

**Bridges Group News**  
**Date: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**  
**Sunday: Easter Day**



**News from Stockton**

As we move through Holy Week to the final events of Jesus' crucifixion, and the empty tomb & resurrection on Easter Sunday, we thank God that Jesus always remains the true Light of the World, whatever our situation. He is there to support us during the worst and best of times. As one Godly Play story says: Jesus is not just back then, in this place or in that place. He is everywhere and in every time. Happy Easter!

..... and some more good news, the advert for a new minister for our group of Churches has gone into the Church Times. We welcome your prayers for this process. Thank you.

**Rectory reflection from Rev Andy**

At the latest Collective meeting we were thinking about the theme of life and death, and that is very appropriate for this Easter season as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, and the defeat of sin, evil and death. I wonder what you think about heaven, the fulfilment of Gods great plan to restore all of his creation? I am not talking about an ethereal existence, filled with angels and music and light, which many people seem to believe, some sort of alternative dimension where their loved ones can keep an eye on what is going on down here. No, scripture seems to make it clear that the life to come will be very much a physical existence, just without the things that have darkened and damaged Gods once perfect creation. Jesus resurrected body was clearly physical, he could eat, be touched, recognised, even if he gained some abilities that human beings don't possess yet. Paul writes that 'We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump'. That leads us to some fascinating reflections. What will our purpose be in this restored creation? Will the things we love in this life continue? What about the animals that can become as dear as family to us? There is still much mystery about what eternal life will be like, but we can be sure that it will, as I often say at funerals, make our present life seem like a pale shadow of that new and perfect existence. I hope that thrills you as much as it does me!

**Prayer**

Dear Lord, on this glorious Easter morning, we rejoice in the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for the hope and new life that Easter brings. May we live in the light of His victory over death.

**A note from Gillian**

When I retired last Easter, several of you said that God still has plans for me. Well, yes, he does! And yet again, he has taken me by surprise! Those who know me well, please don't laugh. I have been worshipping at Coventry Cathedral, initially for a bit of anonymity, but have fallen in love with it – the place, the music, the liturgy, the people – I have found it to be very spiritual and welcoming. And, now I have permission to officiate (PTO) from Bishop Ruth, I am joining the ministry team at the cathedral!

I have also let the local clergy know that, although I don't want to take on anything on a regular basis, I am happy to help out when I can across the deanery.

On Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April I am being officially welcomed and introduced at the cathedral and will be acting as sub-deacon at the 10.30am Eucharist. Anyone who would like to come will be very welcome. (It will be very low key – unlike my previous appearances at the cathedral!)

God  
Gillian

bles,

PS I look forward to catching up with some of you at the Maundy Thursday service in Stockton at 7pm and / or the Good Friday Meditations in Napton at 7pm.

### Looking ahead...

- Good Friday: St Lawrence church, Napton, 10am, making the Easter garden, children and families, everyone, welcome to help.
- Good Friday evening service 7pm, St Lawrence church, Napton.
- Easter Monday: St Lawrence churchyard, Napton, Easter Treasure Hunt 10-12 noon, free entry. Children (old and young!) and families. Lots of fun!
- Stockton PCC meeting, Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April at 4pm
- Priors Marston PCC meeting, Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm
- Napton PCC meeting, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm
- Lower Shuckburgh PCC meeting, Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at 7pm

### ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS – REMINDER!

- Electoral roll and notice of revision to be displayed 6 weeks before the APCM (displaying names only please – not any contact details)  
Electoral roll to be amended 4 weeks before the APCM  
Revisions to electoral roll to be displayed 2 weeks before the APCM
- Draft reports to be circulated to PCC for approval 4 weeks before the APCM
- Notice of meeting to be displayed 2 weeks before the APCM
- Accounts to be displayed 1 week before the APCM
- Agenda & reports to be distributed 1 week before the APCM
- Nominations for CWs and PCC members to be received 2 weeks before the APCM

<b>Services this Sunday: 31<sup>st</sup> March Easter Day</b>	<b>Services next Sunday: 7<sup>th</sup> April Easter 2</b>
10.30am The Gathering at Wormleighton 3.00pm Service for Easter followed by Tea and Cakes at Priors Marston  Bible readings for the week are: Acts 10:34-43, Mark 16:1-8	10.30am Morning Worship at Priors Marston 10.30am CW Holy Communion at Napton 10.30am Morning Worship (Lay Led) at Stockton 6.00pm Easter Carol Service at Priors Hardwick  Bible readings for the week are: Acts 4:32-35, John 20:19-end

(For more details of events and diary dates, see our website: [www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk](http://www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk) or the parish magazines) **Next Week's Bridges Group News will be hosted by Napton**