to permit and restrictions which the pandemic has necessitated.

It would be great to have more gardens on view but helpers are needed for a variety of jobs like garden 'sitting', providing plants for sale or helping with car parking. If you could help in any way please contact Helen Pennant-Rea <hpennantrea@hotmail.com>





St George

This month sees the celebration of St George's Day. He is the patron saint of England, Bulgaria, Georgia, Portugal, Spain (Catalonia and Aragon) and Cyprus. The festival is celebrated under the name of Hıdırellez in Turkey, as well.

The earliest documented mention of St. George in England comes from the Venerable Bede (c. 673–735). His standing in British tradition and mythology became gradually more elevated until by the Fifteenth Century St. George's Day was a major feast and national holiday in England on a par with Christmas.

Although regarded by many as part of English culture he was in fact Turkish and never visited these shores. He is thought to have died in Lydda (modern day Israel in AD 303).

Whilst St George was depicted from the 11th century as a chivalric knight or a warrior on horseback, it is more likely that he was an officer in the Roman army. Like many saints, St George was described as a martyr after he died for his Christian faith.

It is believed that, during the persecutions of the Emperor Diocletian in the early 4th century, St George was executed for refusing to make a sacrifice in honour of the pagan gods.

He became popular with English kings. Edward I (1272-1307) had banners bearing the emblem of St George (a red cross on a white background) and Edward III (1327-77) had a strong interest in the saint and owned a relic of his blood. The St George cross was not used to represent England until the reign of Henry VIII.

Legend has it that St George rode into Silene (in modern day Libya) to free the city from a dragon who had a taste for humans, but it's a story which post-dates the real George by several centuries.

Images of George and the dragon survive from the 9th century – 500 years after his death. Originally these may simply have been representations of the battle between Good and Evil. But the story was developed and popularised in the Middle Ages in a compendium of stories about saints' lives, 'The Golden Legend.'

From around 1100, St George's help was sought to protect the English army. In William Shakespeare's Henry V, the monarch calls on the saint during his battle cry at the Battle of Harfleur in the famous "Once more unto the breach, dear friends" speech, crying "God for Harry! England, and St. George!" Shakespeare's birthday is also celebrated on April 23rd and we can be certain that if not exactly that date, it was pretty close as he was baptised on 26th April.

St George, patron saint of many countries plus soldiers, scouting, books, lepers, equestrians and shepherds.

Wit and Wisdom

'So boring, you fall asleep halfway through her name.' Alan Bennett talking about journalist Arianna Stassinopoulos

"Happiness is good health and a bad memory" Ingrid Bergman

"We are all tourists, God is our travel agent who has already identified our routes, bookings and destinations... trust him and enjoy life" Charlie Chaplin

"We live in a world of competing narratives. In the end, we have to decide for ourselves which is right. And having made that decision, we then need to inhabit the story we trust." Alister E. McGrath

"Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us." Romans 8 v34

"Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence." 2 Corinthians 4.14

New Editor

Forest Edge News is still looking for a new Editor. Although I am happy to help in the future (and I am indebted to all those who have helped me) I shall be stepping down this summer.

If you are interested please get in touch either with me or with the vicar. *Ed johnianrupert@hotmail.com
vicar@forestedgebenefice.co.uk*



CROSSWORD CORNER

The winner of last month's book token was Susan Richards from Ramsden. Congratulations to her and to everyone who completed the crossword. A special thanks to one reader (she'll know who she is!) who even sent in an unfinished crossword just to show that she enjoys trying them. I hope you find this month's offering more to your liking!

The answers were Across: 7. Lanfranc 9. Omahas 10. Cora 11. Touchpaper 12. Asthma 14. Spartans 15. Shadow Cabinet 17. Barbican 19. Grooms 21. A Dead Horse 22. Kate 23. Seder 24. Luteran Down: 1. Faroes 2. Offa 3. Santiago 4. Joshua 5. San Antonio 6. Hazel Nut 8. Cruise Control 13. Headboards 15. Slapdash 16. Baguette 18. Cohort 20. Mutual 22. Keep

As usual please get your entries to me by 20th April. **Ed**

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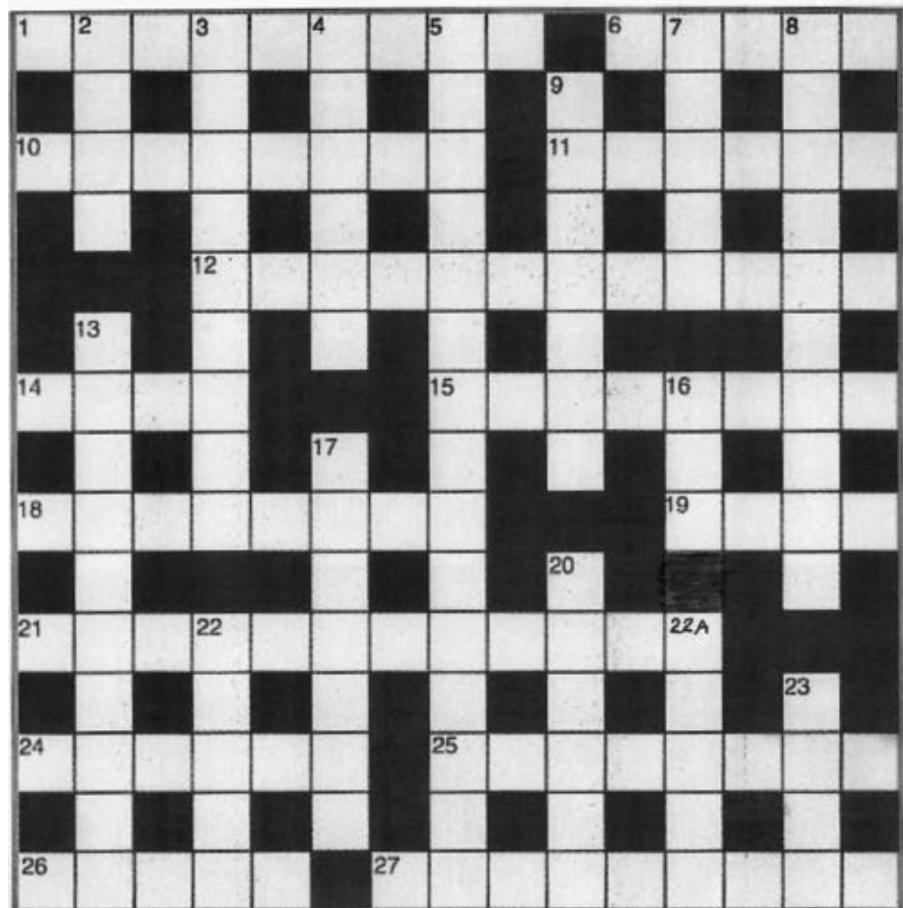
Clues

Across

- Which C18th artist painted this? (9)



- 'Dust to dust' precedes famous cricket trophy (5)
- The Lion and The Witch were found through this (8)
- Vicious winged monster in Greek mythology or a malicious woman with a fierce temper (1.5.)
- Branch of mathematics involving the percussion section (12)
- It replaced the franc, the mark and the guilder (4)
- Shortened a novel while crossing a river? (8)
- Capital of Finland (8)
- Do this and you might end up in it! (4)
- Von grow cider! Or suffer this in your cramped conditions (12)



- What was this old cigarette advert encouraging you to smoke? (Right) It was 'A' cigarette lacking courage (6)
- Joseph, Abraham, Jacob and Pontius Pilot's wife all received messages from God this way. (2.1.5)
- A wound does this in Tottenham Court Road perhaps (5)
- To be unsure of your own abilities. (4.5)

Down

- Mythical Greek warrior is abrasive cleaner (4)
- Performers like to get these (9)
- Unusual and foreign. Plants, food and even hairstyles can be this (6)
- Wilkie Collins wrote about her. Was she a bride? (3.5.2.5)
- Find a suit and get a flat in South East (5)
- William Blake wrote songs about this (10)
- 'Fortune.....the Bold' (Latin proverb) (7)
- French writer (1828-1905) whose works include 'Twenty thousand leagues under the sea' (5.5.)
- Dirty character in Eastenders, Daniel's lions knew well (3)
- Night-time noise which can be rather annoying, others say! (7)
- Type of rice (6)
- Avril confused the opponent (5)
- Swedish film star (1905 - 1990) wanted to be alone (5)
- Most traditional of Easter meals, part of Agnus Dei, if you know your Latin (4)



In Praise of Women

11 people were hanging on a rope on the underside of a helicopter. 10 men and one woman. The rope was slowly fraying and it was decided that one would have to let go to save the rest. The woman made an impassioned speech to say that she would sacrifice herself as for decades woman had traditionally given up so much for their husbands and kids. Realizing her ultimate sacrifice, the 10 men clapped!

Flowers Wrongly Sent

A businessman ordered flowers to be sent to the opening of his friend's new branch office. When the businessman got there, he was shocked to see the flowers with the inscription. "Rest In Peace." He was so outraged that he stopped at the florist to complain.

"It could be worse," the florist said, "Just think: Today someone was buried beneath a floral arrangement with the inscription. 'Congratulations on Your New Location!'"

