

The Good News

Spring 2023



North West Northants Pastorate

One of the good things about walking the country lanes and tracks during the winter can be that the ground is frosted and hard underfoot, crisp, and clean, allowing an easy and swift passage, which is just as well if trying to keep warm.

The appearance of the first snowdrops however reminds us that a change is coming, soon the ground softens and eventually turns to mud and puddles of murky water.

Now heavy going and sometimes making for tedious progress, with the added danger of an unplanned close inspection of the ground.

At some times of the year, some paths are best avoided, your own experience will tell you this.

Also, the shared experience of the wider community, those that have trod those paths before.

Of course we should always test and examine things for ourselves; but forearmed and forewarned we might fare much better on our adventures out in the wild if we communicate and share wisdom.

Wisdom tells us that sometimes things must get worse before they can get better, all the more reason to keep going, to glimpse that beautiful blue clear sky, with its promise of spring...



“...because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him ”

(Acts 2:24, NIV)

Wishing You a Blessed and Joy Filled Easter!

Inside this Spring Issue

The best laid plans of mice and man...

North West Northants

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Deadline for contributions to next issue: 16th May 2023

Good News welcomes contributions from readers, though publication is not guaranteed.

Editorial

Staying Cheerful

Hello Everyone,

As I write this, there are Snowdrops all around, under the hedges and on the banks. Some seem isolated and others stand proudly in groups and clusters, after all it is good to have a sense of belonging. It is the nature of things to hope, that even the single snowdrops, will one day be part of a cluster.

The Snowdrop is one the birth flowers for those born in January (the other being the Carnation, which represents Love).

Some people say the small and delicate snowdrop is a symbol of hope and rebirth. Occurring in the winter months leading up to spring it shows us that even the seemingly most delicate of living things can overcome the greatest difficulties the world might throw at it.

Should this not inspire us to try to overcome our own difficulties, so that we might live to see the "...host, of golden daffodils; beside the lake, beneath the trees, Fluttering and dancing in the breeze..." as Wordsworth put it?

Opposing the cold winds of oppression, standing up to be counted, hope and rebirth...

Reminds me of someone.

Talking of which, Lent. Now what have you given up? Did you have pancakes? Or are you doing something extra? Different people, different traditions, different ideas.

Some people over the years have fasted because they are trying to demonstrate regret and repentance for their sins, other people, these days fast in order to lose weight, yet others fast because they have no food.



Hannah Hill, Lodge Lane,
Long Buckby

[Continued Over....

Editorial

Some Observations

There are lots of people in the world with no food, no place to go and no hope, there always have been. Even in this country, the cost of living crisis is seeing people previously relatively secure begin to fear for the future. We know this. But what to do?

What brings hope, rebirth and love to those that need them most?

Action, not words; by joining with those around us who are already making an effort to bring comfort and support to others. So, not necessarily just our own effort, but that shared from a wider community, those that have trod those paths before¹.

But all of this requires sacrifice, sacrifice of our own share of whatever we have.

Sacrifice leading to rebirth, hope and love.

During this time, the snowdrops become the daffodils, and the daffodils become the bluebells, and the cowslips and all the promise of summer warmth and on into the distant harvest, what promise!

What kind of harvest do we want to be?

“And thus the snowdrop, like the bow
That spans the cloudy sky,
Becomes a symbol whence we know
That brighter days are nigh ;”

From the Scottish poet George Wilsons poem; ‘The Origin of the snowdrop’



Snowdrop
Galanthus nivalis

¹ “Ex vitio alturius hominis sapiens emendat suum” as Cicero might have said.

A Message for All

From Cecil and Pam from Kilsby.

Agreements

Twenty-five years ago, on the 10th of April 1998, two documents were signed in Belfast. One, known as the Multi Party Agreement was signed by Tony Blair, Bertie Ahern and Parties from Northern Ireland.

The other, the British and Irish Agreement, was signed by Tony Blair, Bertie Ahern, Mo Mowlam and David Andrews, and was between the Governments of the UK and Republic of Ireland.

This making a North South agreement and an east west agreement. Together they became known as the Good Friday Agreement. According to the UK Government web site 'It underpins Northern Ireland's peace, its constitutional settlements, and its institutions.

The Republic of Ireland, 26 of the 32 Counties of Ireland gained its freedom from the UK in 1922, the remaining Counties, Ulster (Northern Ireland), chose to remain within the UK, but there had been sporadic uprisings between the two over many years. The latest of these and the one the Treaties had been signed to end, lasted for 30 years and had become known as The Troubles.

It is interesting to notice that this 25th anniversary of the peace treaty being signed also falls on Easter weekend when we remember an even greater peace treaty being signed, this time being signed with the blood of the Peace Maker.



Pilgrims Cross on an
Irish Mountain

A Message for All

From Cecil and Pam from Kilsby.

We could say God and man had been at war for millennia, since Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought a distance between them that God had not intended. Over the intervening years there had been times when God blessed His chosen people, and times when He had to correct them by allowing them to be overrun by neighbouring countries, and finally taken into captivity.

Then, at the time of God's choosing He sent His Son to make peace between God and man. That first Good Friday when Jesus called out from the cross, 'It is finished' God's work of peace-making was done.

The peace treaty is signed but I wonder if this Easter we are experiencing peace in our hearts. The peace that comes from recognising that Christ's blood was shed so that we can have a personal relationship with God the Creator and Sustainer of all things?

What of the other two parts of the 'Good Friday Agreement'? Its constitutional settlements, and its institutions? Northern Ireland has had self-government (unfortunately we have to say off and on) since 1999, and currently that government is not now sitting.

For the individual, we may know and obey God's Constitution and institutions, as we find them in the Bible, when we align ourselves with Him by accepting Him as Lord and Saviour and leader of our lives.

May each of us experience much of the Lord's blessing as we celebrate the first Good Friday Agreement, and the following Resurrection Morning this Easter.

Happy Easter to you all!

Let us remember in prayer

This Season, Some Ideas for Remembrance and Prayer

Week beginning 5h March please pray for:

The Romans 111 Trust Trustees meeting—to be productive and for the outcomes.

Week beginning 19th March please pray for:

Mothers' Day outreach.

Week beginning 2nd April please pray for:

Holy Week and Easter services, and for wholesome ecumenical outreach events and fellowship.

The persecuted Church, for all those facing hostilities, violence, imprisonment and the threat of death, especially at this time of year.

Week beginning 9th April please pray for:

Easter Sunday worship.

The URC's 50th Anniversary Celebrations in London.

Week beginning 23rd April please pray for:

The East Midlands new Resource Areas and Ministers who settled into those pastorates in the last year.

Churches making the decision to close, giving thanks for all the past witness and the people bought to Christ.

Week beginning 30th April please pray for:

King Charles III on his Coronation and for his family.

Week beginning 14th May please pray for:

Christian Aid Week.

Week beginning 21st May please pray for:

All our young people preparing for exams.

Creaton News

News from Margaret Anderson

Hello from Creaton everyone!

Our Mission Statement:

Worship God joyfully
Offer Christ faithfully
Promote growth hopefully
Serve others lovingly.

Sad News

It is with the greatest regret that we have to announce the death of Reg Thomas. He died peacefully on 13th February with two of his sons by his side.

He and his wife Jean became members at Creaton in 2003 when they moved from Northampton. Reg had been an active member at Broadmead Baptist Church in Northampton before they moved to Creaton.

Reg had run the Northampton branch of TORCH at Bethany Homestead until the last few months of his life. He had served on Creaton Parish Church until recently. His wife Jean died in 2022. He was a much loved member of the church who will be sorely missed.

Services

You are warmly welcome to join us for Sunday Worship. For more information, look at our website: search Creaton URC online (<https://creaton.org.uk/church-telephone>)

Pilots

Meets on Monday nights led by Marion Heard

Poppies Coffee Shop

Is open from 10.00am to 12 noon Wednesday and Friday.

Margaret.

Kilsby News

News from Val Janes

Hello from Kilsby everyone!

Our Mission statement:

The purpose of this church is to provide a warm welcoming place for all people, of any age, to worship and to learn about faith.

Services are on Sunday mornings at 11am

Welcoming new people into our congregation; you can find our list of Services and Preachers in the Diary of Services.

Community cafe

Our increasingly busy and popular community café; every Monday and Thursday at 9am until 12noon everyone is welcome. **Any volunteers to help would be most welcome!**

Scrabble

Every Wednesday at 1pm everyone is welcome.

Sewing

Every other Friday at 2pm until 4pm everyone is welcome.

Daventry Food Bank

We are also pleased to be able to offer space for the food bank.

Val.



I hear that you can get a
Good breakfast here!

Long Buckby News

News from Peggy Bond

Hello from Long Buckby everyone!

Our Flower Rota:

March 5th Peggy Bond
12th Don Bird
19th Lucy Faulkner
26th Peggy Bond

April 2nd Sue and Kath
9th Marion Boucher
16th Mary Bignell
23rd Kath Packer

May 7th The Bruce Family
12th Rita Stowe
21st Gill Best
28th Norman Chandler



Cowslips growing wild
In local pastures

Birthday Wishes to:

April: Diane Osbourne, Steven Ball and Don Bird.

May: Dianna Babb, Richard Bignell, James Faulkner, David Boucher and Mark Ellison.

The Hope Centre

Please remember the collection box for the Hope Centre in Northampton. Food, coffee, tee bags, cleaning materials and laundry detergents very welcome.

Coffee mornings - Now with Bacon Butties!

Charity Coffee Mornings will be held every first Saturday for the rest of the Year. See the Notice board and Long Buckby URC web site for further information.

Walk of Witness

Good Friday, April 7th—ending with light refreshments at our Church around midday.

Beetle Drive

Back by popular demand (Oh, no it isn't... Oh, yes it is!...)

Back by popular demand – yes really!!



Long Buckby URC

Fish and Chip Lunch and Beetle Drive

Saturday 22 April 2023 12.30 – 14.30

£8.00 to include lunch and dessert

There will be a Grand Raffle.

Please let Andrew or Richard know if you
wish to attend

andrewhowes66@gmail.com

07814076027

Diary of Church Services March 2023 to May 2023

Date	Long Buckby All services at 11am unless otherwise stated	Creaton All services at 11am unless otherwise stated
05/03/2023	Lucy Faulkner with Favourite Hymns	Rev Geoff Townsend
12/03/2023	Margaret Hooper	Jon Heard
19/03/2023	Rev. Jane Wade With Holy Communion	Rev. Geoff Townsend
26/03/2023	Cecil Gill	Rev Ann Jack
02/04/2023	John Perkins	Rev. Geoff Townsend
09/04/2023	Andrew Howes Easter Day with Holy Communion	Jon Heard
16/04/2023	Eric Nixon	Vaughan Griffiths
23/04/2023	Andrew Bodsworth	Rev. Geoff Townsend
30/04/2023	Rev. Jay Phelps. Joint Service at Kilsby with Holy Communion.	Rev. Jay Phelps. Joint Service at Kilsby with Holy Communion.
07/05/2023	Lucy Faulkner	Rev. Geoff Townsend
14/05/2023	Vaughan Griffiths	Andrew Howes
21/05/2023	Andrew Howes With Holy Communion	Lindsey Cole
28/05/2023	Jon Heard	Rev. Tim Huc

Diary of Church Services March 2023 to May 2023

Date	Crick All services at 11am unless otherwise stated	Kilsby All services at 11am unless otherwise stated
05/03/2023	Wendy Pitman	Rev. Liz Adams
12/03/2023	Ray Smith	Rev. Geoff Townsend With Holy Communion
19/03/2023	Elizabeth Taylor	Pastor Cecil Gill
26/03/2023	Rev. Jay Phelps With Holy Communion	David and Pat Biddle
02/04/2023	Keith Bishop	Rev. Tim Huc With Holy Communion
09/04/2023	Rev. Liz Adams	John Perkins
16/04/2023	Trevor Boys	Pastor Cecil Gill
23/04/2023	Jon Heard With Holy Communion	Mrs Dorn Margetts
30/04/2023	Rev. Jay Phelps. Joint Service at Kilsby with Holy Communion.	Rev. Jay Phelps. Joint Service at Kilsby with Holy Communion.
07/05/2023	David and Pat Biddle	Mrs Wendy Pittman
14/05/2023	Rev. Geoff Townsend With Holy Communion	Mrs Dorn Margetts
21/05/2023	Margaret Hooper	Pastor Cecil Gill
28/05/2023	TBA	David and Pat Biddle

Crick News

News from Jenny Goodger

Hello from Crick Everyone!

The purpose of this church is to provide a warm, welcoming place for people of all ages to worship God and to grow in faith.

Chapel Birthdays

Happy birthday wishes to Joan Saunders and Beth Stanley who have birthdays soon.

Coffee Mornings

We were delighted to welcome friends from Kilsby and Creaton to our recent event.

We have had a successful year fundraising – we have sent £250 to the DEC Ukraine appeal, £200 to the DEC Pakistan floods appeal, and £100 each to Together for Cinema (entertainment for children in hospital) BLESMA, Rugby St Cross Lymphoma Unit, Breast Cancer Now, and Crisis at Christmas, a total for the year of £950. This brings our total since coffee mornings started in 1999 to £18,739.34. Thank you to all the ‘regulars’ as always for your generous donations.

Our carol service collection of £170 was donated, as is our custom, to UNICEF.

Jenny.



I wants to go here!
Is lamb shank on the menu?

Seasonal Madness

For what we are about to receive...

A bit like the lambs that bounce (albeit briefly) in the fields, this poem leapt out at me...

I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:-
But the least motion which they
made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their
fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

(William Wordsworth, "The Longman Anthology of Poetry", published by Pearson, 2006)

My mother used to love a leg of lamb for Easter Sunday diner, it would have been quite a treat in those days, definitely a once a year thing.

Not like today when we can have it every day, how much!?!... Oh dear... maybe we can share an oven...



I mean, you wouldn't
Would you?

The Story Behind the Hymn

Shine Jesus Shine by Graham Kendrick

Also known as “Lord, the light of your love is shining”

Did you know that Graham Kendrick was a native of Blisworth, Northamptonshire, the son of a Baptist pastor?

The idea for his song came about when he had been contemplating the holiness of God and how God wanted the community of believers to live continually in His presence.

Initially Graham wrote three verses with this in mind, the first verse focuses on Christ as the light in the world, and being set free by the truth.

“Lord, the light of Your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us
Set us free by the truth You now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me”

(Graham Kendrick, Shine Jesus Shine, 1987, Verse 1)

The second verse tells of coming into the awesome presence of Christ, the brightness of Christ drowning the/my/our darkness. The third verse, perhaps how we might reflect Christ's brightness outwards.

These verses were performed in his home church successfully, but then put on the back burner.

That was until he was asked to write some new songs for a conference song book. Upon looking at his three verse song again, Graham realised that it needed a chorus. The line ‘Shine, Jesus, Shine’ came to mind.

The Story Behind the Hymn

Shine Jesus Shine by Graham Kendrick

Half an hour later it was written 'all but some polishing'
Suitably polished::

"Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth Your word, Lord, and let there be light."

(Graham Kendrick, Shine Jesus Shine, 1987, Chorus)

If you are like me, it is temptingly easy to sit back on the tried and tested comfort of our traditional hymns and dismiss the more, so-called, contemporary worship songs as 'happy clappy'... But there is more to it than that, a lot more.

Damian Thompson, editor-in-chief of the Catholic Herald, called "Shine, Jesus, Shine" "the most loathed of all happy-clappy hymns."

That statement alone, for me, is enough reason to like this worship song.

As it happens, I love it!

Go on, I know you all want to rush off and play it on YouTube...

I used to think that 'Michael row the boat ashore' and 'Lord of the dance' were modern and so might appeal to the young, how silly was I? Not exactly 'on trend'.

Well, if we don't speak the language of the young, why will they listen, how can they even hear?



Graham Kendrick performing in the 'Tea Tent' at Big Church Day Out, 2019, Wiston House, UK. Photo, Minnie Bannister, May 2019

The Story Behind the Hymn

When is a hymn not a hymn?

Let's start off by defining 'hymn'; from the Greek, hymnos; a song in praise of God – a worship song. Yes, it's a worship song, so a worship song, can be a hymn (careful wording there for those of you who know about 'set theory').

Perhaps, if we are to be intergenerational in our worship, we must be intergenerational in our worship songs.

In his article 'A Brief History of Contemporary Christian Music' for SchoolOfTheRock.com™, Paul D. Race wrote; (US. English)

"One thing that putting this brief history together has done is make me realize just how *old* I am - four decades have passed since I wrote and performed my first Christian song. I also realize that the musical "language" we tried to speak in my youth is not the language in which young people speak today. But it reminds me of how important appropriate music is to believers, and how much prayer and - if possible - other support we owe to those who bless us through Christ-centered music today."

(Source, https://schooloftherock.com/html/a_brief_history_of_contemporar.html)

Remember this? (Not a worship song)

"Give us this day
All that you showed me
The power and the glory
'Til my kingdom come.

Give me all the
Storybook told me
The faith and the glory
'Til my kingdom comes."

(Extract from Hymn, Ultravox, 1982)



Man Singing Hymn, Arvid Liljelund , 1884
Finnish National Gallery

This song by Ultravox described the demands of corrupt and worldly ambitions, of a fall from grace, where all that's good is left behind; (the power and the glory, are Gods alone). There are those who would say, it summed up the 1980's quite well really...

Revised Common Lectionary Readings

March 2023

Second Sunday of Lent

March 5

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalm 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

John 3:1-17

Third Sunday of Lent

March 12

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalm 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-42

Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 19

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalm 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 26

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalm 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

Weaving Sacred and Secular March

2nd World Book Day

8th International Women's Day

13th Commonwealth Day

19th Mothering Sunday

22d World Water Day

Revised Common Lectionary Readings

April 2023

Palm Sunday

April 2

The Liturgy of the Palms

Psalms 31:9-16

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 21:1-11

Matthew 26:14- 27:66 or

The Liturgy of the Passion

Matthew 27:11-54

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalms 8

Easter Day

April 9

Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Colossians 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43

John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

Second Sunday of Easter

April 16

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Psalm 16

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

Third Sunday Of Easter

April 23

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

1 Peter 1:17-23

Luke 24:13-35

Fourth Sunday Of Easter

April 30

Acts 2:42-47

Psalm 23

1 Peter 2:19-25

John 10:1-10

Weaving Sacred and Secular April

7th World Health Day

22nd Earth Day

Revised Common Lectionary Readings

May 2023

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 7

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

1 Peter 2:2-10

John 14:1-14

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 14

Acts 17:22-31

Psalm 66:8-20

1 Peter 3:13-22

John 14:15-21

Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 21

Acts 1:6-14

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

John 17:1-11

Pentecost

May 28

Acts 2:1-21

or Numbers 11:24-30

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

or Acts 2:1-21

John 20:19-23

or John 7:37-39

Weaving Sacred and Secular May

14th-20th Christian Aid Week

18th Ascension Day

A Late Night Reflection: And The Page Fell Open...

Coming together, drifting apart and moving on

A Prayer of Approach and Confession

...We come to worship You O King of the Ages,
but puzzle at this thing called kingship.
Aren't kings meant to be powerful?
Shouldn't they have security and attendants?
Surely they ride in state - in horse and carriage?
Yet you rode on a donkey – hardly befitting a king!
Your attendants were a rag bag of assorted fools,
no red carpet, no preparation,
just the shouts of fickle crowds with makeshift palms.
And where, O King, was your security?
Kings aren't supposed to be put on trial and executed.
What type of king are you?

As we ponder your crucified victory, we confess that we've failed to understand You.
We've acclaimed you as king without thinking about what You mean by kingship.
We've grumbled about crucifixes without thinking of the pain you endured...

(Extract from URC Worship notes for Palm Sunday 2023—Service by the Rev. Andy Braunston. Source: <https://urc.org.uk/your-faith/prayer-and-worship/worship-notes/>)



(Engraving by Gustave Dore - Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey on Palm Sunday. Unknown date.)

Poets Corner

From the Romantic to the Lyric

I Hope you enjoyed the quote from the romantic poet Wordsworth earlier. Those of you that know me, may have noticed that sometimes I include pop song lyrics in my writings, and indeed sermons.

And so it is here, that you find me moving from the Romantic to the Lyric:

“Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.”

(William Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act IV, Scene 1)

I will leave you to ponder what sort of poet
George Wilson was (apart from Scottish that
is...)

Romantic, Lyric, Other?

“Sir, I am vex'd;
Bear with my weakness; my, brain is troubled:
Be not disturb'd with my infirmity:
If you be pleased, retire into my cell
And there repose: a turn or two I'll walk,
To still my beating mind.”

(William Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act IV, Scene 1)

As Ferdinand and Miranda once said:

“We wish your peace.”



William Shakespeare portrait by Martin Droeshout

[Exuent]

Thanks, Afterthoughts and Connections

Wandering From Whence We Came, What Do We Leave Behind?

As the Humphrey Lytteltons of life play the trumpets of destiny in the jazz club of eternity, we wish you a happy and prosperous future. Above all, beware the Calibans of this world... and no, Humph had nothing to do with the Gunpowder Plot...



For Hope and Rebirth

As ever, many thanks to all Good News contributors; writers, sifters and wranglers of content, proof readers, printers and distributors; all those that collaborate across time and travels, in all sorts of ways to produce and deliver all of the wonderful resources into which we dip and find treasures to share.

Most of all, thank You, for reading this magazine.

Worth mentioning: The Tempest's run finishes at the RSC in Stratford Upon Avon on the 4th March 2023.

If you are wondering if a woman can play Prospero,
Oh yes! She most certainly can!

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