

St. Luke's Herald

Easter 2024

A message from Gary Best...



It has been a very wet start to the year but the snowdrops, crocuses, and daffodils have still made their appearance. Spring is always seen as a time of rebirth, renewal and hope. To appreciate that more fully, may I encourage you to spend more time outside as the daylight becomes longer and the weather hopefully sunnier. Try and connect with the natural world around you. Don't let your phone or the music in your earphones dominate your mind. Instead, look and listen. A few years ago, I was walking along a coastal footpath and I

stopped to ask a man how long it would take me to get to my destination. He replied, 'It all depends upon what you want to do. It will take you three-quarters of an hour if you just want to get there as quickly as possible, but you could spend a lifetime walking the path if you want to really appreciate it'. Make it your resolution this spring to really start appreciating God's wonderful world more.

As you watch the plants around you grow, the flowers bloom, and the trees burst into leaf, may I also encourage you to spend some time thinking about how you will grow this spring and in the coming months. What will feed you and enable you to flourish? Reflect on what you need to stop doing, and what you need to start doing, if you are to truly to grow in goodness, grow in happiness. And what 'fruit' will you produce this year? According to the apostle Paul the fruits of the Holy Spirit are 'love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness,

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control'. We would all benefit from seeing more of those fruits in our lives.

All around us in spring we see things which had appeared to be totally dead burst into new life. As you watch the miracle of nature's rebirth, please think of that other miracle which we celebrate at Easter: the miracle of how Jesus rose from the dead. His disciples thought he was dead for ever but three days after his crucifixion Jesus returned, restored to life, resurrected. The amazed disciples found their faith renewed and they came out of hiding to tell the world the good news of Jesus' saving grace. I would like to invite you to join us at St Luke's in our special Easter celebrations this March - and be reborn, renewed and filled with new hope, joy, love and peace.

Wishing you all God's blessing,

Gary Best - lay reader at St Luke's

Do see inside for our Easter Services, activities for children and much more ...

What's on for children?



Well, it's been a year since I was appointed as the Children & Families Minister at St Luke's Church and it has been great to see new initiatives started and continuing to grow and

develop. These include our two weekly parent/carer & baby groups - 'Little Stars & Me' and 'Little Gems & Me'.

It's been wonderful to welcome other care professionals to our weekly groups, which have included a homeopath from Stillpoint, Bath, to talk about homeopathic remedies for minor first aid & minor ailments in babies; a team of

young dentists to talk to us about caring for our babies developing teeth; and more recently two professional First Aiders who joined us to lead sessions for our young families on how to deal with a choking baby/toddler, CPR, baby/toddler recovery position, applying bandages/dressings to a baby's/child's wound.

It's been wonderful to see relationships continuing to become established and community growing for our young families.

In May we will be launching a new weekly group for babies aged 1-2 years of age and their parent/carer. This new group is called 'Little Treasures' and it will run every Thursday from 12.15-1.45pm in the upper room at the St Luke's Church Centre. We will be providing baby gym equipment, age appropriate toys, sensory tables, snack time, story time & nursery rhymes for our small people, and refreshments

Family Easter Nature Trail

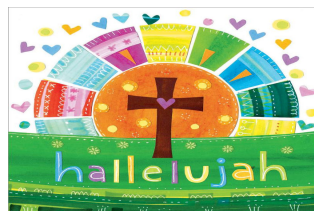
There are a few events coming up for primary aged children & their families over Easter: the first of these is a Family Easter Nature



Trail which will run from Easter Sunday (31st of March) until Saturday 6th April. The trail will not only have a focus on the Easter story but also on nature and celebrating God's wonderful world and our Eco Church status. There will also be a craft bag to collect, and various craft activities to explore as you wander and wonder at the green space surrounding St Luke's Church.

Family Easter Fun Morning

We will also be running a 'Family Easter Fun Morning' on Tuesday 9th April from 10am -12.30pm at St Luke's Church.



Our focus will be on the Easter story through craft, games, song and the retelling of the Easter story and in the making of an Easter Sundae! Plus, an Easter egg hunt and refreshments for all.

For more information please contact serena@stlukesbath.com / 01225 331898

Big Brew Fairtrade Coffee Morning...



Recently members of St Luke's, neighbours and friends gathered at St Luke's for a Big Brew Fairtrade coffee morning. St Luke's has been supporting Fairtrade for over 30 years, initially with a

monthly stall stocked with Traidcraft products, and more recently with stock kept in the church for people to make purchases whenever the church was open. Sadly Traidcraft ceased trading last year, but we are keeping going, using a number of different fairtrade organisations, including some which work directly with producers, and all of which sell products where producers have been paid a fair wage, with extra benefits to help their communities flourish.



At the Big Brew, people had the opportunity to buy such items as crafts, food (including Easter eggs and other chocolate goodies), beverages and greetings cards.

There was a range of homemade cakes, and Fairtrade tea and coffee available, and donations for these were supporting a project in Bangladesh, where Fairtrade charity, 'Transform Trade', is helping to create community-owned shops called Sadaipati run by inspirational women who are transforming their communities.

Sriti is the manager of her local community-run store which is making goods more accessible to local people - they no longer need to travel 10km to their nearest market to



buy household necessities. But that's not all - Sadaipati is changing opportunities for women, by challenging gender norms and fighting social exclusion - a place for families to come together and invest in a more equal future.

Sriti has ambitious plans to take on more business training and expand the shop, and she is encouraging other women in the community to plan their own ventures - they often reach out to her for advice.

Transform Trade plans to help open 100 of these community shops, and we are well on our way to provide the funding for one of them. Support for Fairtrade and associated projects is important to us as we show our care for the people who produce what we use. As Christians, it's our calling and our commitment to work towards a better world for all.

If you would like to support Fairtrade, look out for the Fairtrade mark when you are shopping. Namaste Fair Trade, True Origin Foods and Shared Earth are some of the online Fairtrade shops we use, and you can donate to the Transform Trade project on their website. The Fairtrade cupboard is open for sales at all St Luke's coffee mornings, and after our services.



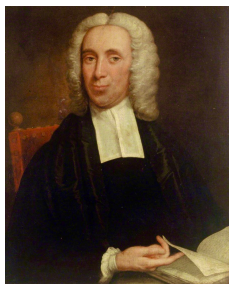
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross....

*When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride*

*Forbid it Lord that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ, my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them through His blood.*

*See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.*



It may surprise you to know that when Isaac Watts published this wonderfully-written hymn in 1707 no one was permitted to sing hymns in most churches. For thirteen hundred years it had been felt that only something written in the Bible could be sung, so singing in churches was

confined to the Psalms and a few passages from the New Testament. Anyone wanting to sing a new religious song, whether it was a carol or a hymn, had to do so outside and not inside a church. The first serious challenge to that view had come from Martin Luther, the reformer who initiated what we now call Protestantism. However, the Church of England, although Protestant, continued to reject hymn-singing in its churches. It was left to nonconformists (i.e. those who did not belong to the Church of England) to promote hymn-singing.

Isaac Watts is usually regarded as the godfather of the English hymn. It is said that as a boy he moaned to his father that singing psalms in church was boring and his father said: "I'd like to see you write something better!" Isaac went to his room and emerged several hours later with his first hymn. As an adult he became the pastor to a large independent chapel in London, and in 1707 he controversially published some of his 600 hymns, and he then dared follow that up with some for children in 1717. Some of Watts' hymns remain very popular today - not just 'When I survey the wondrous cross', but ones like 'O God our help in ages past', 'Jesus shall reign', 'I sing the mighty power of God', and, at Christmas, 'Joy to the World'.

'When I survey the wondrous cross' was written as a communion hymn but it is now sung most frequently during Lent and at Easter. Watts' focus in 'When I survey the wondrous cross' is not to dwell on the brutal details of the crucifixion but to reflect on the extent of Jesus Christ's love. Watts challenges us to think about the salvation that Christ offers us and to get our priorities right. Rather than concentrating on worldly pleasures, we should be seeking to thank and serve God to the best of our ability.

Watts' words helped inspire Charles Wesley (who is still viewed as the world's greatest-ever hymn-writer) to write thousands of hymns between 1739 and 1788. Among those still sung today are 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing!', 'Love Divine', 'O for a 1,000 Tongues', 'Rejoice the Lord is king', and 'And Can It Be'. The use of Watts' and Wesley's hymns by Methodists was what made hymn-singing increasingly popular. Even the Church of England had to concede and let its congregations start singing hymns! It produced its first hymn book in 1861. Some people tend to think the great age of hymn-writing was in the nineteenth century but over the past fifty years more religious songs have been written than ever before. Today at St Luke's we sing a mix of old and new hymns and songs - why not come and join us!

Gary Best

Do read the Easter story in the gospels - we would love to give you a copy of your own if you do not have one - contact the church office on 01225 331898

Please join us in celebrating Easter at St. Luke's

Palm Sunday 24th March

10.00am Palm Sunday Service of Holy Communion

Good Friday 29th March

2.00pm 'The Final Hour at the Cross'
A service of prayers and reflections

7.30pm '*Light in the Darkness*' - an hour of words & music for
Good Friday with the Jane Lilley Singers
(see back page)

Easter Sunday 31st March

10.00am Easter Day Service of Holy Communion



Do join us, this Easter, as we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus and consider God's love for each of us, and what the events of 2000 years ago mean for us today.

Getting a New Vicar!

In May, it will be a year since our former vicar (Rev Matthew Frankum) left us to take up a new post. You may wonder how the Church of England goes about selecting a new vicar. Like many things in life, it is not straightforward! There are three parties involved in the selection process: the wider Anglican church represented by the Diocese of Bath & Wells, a representative from the Simeon's Trust (our trustees), and of course, the members of St Luke's themselves.

Over the last few months we have been meeting, praying and thinking about the future of our church and asking ourselves:

- What are our strengths?
- What are our hopes?
- What are our particular challenges?
- What type of person do we need to lead us?

This has helped us to develop a 'Parish Profile' and also a 'Role Description' for a new vicar. We are hoping to have these documents approved by all parties shortly after Easter, and then to place an advert for a new vicar in the period after that. In the meetings that have been held, we have identified our two main hopes as:-

- To be increasingly outward-looking and serving, and sharing God's love with, our community(s).
- To grow, welcoming people of all ages, but especially by attracting younger families, and being an all-age church.

If you have any thoughts or comments on what St Luke's means to you currently, or what you hope it could mean in the future, then we would love to hear from you. If you'd like to, please drop an email with the subject title "Vacancy" to our office at admin@stlukesbath.com. Thank-you

YOUTH AT ST. LUKE'S

We are still enjoying our fortnightly meetings with Youth in the Lower Rooms. At the end of last year we had a visit from a youth group based in Clevedon, who were staying in the Church Centre for a residential weekend. It was good to mix with them & learn about their experiences, too, as young Christians.

Recently we've been planting sunflower seeds as we talked about being fruitful Christians. Let's hope they grow!! If you'd like to find out more about us do drop in, the outside door is always open, usually on alternate Sundays starting at 10:00am (forthcoming dates are 17th and 24th March; then after an Easter break fortnightly from 14th April)



Prime Time

This monthly lunchtime event (11.45am - 2.30pm) is for those who are not 'as young as they were', and has a great line up of talks and events planned for this summer.

Taking place in the Church Centre, before the talk, you will be served a two course lunch, costing just £6.

After Easter the programme is

April 18th: 'Ripple Effect' - formerly, local charity, 'Send a Cow'

May 16th 'Songs you have loved'
- Geoff Ditcham & Lindy

June 13th 'Flowers from the Farm'
- Sarah Wilson

July 11th 'Kennet and Avon Canal'

For more information and a calendar of events, and to book a place for lunch, please contact Mrs.Helen Walker, via the church office on 01225 331898.



... at one of St Luke's Church's coffee mornings. These are held regularly in the church itself, on particular Friday mornings from 10 until 12.

Come with your family, come with a friend, or just come! Entry is through the front doors of the church and you will be warmly welcomed. There are always people to chat to (if you wish!) and quite often people are surprised to see someone there that they already know.

We serve real coffee or tea, with squash for children. You can choose from our selection of delicious homemade cakes and tray bakes. There's bound to be something you like. We aim to have a gluten- and dairy-free option too, though we are still looking for a recipe for the near-zero calorie cake!

We make no charge for the refreshments. But if you wish to, there is an opportunity to donate to a specific charity each time. So far we have supported a range of charities: recently Great Western Air Ambulance, Leprosy Mission, Transform Trade and Cancer Research. People have been incredibly generous and we have raised over £100 each time and sometimes as much as £200.



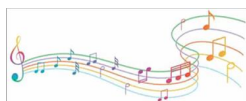
Dates after Easter are:
April 19th
May 10th
June 7th
June 28th
July 12th
August 9th



All on Fridays from 10 to 12. It would be lovely to see you there.

ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, WELLSWAY, BATH

TEATIME CONCERTS



DATES FOR 2024:

THURSDAY: 2.30-4pm

APRIL 25TH

MAY 23RD

JUNE 20TH

JULY 18TH

AUG. 15TH

SEPT 12TH

OCT. 10TH

NOV. 7TH

DEC. 5TH



After a break in January, Tea-time concerts are continuing this year. There is a variety of performers at these events - in February we enjoyed 'Lindsay and Jane Entertain', a mixture of songs and readings which did indeed 'entertain', on yet another rainy day! In March some of Beechen Cliff's excellent Sixth Form musicians are coming to play for us. Dates for concerts after Easter are shown above, so do come along and enjoy the music and the refreshments provided.

An Easter Adventure

This Easter, on Good Friday, 29th March, from 2-4pm, a group of churches, with funding from BathCAN, are taking the Easter Story to the Bandstand Lawn of Royal Victoria Park - 'An Easter Adventure'.

Families can book a timed slot to experience an interactive trail re-telling the Easter Story - ideal for primary school aged children.

All children booked in will receive a free Easter Egg for completing the trail.

Family timed slots can be booked at: [Easter Adventure in the Park | HTCD](#) or using the QR code on the posters.

Holiday Club 2024

This year's holiday club for primary aged children, will run from Monday 19th - Thursday 22nd August 2024 and comes with a 'nod' to the summer Olympics in Paris, with the working title of 'Going for Gold/God'.

This promises to be a wonderful & popular holiday club for our children, featuring our infamous water slide, so make sure you get your children booked in & tell your friend's!

The Jane Lilley Singers, one of Bath's well known and respected choirs, will be leading an hour or so of words and music for Good Friday, on 29th March at St. Luke's at 7.30pm.

There is no charge to attend.
All welcome.



And a date for your diaries - on June 22nd at 7.30pm there is a joint concert by JLS and the Bath Male Voice Choir at St. Luke's church - more details on social media soon.

Sundays at St. Luke's

Sunday Services

During the period when we are awaiting the appointment of a new vicar there may be some changes to the normal pattern of services described below. Do refer to our website for more details of service times - details below.

There is a service at 10.00am every Sunday.

This is a relaxed service of worship, prayer and teaching and usually includes Communion.

On the second Sunday of the month, the format is different when we have a 'Cafe Church' service designed for all ages. Coffee (& tea and squash) are available both before the service and doing it, usually accompanied by biscuits or pastries.

This service is more relaxed and informal, and as it is suitable for young and old alike, there are no children's groups.

Also on the second Sunday of the month, when possible, there is an 8.30am communion service.

See the website for details of other services - for example, contemplative evening services, 'Songs of Praise' and special services on Festival days.

Sunday Activities for Young People:

There are groups for primary school aged children each week (Rockets) and for Youth, fortnightly (see Page 6).