

Coulsdon Cross

News & Views from St. Andrew's Church

March 2024



St Andrew's Vision Statement

A joyful, daring, diverse and generous Christian community, setting the world alight with the love of God.

Come and join us! All are welcome

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Friday 1st 10.30 am World Day of Prayer, Old Coulsdon Congregational Church.

Saturday 2nd Croydon Episcopal Area Lay Conference, St Bede's School, Redhill.

Sunday 3rd 3 pm Esther will be installed as an honorary canon during Evensong at Southwark Cathedral (3pm) – all welcome.

Tuesday 5th PCC meeting, 7 pm on zoom

Wednesdays at 7 pm (**last session March 20th**) 'Still Standing' Lent group on zoom. Please contact Gerry for more details.

Saturday 23rd 11 am Celebration of Women's ministry at Southwark Cathedral.

Holy Week

Sunday 24th 9.45 Palm Sunday Liturgy

Tuesday 26th 7.15 pm Stations of the Cross

Wednesday 27th 11 am Stations of the Cross

Thursday 28th Maundy Thursday 7 pm Liturgy of Maundy Thursday with Agape Meal (The meal is free of charge but please let Esther know if you are coming for catering).

Friday 29th Good Friday 11am Churches Together Walk of Witness (meet at St Aidan's), 2-3 pm The Cross of Christ (a service of music and readings)

Sunday 31st Easter Day 6.30 am Churches Together Sunrise service – Farthing Downs, 9.45 Festal Eucharist followed by Egg Hunt.

REGULAR EVENTS

Every Sunday 9.45 Parish Communion – (Junior Church on the 1st Sunday of the month)

Every Monday 10 -12 noon Time 2B: Coffee chat and craft in the church hall.

Every Tuesday Tots and Toys playgroup in the church hall. 11-12 noon.

Every second Tuesday Pop in Tea at 2 pm in church hall preceded by service in church at 1.30 pm.

Every third Tuesday 3.30 – 5.30 pm Messy Church – craft activities, bible story and hot meal for children and their parents / carers.

Every fourth Tuesday 8 pm – Mothers' Union, Committee Room.

Dear Friends,

As I write, the world marks the second anniversary of the war in Ukraine – just one example of the terrible cost of ‘man’s inhumanity to man’. This oft used phrase comes from a poem of Robert Burns, a verse of which reads:

*Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame!
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame!
And man, whose heav'n-erected face
The smiles of love adorn, -
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn!*

Burns wrote these lines in 1784, but they could have been composed for any age. This month we recall the events of Our Lord’s passion and death. As we do, we are reminded of the cruel suffering imposed on so many across the globe today.

Crucifixion may have been abolished by the Emperor Constantine in the 4th century but there have been no shortage of ways of eliminating people since. The recent killing of the Russian lawyer and anti corruption protestor Alexei Navalny is one high profile case – yet there are countless men and women whose murders go unnoticed by the world’s press (though not by God).

Last year the Universal Declaration of Human Rights marked its 75th birthday. Since then human rights have become more recognised and more guaranteed for which we give thanks. Yet as we know all too well, the hope of dignity and equality for all is still to be realised.

If this day is ever to dawn it will need us to do what we can to stand up against oppression and injustice wherever we encounter it. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu put it: “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has

its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.”

That is a far from easy calling of course – but as Gerry and the Pacemakers sang back in 1963 (covering a Rodgers and Hammerstein classic from 1945), when we walk the way of Jesus, we never walk alone. The promise of Easter is that whatever we encounter along life’s pathway, we do so in the company of our risen Lord, whose love and power are greater than death itself.

Being an ‘Easter People’ then, does not mean closing our eyes to all that is wrong in the world. What it does mean is opening them wide – wide enough to see that there is more to come, and that the more is good. St Paul put it this way:

‘What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him’

(1 Corinthians 2:9)

May we all be given the grace and courage to sing a hope-filled Alleluia when Easter Day arrives – and to keep the Easter flame alive in our hearts as we seek to kindle it in others.

Your friends,

Esther and Jessie the Vicarage dog xx



MOTHERING SUNDAY

March 10th is Mothering Sunday. Everyone is welcome to join us for our 9.45 Holy Communion service during which daffodil posies will be given out. Grateful thanks to the Mothers' Union for kindly donating and making the posies as usual.

The name 'Mothering Sunday' may refer to the old custom of visiting the mother church of the parish or the cathedral of the diocese on the fourth Sunday of Lent. Exactly when this day became a festival celebrating human mums is unknown – but family gatherings and 'going a mothering' were well established by the middle of the seventeenth century. It was usual for servants and apprentices to be given a holiday on Mothering Sunday. Traditional gifts were a posy of violets or primroses gathered from the hedgerows as they went along. This custom fell out of favour until World War II when American servicemen stationed in England confused Mothering Sunday with their own 'Mother's Day' – a secular celebration which began in 1907.

Mothering Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to thank all those who have mothered us in our faith – be it our mothers, grandmothers, aunties, teachers, mentors and friends. We should not forget that God is described in these terms. In Isaiah 66:13 God says; "As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you."

The 14th Century mystic Dame Julian of Norwich wrote "when [a child] is hurt or frightened it runs to its mother for help as fast as it can; and [God] wants us to do the same, like a humble child, saying, "My kind Mother, my gracious Mother, my dearest Mother, take pity on me."

"The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the heart of a mother."
St. Thérèse of Lisieux

"Youth fades; love droops; the leaves of friendship fall; A mother's secret hope outlives them all." Oliver Wendell Holmes

Myths of Motherhood

Somebody said that a child is carried in its mother's womb for nine months. Somebody does not know that a child is carried in its mother's heart forever.

Somebody said it takes about six weeks to get back to normal after you've had a baby. Somebody doesn't know that once you're a mother, normal is history.

Somebody said you learn how to be a mother by instinct. Somebody never took a three-year-old shopping.

Somebody said being a mother is boring. Somebody never rode in a car driven by a teenager with a driver's permit.

A Prayer for Mothering Sunday

**Loving God,
Thank you for mums and children
and for all the joy of family life.
Be with those who are grieving
because they have no mother;
Be close to those who are struggling
because they have no children;
Be near to those who are sad
because they are far apart from those they love.
Let your love be present in every home,
And help your church to have eyes to see
and ears to hear the needs of all who come.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**



LONG COVID RECOVERY

Our friend Lizzie Mills works in the Communications team at King's College Hospital.

After a viral illness, it can be normal to have a range of symptoms, including fatigue, breathlessness, chest pain, or muscle aches and pains. If your symptoms longer than 12 weeks, it's known as 'Long COVID.' If you feel you might have Long COVID, or your symptoms are getting worse, then speak with your GP.

After a viral illness like COVID-19, taking extra care to look after yourself is important. You may feel like you're struggling to get back to everyday life and during recovery, it can be tempting to push on as usual. If you ignore your symptoms and continue with your daily routine, you might feel worse and slow your recovery down.

There are lots of things you can do to give your body the best opportunity to recover:

Prescribed rest

Resting after COVID-19 is important for your body to get back into balance and to help you heal. Rest can slow your heart rate and breathing rate, and help relax the muscles. It gives you the opportunity to recharge your batteries and boost your energy levels. Rest is not watching TV or reading. It means doing as little as you can, with as little stimulation as possible. It might be helpful to plan rest periods that are 'little and often.'

Managing your cough

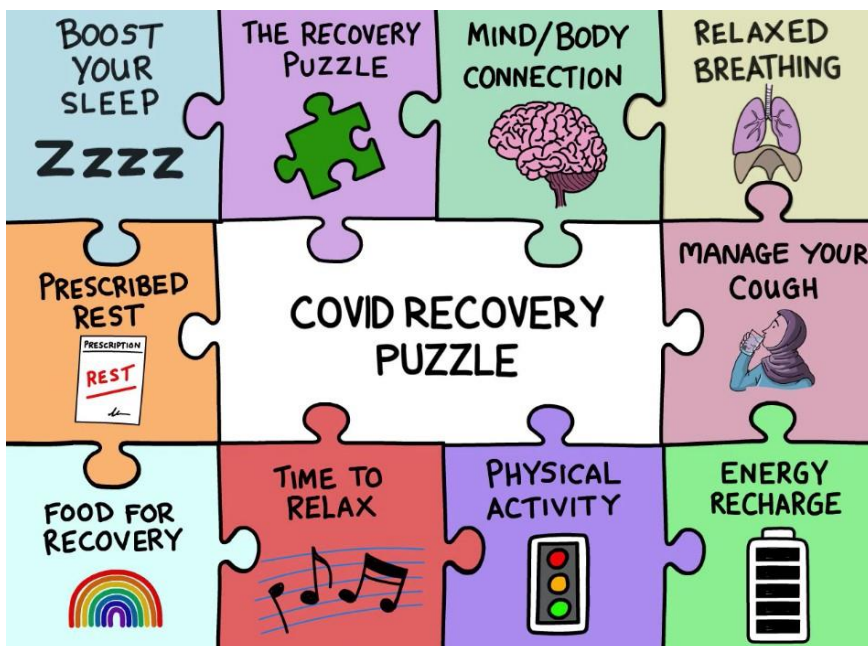
A cough after COVID-19 is common. When you feel a cough starting, take small sips of water. Gently breathe in and out through your nose. Try sucking on a sugar free sweet to increase how often you swallow. Breathing in steam through heated water can also help. And it's very important to stay hydrated throughout the day.

Food for recovery

To help your recovery, try to eat regularly, with smaller meals more often if you have lost your appetite. Soups and stews can be easier to eat if you are feeling tired. If you can, consider online shopping to help you rest. And if possible, keep your food colourful and varied to help with your recovery.

Mind and body connection

Experiencing Long COVID, and the symptoms that come with it, can be frustrating and frightening. Worrying about your health after illness is normal, but continued anxiety can make some of your symptoms worse. Try not to keep your worries to yourself. Talk to people you trust, or to a healthcare professional. Find time to do something small every day that you enjoy, like a chat or a phone call with a friend or family member. If you have been experiencing continuous anxiety, sadness, or inability to sleep, or have feelings that are making you feel low, contact your GP.



NEWS FROM ST ANDREWS' CONTACT GROUP

Monica Jefford, Contact Group Co-ordinator, writes

The weather is well known to be a great topic of conversation for 'us Brits.'

However, I would argue that the debate re where time goes runs a close second.

"Where did 2023/January go ? I can't believe it's lunchtime/Thursday already.' In case you're wondering it's 299 days to Christmas (from 1st March)!



Before any more energy is expended on the passing of time I'd better break it to you that time doesn't go anywhere. Referring to time passing is a product of human perception, a temporal dimension that we can use to understand the world around us. So what is time ? It is the ongoing sequence of events taking place - a measured or pervasive period during which an action, process or condition exists or continues, a non-spatial continuum that is measured in terms of events which succeed each other and form the past, present and future. The basic unit is seconds followed by minutes, days, weeks, months and years. Global time zones provide variation depending on location.

Definition of Time

Time is slow when you wait.

Time is fast when you are late.

Time is deadly when you are sad.

Time is short when you are happy.

Time is endless when you are in pain.

Time is long when you are bored.

Time is beautiful when you're in love.

Every time, time is determined by your feelings and your psychological conditions and not by clocks.

So have a nice time always. (Anon)

We recently celebrated St Valentine. Those who want our money will doubtless focus on the line “Time is beautiful when you’re in love” rather than Shakespeare’s experience that “The course of true love never did run smooth.” Pop In guests were challenged by quizzes to ‘Name that Saint’ and remember their heart throbs. Our canine member was not overlooked with a doggie valentine to enjoy. Whether she will keep her paws off the treat to be kept for Easter is another matter.

Whatever horologists and students of chronometry tell us it cannot be denied that the driving forces of our daily life and the way we do business now give an illusion of limited time. They involve speed, instant communication and feedback, complex components and an apparent need to remain busy to keep up. The advantages of this technology with its impact on enhanced medical and scientific knowledge mustn’t be overlooked. Many have benefitted from advances that have been revolutionary in providing life saving changes with improvements to quality of life. However multicultural demographics, climate change, natural and man-made disasters, wars, increasing economic recession, poverty of our world with its overall inequalities mean many live a life of compromise and discrimination. So many are forced to spend their time existing, staying alive, protecting their families without those aspects that could enhance their wellbeing.

Although we may not experience such extremes volunteers and guests alike know, close to home, that sometimes all is not well and how vital a Pop In tea preceded by a time of worship is for many. A time to meet friends, have fun, to share concerns and be present in the moment. The idea of ‘mindfulness’ is based on Buddhist teachings but in its simplest form enables one to stop the rush, come back to the present and put life back into proportion. As Rick Warren notes; “Worry is a waste of energy. It can’t change the past. It can’t control the future. It can only make today miserable.”

One thing you do not have to worry about is receiving a warm welcome on the second Tuesday of each month. See you then!

Monica and the Contact Group volunteers x

A PRAYER FOR PATIENCE

Submitted by Marion Charman

When my patience seems too short, help me to stretch it.

Teach me how to meet a crisis with a smile.

When I'm running out of quick and clever answers

Let the questions stop for just a little while.

When it seems as though the day has too few hours

In which to do the things I have to do.

May I always find the time for what's important –

Time for listening

Time for love

And laughter too.

SIGNS OF SPRING

Jessie Foss, the parish canine rep writes:

Spring is my favourite season.

Although I enjoy playing in the

mud and rain, the light

mornings and evenings are

much better for my daily walks

with Mum. She likes to see

flowers come into bloom - I

prefer the wildlife that begins to

emerge – though I am not allowed to chase anything, more's the pity! A

sense of new beginnings gives us optimism and hope – at least that's

what Mum says. I am always optimistic and hopeful that I will get

something tasty in my bowl three times a day.



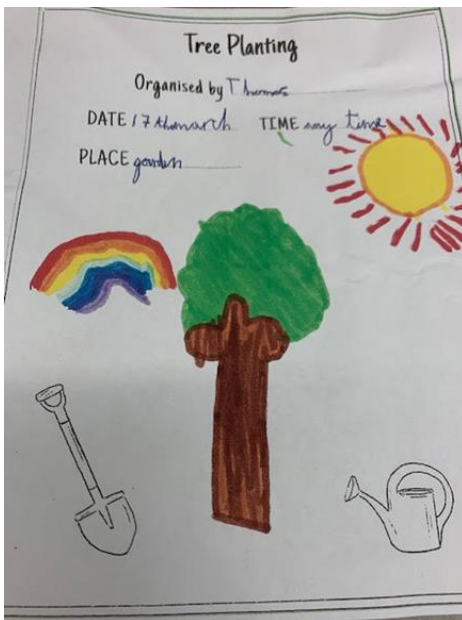
I have been wondering when spring actually begins because catkins have been out for ages on the Downs. I did some research and discovered that there are actually two start dates. According to the astronomical calendar, spring begins on the March equinox which is the moment the sun crosses the celestial equator, The term equinox is derived from the Latin 'aequus', meaning equal and 'nox' meaning night, and this is when the hours of daylight and darkness are equal. Meteorological spring

always falls on March 1st and ends on 31st May. I bet you didn't know that dogs could be so well informed!

The first hints of spring I have seen are the buds on the trees. It is very important to plant trees – as Sheila and John's grandson Thomas reminds us. For his birthday on March 17th he has asked people to plant trees. Well done Thomas!

This month we might be lucky enough to see ash, beech, oak and rowan buds bursting forth as well as first leaves emerging from alder, field maple and silver birch trees. Blossoms can also be seen on blackthorn and crab apple trees. Thanks to my Grandpa we have snowdrops, daffodils and crocuses growing in our pots at home. I have also seen the first signs of bluebells growing in the woods – though of course it will be a while until they flower. I hope you like the picture of me that was taken last year.

I love to see butterflies. According to the 'Big Butterfly Count' numbers were up last year. The most spotted was the Red Admiral - the first time the species, which is increasing in the UK as a result of climate change, has taken the top-spot. Gatekeeper was next with a 12% increase on last year. We can encourage butterflies by growing nectar rich flowers in our gardens and cutting down on weeding – Mum will be pleased about that one! As the weather warms, the number of creepy crawlies also increases including beetles, spiders and ladybirds. That is not so great news for some of us!



One thing I really love is hearing the birdsong every morning – I think this is because migratory birds come back. Those who stay like blackbirds and blue tits begin to build their nests in late February.

We don't need to travel far or spend lots of money to enjoy the sights and sounds of springtime. These wonderful events happen all around us. Following on from my friend Monica's article (thanks for the treats Monica – I'm afraid they have all been eaten now!) let's make time to enjoy observing the sights and sounds of this wondrous season, the beauty really is everywhere!

Here is one of my favourite spring poems, 'I Watched a Blackbird' by Thomas Hardy. I hope you like it.

*I watched a blackbird on a budding sycamore
One Easter Day, when sap was stirring twigs to the core;
I saw his tongue, and crocus-coloured bill
Parting and closing as he turned his trill;
Then he flew down, seized on a stem of hay,
And upped to where his building scheme was under way,
As if so sure a nest was never shaped on spray*

You might be interested in taking part in Nature's Calendar where you can record your own springtime observations. All information can be found on the Woodland Trust website –
<https://naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

COMMUNITY CINEMA AT ST SWITHUNS: SPRING PROGRAMME

St Swithun's Church Community Cinema meet at the Carter Room, St Swithun's Church, Grovelands Road, Purley.

March 23rd – The Reader with Kate Winslet and Ralph Fiennes. *Please note this film will start at 2 pm prompt*

April 27th - Brief Encounter - with Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard at 2.15 pm. Enquiries and bookings to Paul Sandford at stswithunspurley@gmail.com

SPRING QUIZ

Why not have a go at our springtime quiz – the first set of correct answers sent to Esther at estherfoss79@gmail.com will win a tasty Easter treat. Good luck!



1. What are spring onions known as in the USA?
2. Day and night are exactly the same length on the first day of spring - True or false?
3. Which chocolate maker produced the UK's first Easter egg?
4. Who is the Greek goddess of spring and nature?
5. Which Hindu holiday, known as the 'festival of colours, happens in Spring?
6. When was the first Cadbury Creme Egg sold?
7. Easter Island belongs to what country?
8. Judy Garland and Fred Astaire starred in which 1948 springtime film?
9. How many marzipan balls are traditionally found on a simnel cake?
10. What do the marzipan balls on simnel cake represent?
11. Which saint is commemorated on March 17th?
12. Who is Easter named after?
13. What is the common name of the spring flowering plant narcissus?
14. Which bird does William Shakespeare associate with Spring in his play Love's Labour's Lost and also mentions its habit of laying its eggs in other birds' nests in King Lear?
15. "Is the spring coming?" he said. "What is it like?"... "It is the sun shining on the rain and the rain falling on the sunshine..." These are lines from which Frances Hodgson Burnett novel?

JESSIE'S JOKES

What do you call a rabbit with fleas? Bugs Bunny ☺

How do you make Easter easier? Uncross the 't' and dot it instead! ☺

Did you know that Jesus was a DJ? He turned tables! ☺

Arnold Schwarzenegger joined an Easter egg hunt but didn't find any eggs. The organiser of the hunt asked; "Arnie, does this mean you hate Easter now?"

Schwarzenegger shook his head and responded: "I still love Easter baby." ☺

I saw a little boy at the bus stop eating a giant chocolate Easter bunny. I said, "Hey kid, eating that much chocolate at one time is bad for you."

He looked me in the eye and said, "Well, my grandpa lived to 103."

"Oh, really? Did he eat a lot of chocolate?"

"No, he minded his own damn business!" ☺

Letters to the Bishop from a class of school children...

Dear Bishop, I know God loves everybody, but he never met my sister.

Yours sincerely, Kyle aged 8.

Dear Bishop, my father should be a minister. Every day he gives us a sermon about something. Robert aged 8

Dear Bishop, my mother is very religious. She goes to play bingo at church every week even if she has a cold. Yours truly, Annie, aged 9.

Dear Bishop, I think a lot more people would come to your church if you moved it to Disneyland. Laura aged 7.

Dear Bishop, I liked your sermon on Sunday. Especially when it was finished. Billy aged 9.

USEFUL CONTACTS AT ST ANDREWS

Woodmansterne Road CR5 2DD Website: standrews.coulsdon.net

Vicar: Rev'd Esther Foss – 020 3620 1885
(Day off – Friday)
Email: estherfoss79@gmail.com

Reader: Gerry Daley – 07717 233858
Email: gerrydaley@btinternet.com

Churchwardens: Sheila Linney 07815 091206
Toni Best 07767 308375

SPA & Messy Church Co-ordinator Jenny Atkinson

Treasurer: John Linney
E-mail: jlinney1@aol.com

Baptisms/Weddings: standrewsoffice@yahoo.com

Contact Group Co-ordinator: Monica Jefford

Hall Lettings: HiringthehallatStAndrews@gmail.com

Junior Church: Beth Ten Cate

Parish Canine Rep: Jessie Foss
(Days off Monday – Sunday. Don't contact unless you have treats. Thank you.)

PARISH MAGAZINE:

Editor: Rev'd Esther Foss (details as above)

Parish Administrator: Danielle Stobart, Parish Office 020 86762966
(open Monday and Wednesday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.) E-mail:
standrewsoffice@yahoo.com

USUAL SERVICES

Sunday 9:45 am Parish Eucharist (1st Sunday Junior Church, 3rd Sunday Renew All Age Eucharist)
Wednesday 1st 10.00 am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion, 3rd Holy Communion with prayers for healing.