

Around the Parishes

**Awliscombe,
Buckerell, Combe
Raleigh, Cotleigh,
Gittisham and
Honiton
MARCH 2024**



Rev'd Tracey writes ...

I hope your Lenten challenges of giving up something, taking up something, or doing something different are going well, for we still have a while to go. March, for the large part, sees Lent continue, so we might need a little encouragement along the way. The phrase, 'Just keep on, keeping on' rose to popularity when Martin Luther King cited it in a speech in 1964. I offer it to you as encouragement and hope, as we continue our journey towards Easter.

Hope is one of my favourite words, and Easter is the greatest ever story of hope! Jesus's story is one where his resurrection destroys the despair of death. It's a story of life overcoming death, and goodness triumphing over evil.

For the disciples, the crucifixion of Jesus, I imagine took them into a very dark place. On Holy Saturday it probably felt like there was hope for them at all. Dreams were destroyed; their direction and purpose in life had been taken from them. Everything would have felt meaningless. Perhaps this story offers us a chance to bring hope into the lives of others, for we know the end of the story, we are resurrection people.

We know the story of Jesus overcoming death itself, we know the stories of how he came alongside those who were walking away, or were frightened and scared. We know that the Easter story is of one where God is outworking his purpose in the world and that by the gift of the Holy Spirit in us, we are participants in Jesus' mission, today and tomorrow and until he comes in glory.

St Paul's have stories of hope because Jesus is in the church. Where Jesus is present, we can expect to see the transformation and signs of resurrection. Stories of hope are present in our community; stories of kindness; stories of activity and activism and stories of conversion.

All this is bound up in the story of the one who was crucified for us; who rose on Easter Sunday and who then equipped his disciples to take on his mantle in the world.

Today, we are mandated to serve in his name, so that everyone know the love and life-giving-ness of the Resurrection, and with Jesus' love blended with ours, to show that love in the world.

This Easter, I pray you may know the hope of Christ in new ways so that your heart is set on fire with love for Him, and that you share this same hope in the community you love and among the people you serve.

In joyous anticipation I say

'Christ is Risen – He is Risen indeed Alleluia!'

Rev'd Tracey Voysey

**All your usual items inside, PLUS
Details of Holy Week and Easter services
Baptism and Confirmation — it's never too late!
Christian Aid update**

St Giles' Buckerell

Goodness we have reached March already, almost a quarter of the year gone. Rev Sue returned refreshed from her 'busy' sabbatical to 'busy' Honiton almost two months ago and has taken up the reins of guiding us once more. Tracey did a good job of keeping us on the straight and narrow in her absence.

Although the weather is still unrelentingly cold, grey and damp, those brave snowdrops, harbingers of better things to come, will be showed that they can out do what Mother Nature throws at them, at Escott Church on the 17th and Coombe Raleigh on the 18th. And there was delicious cake and tea and snowdrops in the green to buy at both venues.

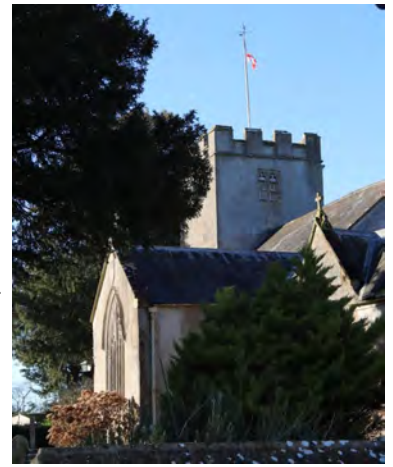
I hope pancake tossing techniques were perfected and that there were plenty of lemons to hand for Shrove Tuesday. At the beginning of Lent flowers were removed from the church and arrangers now have a six week break. This year some of us will be attending 'Table Talk' at the Otter Inn for informal discussions relating to Faith in a relaxed atmosphere with members from other churches in the Mission Community. It is an opportunity to air thoughts which are there but difficult to bring out into the open and the course will run for five weeks. Lent is an austere chapter in the church's year, during which we can give up something we enjoy, and use the opportunity for questioning our Faith.

Our embryo 'Friends of Buckerell Church' have been quietly meeting to establish their role under the gentle but firm chairmanship of Jan Studley. They will be an asset to the community of Buckerell generally and to the PCC. Our venerable and temperamental church clock is still playing hard ball with the patience of both David Wayne and the Cumbria Clock Company but they, however, are determined and are playing the long game. May they win!

Barbara Hook

CHURCH SERVICES IN BUCKERELL FOR MARCH

| | | |
|--------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Sunday 10th March. | 10.00am. | Mothering Sunday Village Service |
| Sunday 17th March. | 10.00am. | Parish Eucharist |
| Sunday 31st March. | 10.15am. | Easter Day Service (Eucharist) |



St Nicholas' Combe Raleigh



After more years than she cares to admit, as PCC member, Churchwarden and, latterly flower co-ordinator, Jean Busby ('Buzz' to most of us) has finally decided it is time to retire from the 'doing' scene. She has been active in many spheres of voluntary work over the years but as a 'thank you' for all that she has done at St Nicholas' she was recently presented with a beautiful orchid for her living room and a flowering shrub for the patio. Thank you, Buzz, for your years of talented commitment. If her Christmas decorating is anything to go by, the task is again in safe hands.

Snowdrops, tea and cake were the order of the day in the middle of last month and, in spite of the slightly uncertain weather, we were overwhelmed with visitors, ensuring brisk business on both plant and refreshment fronts. As in previous years the few remaining snowdrops were planted in the churchyard to provide enjoyment in years to come. We were delighted with the profit of over £1000 for church funds and thank everyone who helped us achieve this.

Three events/services for this month's diary. 'Come and Sing' at 3.00pm on Sunday 3rd; Mothering Sunday on 10th (with gifts of daffodils); and Easter Day worship on 31st.

Then it's April. And the months fly by!

Rosemary Mapleston



St Michael's Awliscombe

David Chippington

As I write this I have just received the news that David Chippington died last night. Many of us knew that he has been in hospital for the last week or so but it still seems impossible that such a dearly loved friend and a constant in the life of St Michael's and of Awliscombe, who just a few weeks ago was doing lay-leader duties with Doreen, should have left us. There will be time later for a proper tribute to David: for now we send our love and prayers to Doreen and their family, who were with David at the end.



And as though to remind us of the continual renewal of life, we celebrated the baptism of **Isla Cannon** at our service on 4th February. Revd Sue presided joyfully over a church full of the Summers family and friends (including Isla's cousins Molly and Archie, whose own baptisms seem as though they were just yesterday), boosting our usual congregation and adding to the volume of our singing.

To complete the cycle, we are looking forward to hosting a wedding at St Michael's on Saturday 2 March - the first of 2024. For many people today, attending a wedding provides a (sadly) rare visit to the inside of a church: for churches they are a welcome opportunity to help a couple with one of the major celebrations of life, and we do all we can to encourage and promote the use of St Michael's for weddings.

Curry Night

Finally, February brought us the second fabulous appearance of the Curry Guys, dreamt up by Allison last year, to make a change from our annual Soup 'n Puds lunch, and a roaring success from the outset.

This year we filled the bookings a week ahead of the event and once again the village hall was transformed by lights and music into something closer to Mumbai or Delhi; the eponymous curry guys created a blur of activity in the kitchen and around the tables, and we all revelled in this further evidence of the energy and versatility of our Awliscombe community. As last year, we split the proceeds between St Michael's and a chosen external charity. This year we raised an amazing £1,260, so were able to send £630 to *Medecins Sans Frontieres*.

Upcoming events

Sunday Services. Don't forget that we now have a Eucharist on both the first and third Sundays of every month and a lay-led service on every fourth Sunday.

There will be **no service on Mothering Sunday** (10th March) as it is a second Sunday. However, we have a full programme for **Easter**:

On **Palm Sunday** (24th March) we have a lay-led service, where the usual Passion Narrative will replace the homily.

On **Good Friday**, Nigel Boulton will lead the *Stations of the Cross* at 10.00. For other events in Holy Week, please see the Mission Community website - www.honitoncofe.org

On **Easter Sunday**, when our Eucharist will be led by John Rawlings, we hope to have a team to ring the bells, and we will be encouraging as much family attendance as possible, with children's activities during the service and the obligatory churchyard Easter Egg Hunt afterwards

Bible study and prayer group is usually on the second Sunday of the month at 09.30 in St Michael's. Please contact Michelle Lucas (shelll@outlook.com) if you would like more information about future meetings.

Nick Thwaites

The Coventry Passion Cross

For many years now, I have had a simple cross on my prayer desk, that I often find helps me to focus my prayers. It is made of three plain black wrought iron nails, and measures about 4 x 3 inches.

I've never visited Coventry Cathedral—maybe one day! I was really interested to discover the following though, about the Coventry Cathedral Passion Cross—the cathedral's emblem. It is made up of three nails together forming the Cross of Christ. What might those nails (and those in my little cross) be?

The first nail is the carpenter's nail and focuses us on the purpose of the nail. We are reminded that Jesus worked as a carpenter before entering His ministry. As He sat there in His carpenter's workshop, smoothing and working the wood with love, did He contemplate the rugged cross on which He would one day be crucified? As He hammered nails into wood, did He ever accidentally hammer one into His finger, and as He felt that pain, did

He foresee the nails of His crucifixion? As He carried large logs to His workshop to make tables, chairs, and doors, did He contemplate the cross he would one day carry to Calvary?

The second nail is the nail of **Passion**, it represents the nails in Jesus' hands and feet that He accepted because of His passionate love for us.

The third nail is the nail of Promise, like the promise He made to the dying thief on the cross. It was that if we believe in Him, then we will reign with Him in paradise. This is the nail that Christ offers to you and to me. Will you accept this nail as a sign of His passionate love, His forgiveness of your sin and promise of eternal life for all who will come to Him? If so, why not pray the following prayer this Holy Week & Easter?

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You that You have a plan and a purpose for my life, thank You for Your passionate love for me, thank You that Your blood was shed for my sins, thank You for Your promise of eternal life. As I think about that nail of promise, I receive Your passion, Your grace and Your forgiveness, may I fulfil Your plan and purpose for my life, In Jesus name, Amen.

Rev'd Sue

St Paul's Honiton

It was a great privilege to welcome Bishop Jackie Searle, the Bishop of Crediton, and Acting Bishop of Exeter, to the Mission Community on Sunday 11 February to preside at the Eucharist in our midst. The church was pretty full, and it was such a joy to see familiar faces from all round the Mission Community coming together to worship Almighty God, and to be with Bishop Jackie. It was lovely that the Bishop was able to stay afterwards and chat over refreshments.

Towards the end of the month, it was also a joy to welcome Fr Allan to our Sunday service. Fr Allan was visiting from Zambia, and joined us for our Tuesday coffee morning also, and was full of praise for the outreach that provides.

Our next Mission Community Service at St Paul's will be on Sunday 30 June when we welcome our newly ordained curate, Scott Angell. More details about this nearer the time.

On the first Sunday of each month, there is now a regular Eucharist at 0800 in the Transfiguration Chapel. All are, of course, most welcome, and it is lovely to see this congregation growing again.

We're rapidly progressing through Lent. Please see elsewhere in the magazine for details of all that is happening now and for Holy Week and Easter.

We are pleased to say the **Fairtrade stall is up and running again** at St Paul's. Richard and Kate aim to be there at the Saturday Coffee Morning and after the 11am Sunday service on the third weekend of each month. The new supplier is True Origin who worked in partnership with Traidcraft before the business went into administration. We make a small profit on some items and this along with all donations continue to go to Transform Trade (formerly Traidcraft Exchange) to support its work for trade and climate justice.

Easter Eggs: We will also be placing an order for Fairtrade Easter Eggs with the Meaningful Chocolate Company. For more details or if you would like us to include an order for you please speak to Kate or Richard Pryor or email richard46new@gmail.com

Easter flowers on the window ledges. Once again we are planning to put jars of flowers on the window ledges for Easter. Bring your posies on Saturday 30 March in the morning as we have the jam jars.



Day of Prayer for St Paul's Church Wednesday 13th March 8am – 8pm

St Paul's Church is the living presence of Christ in our Community. Over the years since it was built many people have come through its doors, for Baptism, Weddings and Funerals, besides all those who have worshipped here, stopped by to look in or pray, to have a coffee or light a candle. Therefore, it is important we recognise all that has gone before, giving thanks for it in prayer and praying for what is to come. You are warmly invited to join us to pray for the life of the church. On the hour, every hour, there will be specific prayer points. The day will begin at 8am with 30 minutes of prayer to set us off. At 11am Revd Sue will preside at the Eucharist, giving thanks for the sacramental life of the church, and at 7pm there will be a 45-minute service of praise and prayer. Then for the last 15 minutes we shall exit the church and pray outside for our community. Specific prayer point details will follow. If you would like to know more please see Revd Tracey.

Honiton Mother' Union March meeting is on Monday 4 March when we will be exploring Rise Up – against Domestic Violence. This is an extension of the 16 Days of Activism which we focus on each November/December. Rise Up campaign seeks to cover the rest of the year. Do join us at 2.30pm in the Chapel at St Paul's.

A change to our programme - Lady Day on 25 March has been transferred to 8 April this year as it falls in Holy Week. So we shall be visiting Colyton MU to celebrate and share in a service at 11am followed by a Bring and Share lunch.

Our meeting for **April** has also transferred to this date, as 1st is Easter Monday. In the afternoon at 2.30pm we will be hearing about Food Share in Honiton.

Christian Aid and doing things together

It has come as a great relief to us on the Committee that, thanks to Deborah our newest member, we have now found our next Treasurer, with plenty of time for her to learn the 'ins and outs' of the role, well ahead of Christian Aid Week in May. Some of those 'ins and outs' will involve using the chequebook for the Committee's bank account, even though many of us now hardly use such a thing domestically, in this 21st century of cards and smartphones. This is because, for charities as much as businesses, it is good practice to share the responsibility for signing cheques, rather than leave it to a Treasurer alone. Then local people like you, who give generously to Christian Aid, can trust that your donations are being handled carefully and responsibly, respecting our Committee's decisions about payments to Christian Aid nationally. Our local rule, agreed with the bank, is that any cheque of ours must be signed by any two people already on our list of approved signatories. There are three or four of us on this list at any one time, with specimens of our signatures on record at the bank; so there's some flexibility in our arrangements (Our Treasurer is allowed to go on holiday!), at the same time as we're running a tight ship when it comes to moving the actual treasure.

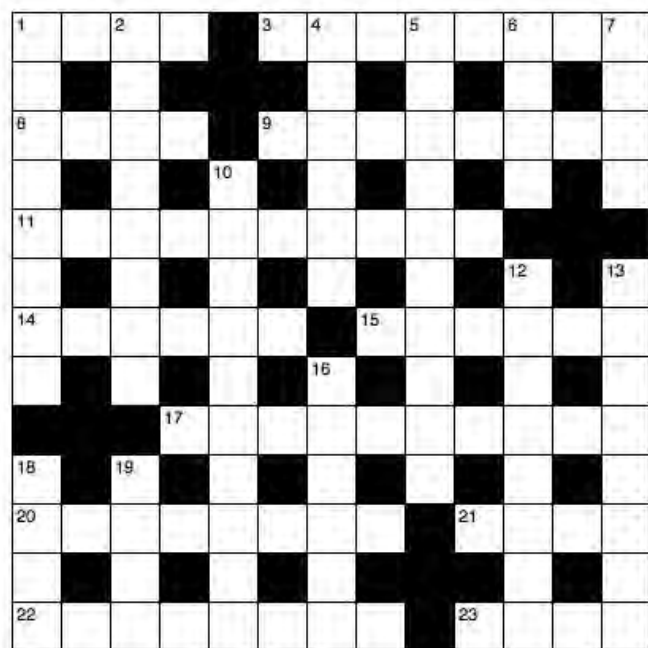
Many years ago, I learned that there is a technical term to describe the relationship between co-signatories to cheques: "in solidum". Yes, it's Latin, but mercifully we can all work it out! Believe it or not, I learned this, not from my father whose whole working life was with Barclays, but from a lecture in Year 2 of the Theology course at Exeter... a Doctrine lecture! Theologians of the early Church borrowed the term 'in solidum' from the world of banking (hopefully without interest payments!), and applied it to the way the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit relate to one another and act together within the divine life of God. Three co-signatories in a committee of three, with all three members deciding and acting together in anything to be done by the God of Love. Creation?...Salvation?...Sanctification? Sometimes in the liturgies of the Church it may be convenient to push one of these activities towards one particular member of the Trinity more than the other two; but the deeper truth is that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are always equally "all signed up" to all the divine decisions, commitments, and activities, that we Christians can trace in the life of God, touching our world and our humanity. Not so much a traffic light with three colours to do different things, as three whole sets of traffic lights, always agreeing in love when to show red together, or amber, or green. We can trust that we are infinitely safer, more loved, in the co-signing hands of the solid Holy Trinity, than we could possibly be in the slippery hands of other gods, each with their own agenda.

As we come through Lent to the day-by-day intensity of Holy Week, of course the focus is strongly on Jesus of Nazareth going to his individual cross, where he will be recognized as Son of God (with Latin words included on the inscription), as if only Jesus saves. But maybe something as humble as a committee's chequebook (safer than the Judas way), or a gift to Christian Aid because "God so loved the world", or a three-cornered palm cross, can prompt us, even that week, to say "Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit."

And then, of course, there'll be something inevitable, and more 'solid', about Easter.

John Harrisson

March Crossword



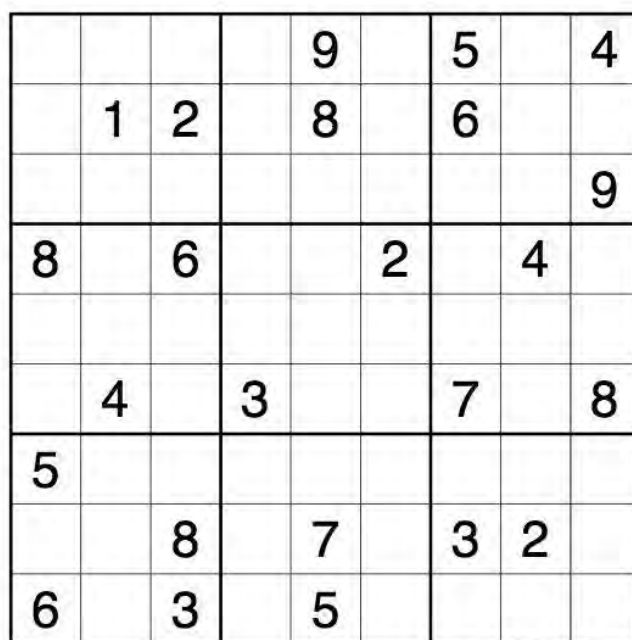
Across

- 1 Made from the fruit of the vine, symbol of the blood of Christ (4)
- 3 'You are to set an ambush behind the city. Don't go very far from it. All of you be on — — ' (Joshua 8:4) (3,5)
- 8 Seep (4)
- 9 Celebrated by Jesus on the night of his betrayal (Luke 22:15) (8)
- 11 One of the supposed sites of Christ's burial place in Jerusalem (6,4)
- 14 'A city on a hill — be hidden' (Matthew 5:14) (6)
- 15 He inherited Elijah's mantle (2 Kings 2:12-13) (6)
- 17 Where Jesus prayed 'Not as I will, but as you will' (Matthew 26:36, 39) (10)
- 20 'Only in his home town and in his — — is a prophet without honour' (Matthew 13:57) (3,5)
- 21 Sail (anag.) (4) 22 How Jesus was punished before his crucifixion (Matthew 27:26) (8)
- 23 Eye sore (4)

Down

- 1 Can't grow (anag.) (5,3)
- 2 A servant girl to Peter, 'You also were with that — , Jesus' (Mark 14:67) (8)
- 4 Well-being (Proverbs 3:8) (6)
- 5 Pentecostal denomination, — of God (10)
- 6 One of the 'obvious' acts of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:19, 21) (4)
- 7 'I preached that they should repent and — to God' (Acts 26:20) (4)
- 10 ' — — , the world will not see me any more, but you will see me' (John 14:19) (6,4)
- 12 He betrayed Jesus: Judas — (Luke 6:16) (8)
- 13 Jesus to Peter: ' — — of my sheep' (John 21:16) (4,4)

March Sudoku



God in Music

'Glorious the song when God's the theme': Hildegard of Bingen

In this series we have looked at the psalms of the Old Testament and the songs of the New Testament, and now we enter the Middle Ages. But it is the Middle Ages through the eyes of a record producer in the last century.

In 1980 Ted Perry decided to found a new independent record company, Hyperion. If that was not financial risk enough, in the following year Hyperion issued a CD of a composer virtually unknown in the 1980s – Hildegard of Bingen. The risk paid off, and Gothic Voices' recording of the music of this remarkable medieval nun became a best seller. The CD sold in its thousands and received awards from the gramophone industry.

'A feather on the breath of God', the title of the CD, is how Hildegard described herself. 'Listen, there was a king sitting on his throne. Around him stood great and wonderfully beautiful columns ornamented with ivory, bearing the banners of the king with great honour. Then it pleased the king to raise a small feather from the ground and he commanded it to fly. The feather flew, not because of anything in itself, but because the air bore it along. Thus am I a feather on the breath of God.' Hildegard was born in 1098, the tenth child of noble parents who lived in western Germany. Aged only eight, she was given into the care of Jutta, abbess of a monastery in the Rhineland, near Bingen. There she lived the life of an enclosed nun, her only contact with the world outside via a grille through which food was passed.

After 30 years, Hildegard left that cell and was assigned a scribe, who wrote down her visions and meditations in two volumes. She founded two monasteries, wrote books on medicine and natural healing and the first morality play, and composed a great range of songs. She corresponded with the great and the good, and as the 'Sybil of the Rhine,' her advice was sought by popes and emperors, by kings and bishops. A truly creative life of prayer and service until her death in 1179.

The starting point for her own compositions was the plainsong of that time. Modern techniques of singing and performing often make plainsong slow and heavy. The secret to bringing plainchant alive is to sing it with relaxed attention. In many ways that is the secret of the life of prayer: that paradox of resting in the Lord while being alert to the promptings of his spirit. Hildegard realised that secret as she brought to her music, as she did to everything, an intensity of emotion and faith, developing the medieval plainchant into melodies that flowed off the page and soared into the skies.



Ringin' Matters

The East Devon Branch of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers Annual General Meeting saw a few changes. Trevor (Combe Raleigh) relinquished the post of chairman, for health reasons, to be replaced by Ian Rees (Honiton). Shan (Feniton) was succeeded by Sue King (Sidmouth) as the Branch Guild committee member. Lisa (Combe Raleigh) remains as Branch Training Officer. Another of Lisa's pupils has now started ringing with the Combe Raleigh band on practice days and we hope will soon be a regular Sunday ringer.

On Sunday 18th February the Combe Raleigh ringers now annual Snowdrop Tea, was a great success raking in a profit for church funds of over £1,000. Those who admired the snowdrops in the churchyard and enjoyed tea or coffee and cake in the church said some very complimentary things about the event and clearly enjoyed themselves. If you missed it then try not to next year.

If you have ever felt even the slightest urge to give ringing a go then please contact your nearest tower.

Trevor Hitchcock





**Mothering Saturday Café
St Paul's Church, Honiton
9th March between 10am – 12noon**

Has someone done something kind for you?

Bring them along to our free café for a cuppa and cake to say thank you.

Mothering Sunday Childrens' Activities include
Card Making, Gift Making and take a posy of flowers too.
Everyone welcome to join us

St Michael's, Gittisham



A sad month in Gittisham though a brief moment caught on camera helped to lift our spirits. Lent is often mistakenly thought of as a dreary time, a time of self-denial and abstinence that for many does not feel at all life-giving, especially on days when it never seems to stop raining and when much of the news is so awful. And therefore it is tempting, in the secular world at least, to forget about Lent altogether! But as we explored in our first **Table Talk** session at the Otter Inn, hope can shine into the darkest of places. Themes for the coming weeks include 'forgiveness and justice' and as we move towards Holy Week 'suffering and death' asking 'where is God in all of this'? All welcome to come and join us at the Otter

Inn Wednesday evenings in Lent at 7pm. Just turn up or for further information email Julia gshaminis-ter@gmail.com

Both Edward and Doreen were faithful members of our telephone service during Covid and we were very pleased at our recent Eucharist Service to welcome Edward, his niece Linda and Doreen's daughter Sarah for the blessing by Reverend Robert of a kneeler stitched in memory of Doreen.

Auction of Promises. We are delighted to have raised almost £3,000 towards the upkeep of the Church Fabric. Many thanks to Helen Hayman and all who helped to organise it and to everyone who bid so generously and helped to make it such an enjoyable evening.

March Services: **Mothering Sunday.** March 10th 11am All Age Eucharist with distribution of posies. **Palm Sunday** March 24th 11am with procession from the Lychgate. **Good Friday** March 29th 10.30am followed by Hot Cross Buns in the Parish Room. **Easter Day** 11am Eucharist followed by Easter Egg Hunt in the old Churchyard.

Julia Barrett St Michael's Church, Gittisham. LLM in the Honiton Team Ministry.



Church News

Support for Russian priest who prays for peace

Thousands of Russian Orthodox Christians have been urging Patriarch Kirill of Moscow to reinstate a very popular priest in the capital, the Revd Alexei Uminsky, who has refused to recite an official prayer for Russia's victory over Ukraine.

An open letter, which attracted more than 11,000 signatures, including the heads of local charities, says: "The decree banning this priest from serving will deprive thousands of people of spiritual support – a great tragedy for many believers, for children's hospice patients, for hundreds of prisoners and thousands of homeless people."

Uminsky had repeatedly warned that he could not endorse the invasion of Ukraine.

Now Russia's online news agency, Gazeta.ru, says that Fr Uminsky was banned from ministering under a decree issued by the Moscow Patriarchate, for suggesting in a YouTube interview that Christians should "pray for peace, rather than victory".

Cont'd on next page

The Russian news agency went on to say that Uminsky has long been seen as “a thorn in the Kremlin’s side” for his anti-militarism. He was branded a ‘criminal in a cassock’ by the Russian Orthodox Church’s own TV channel Spas, after calling for mercy for the opposition leader Alexei Navalny, during his prison hunger strike. For the moment, Uminsky remains banned, and may face defrocking as a priest. More than 300 Russian Orthodox priests, who signed an appeal against the Ukraine invasion of 2022, have since been silenced, or forced to emigrate.

Dramatic decline of religion on TV

There is less television being devoted to religion and ethics than there used to be. A *lot* less.

The latest statistics from Ofcom, the industry regulator reveal a dramatic reduction in television programmes about ‘religion and ethics’ broadcast by the public-service broadcasting networks (PSBs): BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5.

Comparing 2022 with 2011, peak time hours of ‘first-run’ UK origination output fell by 85 per cent; while peak-time hours of ‘all origin’ output (that is, including bought-in material) fell by 76 per cent. Channel 4 dropped from being the most prolific network to providing no output at all; and the BBC output fell by 65 per cent.

Roger Bolton, a former BBC and ITV executive and independent producer, wrote recently in the Church Times: “All this has happened without a peep from Ofcom or the boards of the PSBs, who are supposed to protect the public interest. There have been no peeps, either, from religious leaders. They seem to be asleep, or preoccupied with their own internal issues, unaware of this wanton destruction.”

“In my opinion, television commissioners ... underestimate the power of religion and the continuing interest in it. They also seem to forget that people are moral creatures, often keen to do the right thing, but wishing to discuss and debate what that is.”

(From Church Times, 19th Jan 2024, p14)

Worldwide persecution of Christians on the increase

More than 365 million Christians worldwide now face persecution and discrimination for their faith.

Entire Christian communities face extinction in some parts of the world. Those in sub-Saharan Africa are especially at risk, because of increasingly authoritarian regimes and violence.

So warns the latest global study of persecution.

The World Watch List 2024 is compiled by the charity Open Doors. It rates the top 50 countries where it is most dangerous to be a Christian. This year, something new has emerged: the countries listed have not changed since 2023, and there are no new countries to the list, but the level of violence experienced by Christians globally has grown exponentially in just this past year.

Open Doors reports a *sevenfold* increase in reported attacks on churches, Christian schools, and Christian hospitals. In 2022 there were 2,110 such attacks. In 2023 it was 14,766.

Attacks on the homes of Christian have also soared – by 371 per cent.

A staggering *one in seven* Christians worldwide now faces a high level of persecution and discrimination.

This is the 30th year that the World Watch List has been compiled and published. The countries are scored by various factors: pressure levels in private life, family life, community life, and national life, and on church communities, as well as violence levels. This year’s list covers the period between 1st October 2022 to 30th September 2023.

The chief executive of Open Doors UK, Henrietta Blyth, says that Christian minorities in East and West Africa face an existential threat from jihadists and autocratic regimes. Jihadists are viciously attacking Christians across sub-Saharan Africa: Somalia, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali, to name just some countries.

In Nigeria, things have got particularly bad, where Islamist extremism is threatening many Christian communities. In fact, the murder of Christians in Nigeria accounts for a staggering *82 per cent of ALL Christians killed for their faith worldwide*. Last year 4118 such murders were recorded, though many more were never even reported.

Open Doors has praised UK government efforts to become a global leader in standing up for the freedom of religion and belief, but it urges that the position of the Prime Minister’s special envoy, currently held by Fiona Bruce MP, should be turned into a permanent, statutory post.

Were you baptised, but never got round to being confirmed?

Did baptism somehow pass you by as a youngster?

It is NOT too late - it's NEVER too late. What can you do about it?

As there is a confirmation service on 9 May this year at Kilmington, I thought it might be timely to include something in this month's magazine for anyone who might be wondering about being confirmed. It's so often associated with young teenagers—a 'stage on the way' that people go through. However, it is by no means limited to one age group—anybody, however old can be confirmed, and often there are as many, if not more adults than youngsters at a confirmation service these days.



Confirmation is a chance for anyone who has already been baptised (perhaps baptised as a child) to commit themselves to Jesus – to 'confirm' the promises made at their baptism. These promises publicly recognise God's love for us, and acknowledge that we all need to turn away from selfishness and evil and to accept God's offer of a fresh start with him. In declaring this faith we become members of the local and worldwide Christian family and the Church promises to support and pray for us on our journey of faith. Confirmation is also an opportunity for those who don't already receive communion to start taking communion with the rest of the church family. In the Bible, baptism with water and praying for the gift of the Holy Spirit by laying on of hands were originally both used to welcome new Christians into faith in Jesus. Over the centuries they are now often done separately, with many people being baptised in water as children and then confirming their faith later when they are old enough to answer for themselves.

Confirmation services are led by the bishop. Those being confirmed declare that they have decided to turn away from everything which is evil or sinful and instead to turn towards Christ - the same promises used at baptism. If you were baptised as a young child your godparents will have made these promises on your behalf and you will renew these decisions and promises at Confirmation. You will declare your faith in front of your friends, sponsors and the wider congregation, who will all promise to support you and pray for you. You may have a sponsor, as you would at a baptism, to stand with you to support you in your journey of faith. The bishop will make the sign of the cross on your forehead with oil. The cross as a sign of belonging to Christ, and the oil as a sign of the Holy Spirit. The bishop will speak to each candidate by name saying: **(name), God has called you by name and made you his own.** He then lays his hand on the head of each as he prays: **Confirm, O Lord, your servant with your Holy Spirit.**

Anyone may be confirmed who has been baptised, and as a general rule the Church of England suggests that anyone who is over 10 years old and can answer for themselves could be ready for confirmation.

- Maybe you've been baptised as a child but would like to make the promises for yourself now you're older.
- Maybe you've been baptised and following Jesus for a while but would like to make a fresh commitment to be a disciple of Jesus now.
- Maybe you've been baptised in another church and would like to formally become a member of the Anglican Communion, a worldwide body of which the Church of England is just one member.
- Maybe you're interested in making this commitment to Jesus but haven't been baptised. . If you have never been baptised, then once again, it's never too late! As a general rule, adults are baptised and confirmed within the same service.

If you are in any way interested in finding out more, do please talk to Revd Sue or Revd Tracey. Please don't feel that you have to race towards 9 May - services can always be arranged for a later date!



Honiton Mission Community - Holy Week and Easter Services

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Monday 25 March | 10am 7pm | Guided Meditation at St Paul's Eucharist at Awliscombe |
| Tuesday 26 th March | 10am 7pm | Guided Meditation at St Paul's Eucharist at Buckerell |
| Wednesday 27 th March | 10am 7pm | Guided Meditation at St Paul's Eucharist at Combe Raleigh |
| Thursday 28 th March | Maundy Thursday 10am 7.30pm | Guided Meditation at St Paul's Liturgy of the Lord's Supper followed by Watch at the Altar of Repose |
| Friday 29 th March | Good Friday 10am 10am 2pm | Childrens Activities in the Mackarness Hall Guided Meditation at St Paul's Liturgy of the Lord's Passion |
| Saturday 30 th March | Holy Saturday 8pm | Easter Ceremonies, Vigil, and First Eucharist of Easter |
| Sunday 31 st March | Easter Day 8.00 am 9.30am 9.30am 10am 11am 11am 11.15am | Easter Eucharist at St Paul's Honiton Easter Eucharist at Awliscombe Easter Eucharist at Cotleigh Easter Eucharist at Buckerell Easter Eucharist at Gittisham Easter Eucharist at St Paul's Honiton Easter Eucharist at Combe Raleigh |

Easter SONrise Service and Easter Trail at St Michael's Church – Details in due course

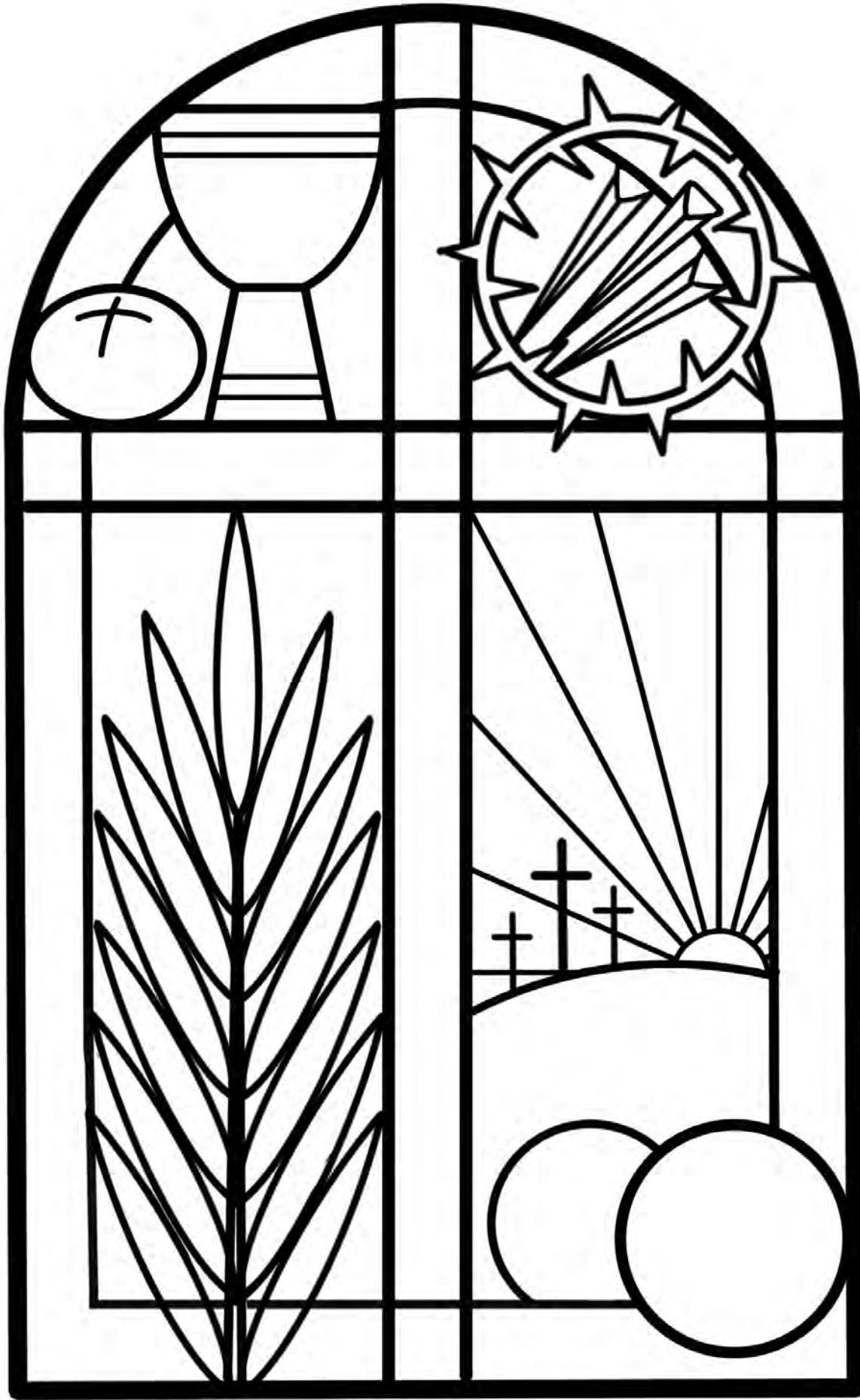
Answers to March Puzzles

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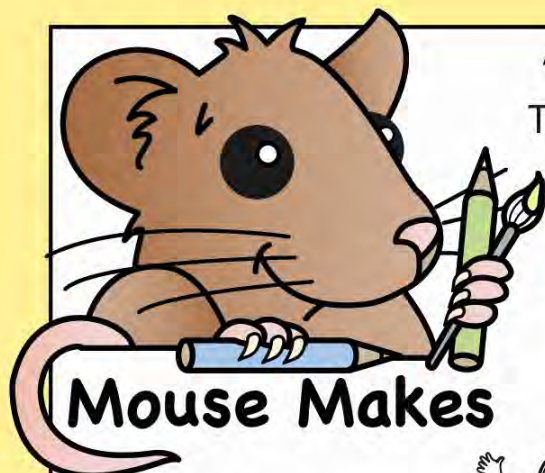
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Childrens' Pages



A wonderful stained glass window to colour in. There is a palm branch for Palm Sunday, a cup of wine and some bread for the last supper that Jesus ate with his friends, some nails surrounded by a crown of thorns to help us think of Good Friday when Jesus died on the cross, and also a lovely empty tomb for Easter morning.



"I am the **resurrection** and the life.
The one who believes in me will live
even though they die."

John 1:25



READ the Bible
passages to find
the answers to the
crossword clues

Matthew 21:1-11

1. Which city did Jesus ride into?
2. What did he ride on?
3. What did the crowd shout?
4. What did clothes did they put down?
7. What did they cut down to spread
on the road?



Matthew 26:17-29

15. What feast did Jesus celebrate?
12. Who did he celebrate it with?
11. What did Jesus break to eat?



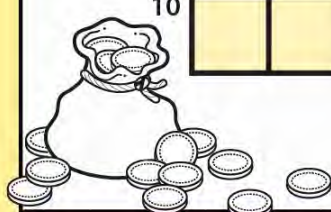
Matthew 26:36-75

6. What did Jesus go to
do at Gethsemane?
18. Who denied Jesus?



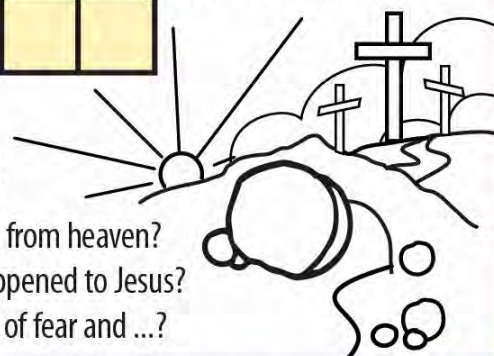
Matthew 26:14-16

- 8d. Who betrayed Jesus?
10. How many silver
pieces was he paid?



Matthew 28:1-10

5. Who descended from heaven?
19. What had happened to Jesus?
- 8a. Mary was full of fear and ...?



Worship at Home

If you are unable to get to church on Sunday, you might like to use this simple form of worship. You will be using the same prayers and readings as your parish church.

Preparation

+ In the name of the Father
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

You might like to sing or prayerfully read a hymn

Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen



Prayers of Penitence

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to eternal life. Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

Most merciful God, I confess to you, and before the whole company of heaven, that I have sinned in thought, word and deed and what I have failed to do. Forgive me my sins, heal me by your Spirit and raise me to new life in Christ. Amen.

The Gloria *(not used during Lent, except on Maundy Thursday evening)*

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

The Collect for the Day

Sunday 3 March Lent 3

Almighty God,
whose most dear Son went not up to joy
but first he suffered pain,
and entered not into glory
before he was crucified
mercifully grant that we,
walking in the way of the cross,
may find it none other
than the way of life and peace;
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.

Sunday 17 March Passion Sunday

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.

Maundy Thursday

God our Father,
you have invited us to share in the supper
which your Son gave to his Church
to proclaim his death until he comes:
may he nourish us by his presence,
and unite us in his love;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Sunday 30 March Holy Saturday

Grant, Lord,
that we who are baptized into the death
of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
may continually put to death our evil desires
and be buried with him;
and that through the grave and gate of death
we may pass to our joyful resurrection;
through his merits,
who died and was buried and rose again for us,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sunday 10 March Mothering Sunday

God of compassion,
whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary,
shared the life of a home in Nazareth,
and on the cross drew the whole human family
to himself:
strengthen us in our daily living
that in joy and in sorrow
we may know the power of your presence
to bind together and to heal;
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.

Sunday 24 March Palm Sunday

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow
the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
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.

Good Friday

Almighty Father,
look with mercy on this your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ
was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hands of sinners
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

31 March Easter Day

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity.

Readings:

Sun 3 Mar: 1 Cor 1:18-25; Jn 2:13-22

Sun 17 Mar: Heb 5:5-10; Jn 12:20-33

Thu 28 Mar: 1 Cor 11:23-26; Jn 13:1-17, 31b-35

Sat 30 Mar: Rom 6:3-11; Mk 16:1-8

Sun 10 Mar: Exod 2:1-10; Lk 2:33-35

Sun 24 Mar: Phil 2:5-11; Mk 14:1-15:end

Fri 29 Mar: Heb 10:16-25; Jn 18:1-19:end

Sun 31 Mar: Acs 10:34-43; Jn 20:1-18

Affirmation of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.



Prayers of Intercession ending with the Lord's Prayer.

You might like to sing or read another hymn here.

Blessed are you,
the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
for you have blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.
You chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world
and destined us for adoption as your children.
In Christ we have the forgiveness of sins,
and inheritance in your kingdom, the seal of your Spirit,
and in him we live for the praise of your glory
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.
Amen.

AND GO IN PEACE
TO LOVE AND SERVE
THE LORD

April issue:
Sunday 17 March = deadline!

All items to sue41260@gmail.com please.