



*We can't bring you GRAPEVINE but we
can bring you an Offshoot*

Welcome

March/April 2022



Poynton Parish Church

Dear Friends,

This time of year in the church's calendar observes the journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday. A journey that begins with self-examination, remembering Jesus' temptation and sings forth in loud alleluias on Easter morning with the good news of victory over sin and death.

Some people like to add a particular practice or habit, or give something up during Lent. Over the years I've given up alcohol, chocolate, and have taken up fasting one day a week or reading a particular portion of a book each day (not all at the same time!). I wonder if you regularly give something up or take something up? The point is not to be either healthier, or miserable, or to feel self-righteous... these things are to remind us of Jesus obedience, and the way in which our own discipleship occasionally needs a revitalisation, or at least a nudge!

We are invited each year to make that journey with Jesus. To follow his steps as he 'turns his face to Jerusalem' (Luke 9:51), and to understand how he is a saviour, rescuing us for a new life in the power of the Spirit.

Morning Prayer in Lent begins with this prayer of thanksgiving:

Blessed are you, God of compassion and mercy,
to you be praise and glory for ever.
In the darkness of our sin,
your light breaks forth like the dawn
and your healing springs up for deliverance.
As we rejoice in the gift of your saving help,
sustain us with your bountiful Spirit
and open our lips to sing your praise.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever.

Can you see how through the journey of Lent, however hard or difficult our journey this year, it is in God that we find light and deliverance. From God, who is full of 'compassion and mercy', we can receive healing that 'springs up'.

May you be guided this Lent, to know the everlasting joy of Easter,

Yours in Christ,

Matthew

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

***These who have recently received Baptism or
Thanksgiving***

23rd January	Rose Catherine Timothy
23rd January	Esme Grace Tootel
27th February	Ronnie Piper

The family and friends of those who have recently died:

17 th December	Jane Norton	aged 83
20th December	Margaret Weaver	aged 84
20th January	Donald Leonard Cook	aged 86
16th February	Joyce Cooke	aged 91

The text below is taken from a letter to clergy from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York:

"Many of us will have troubled hearts as we watch with horror the attack by Russia on Ukraine. As we have already said, this attack is an act of evil, imperilling as it does the relative peace and security that Europe has enjoyed for so long. The attack by one nation on a free, democratic country has rightly provoked outrage, sanctions and condemnation.

We lament with the people of Ukraine, and we pray for the innocent, the frightened and those who have lost loved ones, homes, and family. We continue to call for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Russian forces as well as wide-ranging efforts to ensure peace, stability and security.

These events remind us powerfully that peace is precious and it is fragile. In Chapter 14 of John's Gospel, Jesus speaks to his disciples at the Last Supper and he leaves them his peace. This is not a mere greeting, but rather something deep and abiding. This peace is something that only Jesus gives; for it is a gratuitous gift, a way of living, something to be received for the gift of peace is the gift of Jesus himself. That is why the Lord is able to offer reassurance to our hearts, why those who receive the gift of the peace of Jesus Christ at the deepest of levels should not be afraid.

Peace, therefore, is so much more than the absence of war. It is a gift, and it is also a decision, a gift that must be received. It is a choice we make that shapes the way we live well alongside each other. It characterises our relationship with God."



Thanks

The family of the late Donald Cook would like to thank everyone who attended Don's funeral and for the many cards and messages of sympathy we received at this sad time.

Many thanks to Andy Livingston for conducting such a fitting memory of Don and his love of life.



Update Argentina 2022

Although it has not been possible to meet our Argentinian Partners since Rob, Joe and I were there in October 2019 because of.....

March 2020

Like us Argentina suffered from lockdowns in 2020. Only clergy were allowed to visit anyone but as the rules didn't allow those over 60 to go out only Dany from the team could visit (Both Hans & Priscilla are over 60).

As we already know many of the Salta congregation are not at all well off and Covid-19 meant that many families had very little, no work, no food. Dany and the team were able to organise weekly food drops of basic foods. Like the UK, Zoom meetings were arranged with those who had the technology, daily devotionals were recorded and recorded services were transmitted.

July 2020

Although the lockdown had eased there was still a great need for weekly food parcels which the Salta Team organised and distributed.

September 2020

A further lockdown, but San Andres with 6 other churches, as well as individuals around the world, began a live reading of the whole Bible in a 'Bible Marathon'.

November 2020

Dany, Flavia, Paula & Mati all had Covid and schools were still operating online. By now groups of 10 could meet but the services and groups were still meeting virtually, with similar difficulties for older folk who didn't have or want Zoom.

A Youth Alpha course was also held virtually.

January 2021

Summer in Argentina. Services restart in San Andres with 40 people in the church building, others use Facebook and follow the live stream.

May 2021

Covid cases rising again but able to have 50% capacity in the church building, so in-person services being held (social distancing and masks being used). Homes up to 10 were meeting.

June 2021

Winter in Salta, also in the grip of football (European Cup & Copa America). One of the young people from San Andres is Efrain who is supported in his studies and vision to reach youngsters in his neighbourhood. He started a soccer school with 16 boys, it quickly grew to 96. He has raised money not only to support the teams with strips, but also to feed those from the poorest families.

Money raised by San Andres was able to pay for 3 chairs for the local public hospital for those who are undergoing treatment for cancer. There were 2 people from San Andres who had this treatment in lockdown, Dany was taking them almost daily for treatment, with only one proper chair, someone had to sit on a plastic garden chair throughout the 4 hour treatment.

Happy 2022



Dany, Flavia y Sofi

July 2021

Argentina win the Copa Americas. We are sent encouragement for England. Sadly we didn't do quite so well losing in the Euros final.

September 2021

Spring is approaching, still meeting with a mixture of virtual meetings and in-person gatherings. Sofi continues classes and other activities in person since March. New people are continuing to be drawn by God to the congregation.

Marcos, the young man who was supported through bible college in Chile, (there are no places like this in Argentina) and the Team continue their plans for a church plant in Gran Bourg, one of the poorest areas of Salta.

October 2021

Hans "travels to Bolivia", but only virtually, having produced 10 videos for a course in Genesis. Mother's Day in Argentina, the teenagers prepare something tasty to give them.

November 2021

Dany visits one of the indigenous groups, Wichi in the North of Salta, also meeting with the Diocesan Bishop to organise training for future deacons and presbyters in the diocese.

Flavia and a group from the church planting team run a children's group each Saturday in Gran Bourg. She is also involved in a fortnightly women's group. Sofi completes her first year of primary school, the family are grateful the whole year was in-person.

December 2021

Priscilla is ordained as Presbyter by the Bishop of Argentina. At the same service Marcos, who was supported through training in Chile and has recently been working on a church plant in San Bourg, was made a Deacon. Sofi and seven others had their full immersion baptism.

A Christmas Eve lunch is prepared for the homeless who are supported regularly by San Andres, each person is given a pair of trainers, a bag of goodies including things provided by groups in San Andres, cards made by the children, Christmas bread, and sweets from the older members of San Andres. Chicken has been donated by a local shop.

The church plant team have been busy too, a Nativity play by the Saturday children's group is watched by the parents who have been invited, they are given Christmas bread and a 2022 calendar with Bible texts.

January 2022

Dany and family visit his mother and brothers in Tartagal for New Year. The temperature reaches 49degrees. Phew!!

Ann McClelland



The Significance of Lent

Lent takes its name from the old German word for Spring (Lenz) and begins on Ash Wednesday. It can be viewed as a spiritual cleaning, a time for taking stock of our lives and those things which may be hindering our relationship with Jesus. So it is that on Ash Wednesday we spend time in repentance and may also receive the outward signs of oil and ashes, symbolising our repentance and our mortality. For many Lent includes times of fasting, strengthening our discipline of prayer, and consideration of our giving. Fasting was originally a discipline for those intending to join the Church at Easter but in time it became a practice for the whole membership though the Eastern Church does not observe Ash Wednesday. 'Giving up' something may be a part of some people's Lenten intention; smoking, chocolate, and wine are not sins but may be bad for us and 'taking up' something may be a better substitute especially if it helps us to become closer to the way we should be living our lives. Lent has been seen as a time for acts of charity since very early times but 'giving alms' can include giving time and effort to needy causes or extra help to our friends and neighbours. Maundy Thursday sees a formal recognition of almsgiving when the Queen distributes money to a chosen group of elderly people.



Lent lasts for forty days excluding Sundays which though still within the season of Lent are seen as celebrations of Christ's resurrection and therefore to be observed with joy and thanks. Forty days parallels the time that Jesus spent in the wilderness and during that time the Church will be without flowers or other decoration in anticipation of the blossoming of new life that comes with Easter and the resurrection. During Lent some churches will follow the liturgical practice of using purple altar cloths, and during Passiontide and Holy Week erecting a rough wooden cross which at Easter is hung with a white cloth signifying the grave cloths of the risen Jesus.

Spring Cleaning - Heaps of Stuff

How I wish that I was tidy
How I wish that I was neat
How I wish I was methodical
Like others down our street.
I tried to stem the rising tide
I tried to hold it back
But I have been the victim
Of a heap of stuff attack.

In a heap of stuff invasion
They settle everywhere,
They grovel on the lino
They tower on the chair.
You're searching for a jacket
"Is it here?" you shout,
And, opening up the cupboard,
A heap of stuff falls out.

If it's in the shed
It's broken propagating frames
And if it's in the bathroom -
Well, it's best to say no names,
And if it's in the bedroom -
Your own and not the guest's -
The heap of stuff is mostly made
Of socks and shirts and vests.

Yes, heaps of stuff come creeping,
They clutter up the hall.
And heaps of stuff are softly
Climbing halfway up the wall.
At each end of the staircase
Is a giant heap, a stack;
One to carry up the stairs
And one to carry back.

But heaps are many - faceted
And heaps are multi-faced
and what a heap is made of
Will depend on where it's placed.
Now if it's in the passage
It is mostly boots and shoes
And if it's on the sofa
It is magazines and news.

For a heap in indestructible
It's something you can't fight.
If you split it up by day
It joins back up again at night.
So cunningly positioned
As from room to room you trek,
Increasing all the chances
That you'll trip and break your neck.

But step into my parlour
Now I've forced the door ajar;
I'll excavate an easy chair -
Just cling there where you are.
And together we'll survey it
Till our eyes they feast enough
On the tidiest home in England
Underneath the heaps of stuff.

Anon.

THE DISAPPEARED

What would you say is the worst thing that could happen to a member of your family?

To be diagnosed of an incurable illness?

To die in a tragic road accident?

To be sent to prison?

To be executed for a crime they did not commit?

Any of these scenarios would cause unbelievable pain to those nearest and dearest to us, but I consider there is one situation that is even worse, the sudden disappearance of someone at the hands of a despotic regime.

It is 17 February, 2017. The scene is a street in a town on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. This was the day Pastor Raymond Koh was abducted. Suddenly, according to CCTV footage, five black SUVs, two motorcycles and 15 men wearing black balaclavas appeared out of nowhere. It took just 42 seconds to abduct him on a street in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia in broad daylight. An eyewitness described the February 2017 incident as like 'something out of a movie'.

Pastor Raymond hasn't been seen or heard from since that day nearly five years ago. His activities had drawn the attention of the authorities for some time before his abduction. In 2004 he founded Harapan Komuniti (Hope Community), an NGO that provides social and charitable assistance to marginalised and underprivileged communities. In 2011, a dinner organised by the NGO was raided by 30 officers from the Selangor Islamic Religious Department after the organisers were accused of 'proselytising Muslims'. Pastor Koh's family received death threats in the aftermath - once he received a box of bullets in the post. Despite this, Pastor Raymond continued to carry out his ministry work bravely until his abduction. Pastor Raymond's family believe that he was abducted in an attempt to silence him.



His wife, Susanna and his family are still seeking answers, fighting for justice and continuing to trust that God will help them find the truth.

Gao Zhisheng is a fearless Chinese human rights lawyer and a Christian. For many years he defended the rights of Christians and those of other religious faiths against the charges levelled against them by the Chinese authorities. In 2005 he resigned from the Communist party and began to criticise the Chinese Government openly. After his conversion to Christianity in 2006 things got much worse for him. There was a bungled attempt to assassinate him through a road traffic accident and there followed numerous arrests and several spells in prison. He was first detained by the Chinese authorities in 2006. By this time he had gained a reputation for taking on human rights cases, and was known in particular for defending religious minorities.

Between 2006 and 2011 he was disappeared multiple times and suffered many beatings and spells of torture. He spent 3 years in prison from 2011 before being released in August 2014. While in prison he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize twice, in 2008 and 2010. Then on 13 August 2017 Gao disappeared once more. Since that day nothing at all has been heard of him.



Before his final disappearance Gao was kept under strict surveillance under house arrest. I remember his daughter telling us at a meeting in Birmingham that the authorities had installed CCTV in every room in the house, even in the showers. Amazingly, despite the surveillance, he had been able to author a 40-page report detailing human rights abuses and related social issues in China. This was the first comprehensive human rights commentary written by a human rights lawyer still living in China and probably is the reason for his last disappearance. He knew the risk he was taking, but his concern, borne out of his deep Christian faith, meant he had to do this. By a miracle this document was smuggled out of China and has now come into the hands of Christian Solidarity Worldwide, who use it in Parliament and at the U N to press for change in China.

As I have said, it is believed that Gao is now in prison again although his whereabouts are uncertain. We dread to think what treatment he is undergoing in detention or even whether he is still alive.

As a postscript, in 2009 his wife, Geng He, and his children were forced to leave China because their lives were in danger. They now live in asylum in the United States, where they wait day after day, year after year for news.

Please pray for Raymond and Gao and their families. You can also find out more on the CSW website, www.csw.org.uk

Keith Davies

Contact me on keithdavies1950@yahoo.co.uk or phone me on 07773892244

Forthcomine Men's Events

Men's Quiz - Friday 4th March, 8pm (Church Hall)

A good opportunity for fellowship, discussion and demonstrating knowledge! We will form teams on the night, but please feel welcome to invite as many friends as you wish. (Bring Your Own Booze).

Thursday 21st April

Men's Chef Night - , 8pm (Matt Coleman's house - 41 Brookfield Ave, Poynton, SK12 1JE)

Get some expert training from a qualified chef and learn how to make a tasty new dish! Enjoy plenty of food and fellowship on the night as well.

Contact the Men's Events team if you'd like to take part or receive further information - mensevents@poyntonparishchurch.org



Sarka Roberts writes:

My name is Sarka Roberts and I'm the new office manager at St George's. I am also wife to David and Mum to my three boys William, Daniel and Matthew. I first came to the area 20 years ago to work as an Au pair to learn English and then travel the world. It turned out quite differently in the end but I still have my plans and hopes to travel one day...

I am originally from The Czech Republic. I grew up in small village in south of the country known for being the driest part of Czechia. I often ask myself how did I end up in the always rainy North West of England. The truth is, I really love it here, and I'm glad to call Poynton my home. I enjoy walks in the surrounding country side, especially Lyme Park. I like the shops, the restaurants, the bars, but mostly I like the people and that is what makes it home for me. I am an active member of Poynton WI and Poynton Wine Circle and I have recently

joined Poynton Gardening Club. I am an avid but not always successful gardener. I like reading, cycling and good food. Anyway that is enough about me. I am looking forward to meeting you all, so if you are around pop up to the office to say Hi.

Lucy Carmen writes:

From Twinkl with love...

On Friday 14th January I logged out of the PC at St George's church office and locked up and alarmed for the last time... and on Monday 17th January at 8.30am sharp, logged in to Twinkl, an educational publisher based in Sheffield, to start my first day as their parent writer for parents of children with special educational needs.



My first few weeks have been a bit of a whirlwind – learning IT systems, meeting new people, researching topics and, of course, writing, editing and publishing regular articles on the Twinkl website and on social media. I'm really enjoying the work, and am learning lots about my subject matter, which is handy as two of my children have additional needs. It goes both ways though and my children have already played starring roles in some of the articles that I've written!

I've also travelled to Sheffield a couple of times to work from the Twinkl office there, which has been lovely as my dad, my sister and brother-in-law, my brand-new (nine week old) nephew and some school friends are all there (I grew up in Sheffield until I was 18). It's been lovely to be able to pop to my sister's after work and have tea made for me! And to see family and friends there more regularly.

I'm missing St George's though, and the people that became a part of my day-to-day life there. I had such a wonderful two-and-a-bit years at St George's and the people there felt like extended family. But it is amazing how adaptable human beings are – within a few weeks all the information that was in my head about how to book a couple in to get married, authorise an additional inscription on a grave, balance the end of month accounts and make sure no news was missed from the monthly notice-sheet (am imagining Eileen and Dave Mc smiling as they read this – they know the reality ☹️) has been replaced by Twinkl house style, where to get the most up-to-date special educational news and the best parking spots near the office in Sheffield! What hasn't left my head are the great memories of my time at St George's and the wonderful people I met. I'll still be popping up at events and service from time to time and hope I'll bump into some of you around Poynton.

If anyone would like to follow me, you can do so on Twitter at [@LucyDigest](https://twitter.com/LucyDigest) and on Facebook at [LucyDigest](https://www.facebook.com/LucyDigest). And you can read my articles at www.twinkl.co.uk/blog/author/lucy-carman

And if you have an idea for a story about education and special needs, do get in touch, I'd love to hear from you.

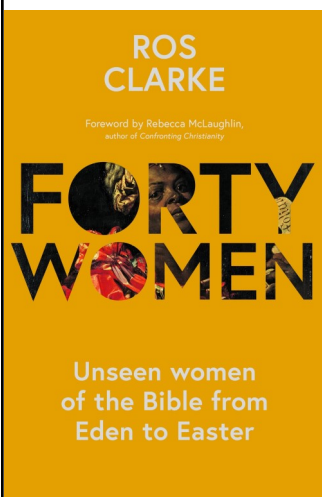




Lent - Ash Wednesday and a book recommendation

On Shrove Tuesday (1 March) there will be a pancake party at the hall at St George's - do invite friends (timings to be confirmed)!

Ash Wednesday (2 March) - a reflective Communion service at 8pm. An opportunity to reflect on God's goodness, his call on our lives and his love for us. There will be a time in the service to receive the imposition of ashes, if you would find that helpful.



Can I encourage you to take something up for Lent this year - to read a few pages of a book each day (apart from Sundays) and to discuss what you read with others (perhaps over coffee)?

Earlier this week I spoke to Ros Clarke, the author of 'Forty Women: Unseen women of the Bible from Eden to Easter'. Do watch Ros introduce the book and why we should all read it, in a recording of our conversation [here](#).

We'll have copies available after services - £7.50 (do remember to bring some cash to church!).

It would be great if we could discover these women's stories together!

Matthew

Story Trail

We are hosting the Easter Story Trail in March - and we've invited every primary school in Poynton to visit the church, which will be transformed to transport them back to the first Easter! We'll need lots of help - of various kinds - particularly around the weekend of 19th/20th and on Friday 1st April. More details to follow.

Electoral Roll

If St George's or St Martin's feels like your spiritual home, can I encourage you to join the Electoral Roll. This is the church's roll, not for voting in general elections... but does mean you can vote at the Annual Meeting! You need to be baptised, over the age of 16 (or going to turn 16 in the next year) and live in the parish or have been attending worship for six months.

I'll say more about what it means to belong to church in the coming weeks, as we prepare for the APCM (15th May).

Men's Quiz - Friday 4th March, 8pm

A good opportunity for fellowship, discussion and demonstrating knowledge! We will form teams on the night, but please feel welcome to invite as many friends as you wish. (Bring Your Own Booze).

Do contact the Men's Events team if you'd like to take part - mensevents@poyntonparishchurch.org

Finding God on the smallholding

Until December the sheep and lambs eat grass in the fields and although the growth slows down there is usually enough until this month. From now on we supplement their grass by feeding hay which is last summer's longer grass cut and dried and rolled into bales. Our hay meadow isn't made up only of different grasses, but also contains a lot of wild flowers and herbs which the sheep love when they are allowed to graze it, and equally love when they have it as hay,



It smells to me like really good tea leaves and is soft to handle. So much loveliness in such a simple thing - dead grass - which in its transformation becomes something tasty for the sheep and delightful for us to work with. This, for me, speaks of resurrection, of new possibility, a new way of being able to nourish the world God loves and cares for.

Jeni Parsons



Lent, Holy Week and Easter 2022

Ash Wednesday – 2 March – 8pm

A reflective Holy Communion service at the start of Lent.

Holy Week

Monday 11 April, Tuesday 12 April, Wednesday 13 April – 8pm

Evening Prayer and Reflection

Maundy Thursday 14 April – 8pm

Holy Communion and Reflection

Good Friday 15 April – 10am

Exploring Easter – craft, story and song to explore the good news of Easter. Particularly suitable for primary aged children and their families.

Good Friday 15 April – 2pm

An Hour at the Cross – Three pictures guide our reflections on the cross. Music, bible reading, reflection and quiet.

Easter Day Sunday 17 April

9.15am – Holy Communion at St George's

10am – Holy Communion at St Martin's

11am – All Age Holy Communion at St George's

Starting Lent - Loving God, loving others

FAST from Criticism and FEAST on Praise

FAST on Self Pity and FEED on Joy

FAST from Resentment and FEED on Contentment

FAST from Jealousy and FEED on Love

FAST from Pride and FEED on Humility

FAST from Gossip and FEAST on Encouragement

FAST from Anger and FEED on Patience

FAST from Worry and FEAST on Trust

FAST from Self Reliance and FEED on Prayer

FAST from Bitterness and FEAST on Forgiveness

FAST from Discouragement and FEAST on Hope

FAST from Fear and FEAST on Faith.

Bible Fun

Q: What kind of car did the disciples drive?

A: Honda ... because the Bible says they were all in one Accord.

Q: Who was known as a mathematician in the Bible?

A: Moses - he wrote the book of Numbers.

Q: Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?

A: Samson - he brought the house down.

Q: Why was everyone so poor in Bible times?

A: Because there was only one Job!

Friends of St George's

As with all organisations, Covid has played havoc with social programmes over recent months but we recently decided to make a move and arrange an event. The report below sums up the Afternoon Tea held in the Hall on 16th January. The fact that 40 people were happy to come encouraged us to plan (to re-plan!) an evening twice postponed and are now due to welcome Mr. Tom Blackmore of Maxwells Auctioneers on Friday 11th March. He will be telling us about the business of valuation and sale and has agreed to use a few small items, from among those people may bring, as examples of the daily work in an auction house.

Tickets £10 will include a glass of wine and nibbles and are available from the Church Office or Committee members Margaret Goode, Alice Lees, Sandra Sharpe, Eileen Shore, Geoff and Judith Smith and Susan Warrington.

Suggestions for coach trips later in the year include Thornbridge Hall and Gardens and Bakewell, and Liverpool.

All events are open to everybody whether a member of the Friends or not but we are always delighted to enrol new members to help us to finance projects, whether big or smaller, designed to enhance the Church and churchyard. Membership forms are available in the Church and in the Hall; perhaps you might like to pick one up and discuss it with a Committee member?

Susan Warrington

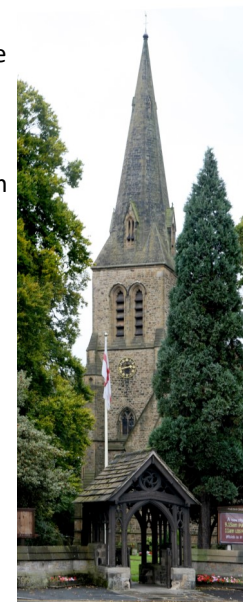
On the 16th January The Friends of St. George's held a well attended afternoon tea in the Church Hall during which we were entertained by Angela Rowley who sang a selection of songs from several different genres, something to please everyone.

The food we were served was a veritable feast - a good variety of sandwiches followed by a delicious choice of cakes, made and donated by members of the congregation. Some talented bakers out there!



A big thank you to everyone who helped to make this a lovely treat for all of us on a damp, gloomy January day. It was good to see so many supporting The Friends, being together again enjoying ourselves, an excellent event at the beginning of a new year that promises so much.

Pam Timperley



Name that Hymn

The lines below come from well known hymns. Can you identify them?

- 1 It causes me to tremble....
- 2 Friends on earth and friends above....
- 3 Frail children....
- 4 With many a conflict....
- 5 Opened the life gate....
- 6 Crisp and even....
- 7 Refreshing rain....
- 8 With a well tuned heart....
- 9 A shining throng....
- 10 Joys grow dim....



Members of the choir enjoying their annual dinner at the Golf Club recently attempted 24 different ones and were ashamed to find that there were several not recognised by one team or the other! Scores of 14 and 11 were the best we could do!!

Nevertheless a good time (and a good meal) was had by all. Just hope we don't have to wait two years for the next one!!

.Susan Warrington

Answers in the next edition



The eagle-eyed among you may have noticed we have replaced the 20 year old church hall oven. Boasting a technical spec which would rival that of a high-end Ferrari (or at least a Mercedes!), it comes equipped with electric fan ovens and gas hobs. We hope it will be a blessing for our retired lunches, breakfasts, Living Well, Holiday at Home and other hospitable events and make life a little easier for those serving in these ministries”.

*Hannah Brackenbury
Operations Manager*



A group of us visited Chester Cathedral to view an exhibition created in fabric by Jacqui Parkinson. It was entitled "Threads through Creation" inspired by the first pages of the Bible (Genesis 1: 3 -24). It was completed in 2021 and took three years to finish.

The exhibition comprises of twelve huge panels of intricate and exquisite embroidery and each panel has a theme. It was not just the beautiful embroidery that was so captivating, but also the thoughtful explanation and depiction of the Bible story of each panel. An amazing presentation of skill and insightfulness into what God intended in his creation and the resulting consequences of actions of humans.

With thanks to Kryss Turner and Dave McClelland



Spring



Signs
symbols
white snowdrops,
pale primroses.

New silent growth from the muddy dark earth.

Bright spotlights of hope illuminating
soggy bark chips, blackened stalks, shrivelled leaves.

Hope,
courage,
faith, belief ~
in creation

Early Spring returning, ousting
surly, grey.

Bringing, heralding bright light to each new day

Colour revives,
So vibrant
full of joy.



Rosanne Alcraft

Springtime Hope

Despite the fact that death comes to us all, we usually shrink from pondering it. We imagine that by ignoring it, death will simply go away - or at least go somewhere else. Yet we all experience little deaths through the normal processes of aging, or by unexpected events of illness or accident. And we know that people of all ages die every day.



Paradoxically, when we face the questions of suffering and death we are also enabled to face the deeper questions of life: what does it mean to be alive and know it? Why do we have the privilege of enjoying the beauty of the earth, but only for a season? Is all the richness of life itself only here for a time, fated to eventually disappear forever? Will the earth itself die one day, and float, inert and silent, in dark space forever?

Christian faith responds to these questions of death and life with honesty and hope. We wonder at a faith that affirms that God, the maker of all, not only became a human being but also experienced suffering and death. And, further, that this divine human-God returned from death with the promise of eternal life for all.

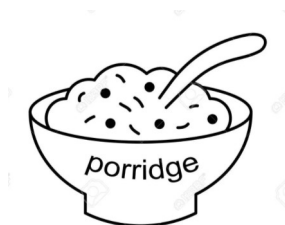
From Manchester Cathedral News, reprinted with the permission of the author

Grace as we eat ...

Lancelot Fleming, Dean of Windsor, is credited with the following:

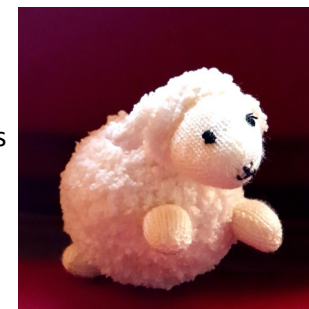
O Lord, grant that we may not be like porridge
(stiff, stodgy and hard to stir):
but may be like cornflakes -
crisp, fresh ... and ready to serve.

BUT there was this Scottish Grace as a riposte:
O Lord, grant that we may not be like cornflakes
(lightweight, brittle and cold):
but may be like porridge -
warm, comforting, and full of natural goodness.



Knitters wanted

When a child is baptised into our church family they are presented with a Bible and a soft lamb. The lambs we use have been knitted by members of the church. However the supply has now run out and we need your help. Please if you can knit would you consider making one. They are truly appreciated and even more special because every single one is unique.



Patterns are available to pick up from the office or by e-mail from Sarka. Please send your request to office@poyntonparishchurch.org

Thank you,

Christine

