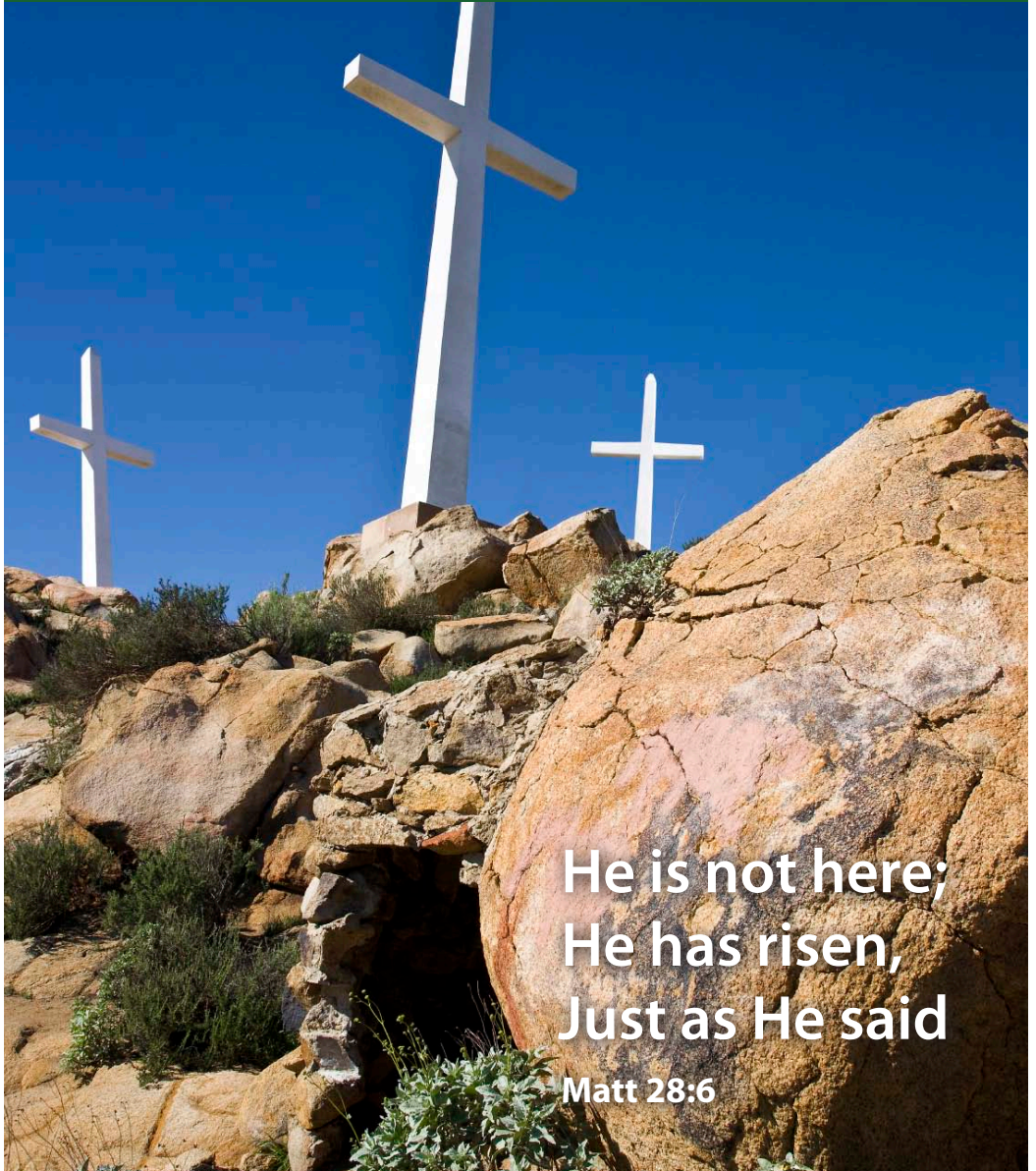


GoodNEWS **MAGAZINE**

FREE MONTHLY

From Lindfield United Reformed Church

April 2014



He is not here;
He has risen,
Just as He said

Matt 28:6

Bible verse of the month

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

John 14: 1-2 KJV

**This month verse chosen
by Jesse Green
See Page 25**



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**If you have a verse or article
you would like to share in
GoodNEWS email:**

goodnews@lindfielddurc.org.uk



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Editorial

I am sure we all are delighted to have enjoyed, at last, some really lovely sunshine. The Crocuses are simply so beautiful and a very special part of the village of Lindfield.

Easter is a time when we all can look at ourselves and see how we possibly can change and try to live as Jesus would like us to. Easter and all it stands for is written in the magazine so, hopefully, it gives us some very good guidance in what steps Jesus wants us to take.

There is a big variety this month showing how Jesus has played a big part in so many lives. Martin has written about an outing, which really turned out to have more depth, rather than just having the enjoyment of music.

Josh writes about our Young People and what they are doing. Read how he is making such strides in providing teaching and help for the young people in their knowledge of Jesus. It reminds me of the hymn 'Tell me the stories of Jesus we love to hear'. The things we learnt at school really can help form such a good basis and help for our lives in later life. It is wonderful that our own young people are taking such an active part in getting the message through. Do read the articles written explaining the progress that is being made.

Easter is a time when families get together to celebrate all the good things in life. It is good to remember how our lives are enriched by Jesus' suffering on the cross to save us all.

With all good wishes and God Bless,

Anne

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Sunday April 13th

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Dear friends

On 21st December 2012 the world ended according to interpreters of the Mayan calendar. Except that it didn't. On Saturday 22nd February 2014 the world ended according to those who study Norse literature. Except that it didn't.

Jesus said, as recorded in the Gospel according to Matthew in Chapter 24 verse 36 and similarly in the other Gospels, "However, no one knows the day or hour when these things (the signs of Jesus' return) will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows".

So, should we be concerned? Of course we should, but not in the way of trying to predict the return of Jesus. How could we do that when only the Father knows? A lot of people have expended time and effort trying to calculate that date. To my mind that is an unnecessary and futile exercise.

Jesus went on to say that we must keep watch as we don't know on what day our Lord is coming. "You must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected".

What does that mean for us? Are we prepared? When Jesus comes again will he find us as the "Bride of Christ"?

One of the features of Lindfield URC that I treasure is the obvious care that each member has for another. As Jesus said, "A New Commandment I give to you. Love one another."

Jesus' return will be followed by Day of Judgment. One of the descriptions Jesus gives of that day is of him saying to those entering Heaven: "For I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was a stranger and you invited me into your home, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you cared for me, I was in prison and you visited me. A new commandment I give to you. Love one another."

Jesus is coming back. I have absolutely no doubt about that. The hour and the day I have no idea of whatsoever and I am not supposed to know. I don't need to know. All I do know is that I wish to be ready and I wish us, as a church, to be ready. The Living Faith programme that we are following at present will help us to be ready. We need to be a Spirit filled Church fulfilling Christ's desire for us.

I believe that we are getting there. We are not there yet, but with the help of our Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit we will be ready. I, for one, am looking forward to it!

With love

John Merrett
John Merrett - Elder

Family News

Thank You

Gill Couchy and family would like to thank everyone for their cards, messages of condolences and for all the prayers, which were such a comfort and help. In particular we would like to thank everyone who took part in the service of thanksgiving. It was really appreciated. We also thank the friends who gave special help which ensured that everyone could gather together afterwards to have such wonderful refreshments and enabled us to share so many happy memories.

With love and grateful thanks to all our friends who provided such practical help and support.

Gill, Andrew and Stephenie

Boys Brigade

Our annual Awards Evening will be held on Monday 19th May, starting at 6.30 p.m. All are welcome to join us, and see the Boys presented with the badges they have earned during the year.

Our Chief Guest will be Adam Pymble, curate of All Saints.

Geoffrey Cocksedge

Pastoral Vacancy

Our Pastorate Profile is now 'Out there' for any prospective minister to view. Please continue to pray that the right person will see it and respond.

David Walters



Happy Birthday!

The entire Lindfield United Reformed Church family would like to congratulate Irene Curtis who will celebrate her 100th Birthday on April 28th.

Wednesday & Friday Lunch Fellowship

We provide a two course meal, once a month from September to May inclusive for people of pensionable age who live in and around Lindfield.

We invite a different person each month to give a short spiritual talk at the end of the meal. If you would like more information about these monthly lunches, please contact Sue Waller on 455047 or Anne Parker on 473519

The Fellowship

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 23rd April at 2.30pm. This will be our Charity Tea with a speaker, Jane Todd, from 'The Children's Hospice, Chestnut Tree House'. Do come along and learn about the wonderful work being done there. Your support will be really appreciated.

There will be the usual Bring and Buy Stall, with a cup of tea and cake after the talk. All who come may be sure of a very warm welcome.

Pat Phillips



a passion for life

A Passion for Taste: Butcher and Beer

King Edward Hall, 7-10pm, 31 March 2014

Watch local butcher Steve Bradshaw preparing your favourite lamb joints, sample some local ales and take home a bag of meat.

Rico Tice author of the Christianity Explored Course will share his passion for tasting real life.

Tickets £5 available from participating churches or email ask@cchh.org.uk

A Passion for Life: Lives Changed by the Passion of Christ

Dolphin Centre, 8-10pm, 5 April 2014

Former BBC & Sky Sports reporter Adrian Holloway is an engaging communicator about the Christian faith and he will talk about how Jesus changes lives.

Singer songwriter Steph Macleod was living rough on the streets of Edinburgh, begging to feed his addictions to drink and drugs. That all changed in 2006 and Steph sings and speaks about how his life was transformed by hearing about Jesus.

Free Tickets available from participating churches or from ask@cchh.org.uk



ROC on Saturday

Making connections!

You are warmly invited to come to our fortnightly event on Saturday afternoons for the over 55s which takes place in the Lindfield United Reformed Church Lounge

3.00 - 4.30pm

April 12 & 26

May 10 & 24

June 14 & 28

July 12 & 26

August 9 & 23

September 13 & 27

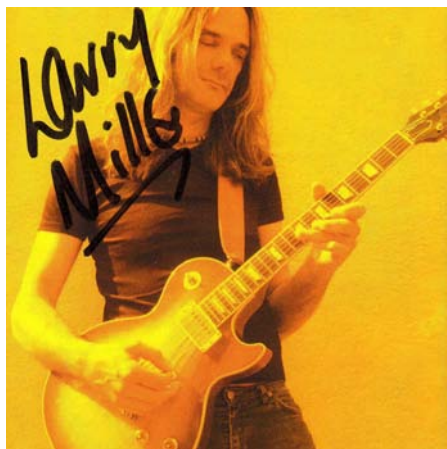
With tea or coffee and cakes, various activities and the chance to chat with friends old and new!

All welcome - no charge!

Contact 01444 482428 for further details

Larry Miller

Took the Bullet



On a blustery but dry Friday evening in February I headed down to the Shoreham Ropetackle Arts Centre for a boys' night out with my sons, Jonathan and Alex with brother-in-law Tim. We went to see Larry Miller and his band in action, a guitarist described as a "Sensational Blues Rock Guitarist" (Guitar World USA) and "A Blues Rock Powerhouse" by the Guardian. Tim and I had been to see him play at the Martlets Hall in Burgess Hill in 2011 - having seen Blues guitarists like BB King, Robert Cray and Gary Moore we know a good Blues artist when we hear one and Larry was excellent! We were enthused not just with his wonderful guitar playing but with his great energy on stage, his fantastic warm personality and genuine appreciation of the audience. He appeared at the end of the show to chat and sign CDs. Three years later we were

equally enthralled with the Shoreham show where, if anything, he was even more engaged with the audience - we didn't just get fantastic blues rock but stand-up comedy too!

Reading the insert to his "Unfinished business" CD, bought at the end of the Burgess Hill show, I could see that Larry had a Christian faith as he thanks "...my Rock and Friend Jesus Christ". So it was interesting at Shoreham to hear him talk about how few people went to church these days - we were among the half dozen who stuck our hands up when he had a straw poll of those who attended the church! Soon after he played a song called, "Took the Bullet", which I had not heard before. I was intrigued by the lyrics which included reference to Calvary, "...where he paid my debt, paid it all..... cause he took the bullet for me, took the bullet for me, took the bullet for me".

At the end of the show I went to see if I could buy a CD with that track and found it on the album called "Fearless". After buying the CD I looked up and Larry was standing there and asked "...why did you chose that one?". When I mentioned the song and its Christian content he joked that I must have been one of the few who stuck my hand up! We had a nice chat about Church and Alex's involvement in the worship group.

Back home I wanted to find out a bit more about Larry and came across an interview he gave to Tony Cummings of Cross Rhythms, a Christian media organisation. You can read the interview which includes the full lyrics to "Took the Bullet" at the link below and listen to their radio station online. The interview recalls how Larry came to know Jesus and one passage reads, "In 1986 Larry found himself praying to God, 'Do you still want me to do music?' Larry recounted what happened next. "The very next day this guy comes around and says they're doing a charity single up in London; will I sing and play guitar on it? I thought, 'That's a good, quick answer to prayer.'" Two of the musicians Larry worked with on the single became Christians."

I wanted to know a bit more about how Larry came to write "Took the Bullet" and so sent him an e-mail asking if he might provide a few words on it for our Church magazine. How often do we send off requests to busy people and really not expect to hear back? So I was delighted to receive a swift reply which I am reproducing in full, as it is such a personal and powerful message, written especially for our Church and highly appropriate for our Easter issue. Many thanks Larry!! Read more about Larry and see some videos of his guitar work on his website. When he is next back in Sussex go and see him – you'll have a memorable evening!!

Martin Hall

Larry's Letter Hi Martin,

Good to hear from you and thank you for reviewing Took the Bullet in your church mag (the song is now actually 10 years old and only just brought it back into the set... hopefully we're playing it better now).

You asked me to comment on the song so here goes...

As a songwriter and conscious that God says sing me a new song, I take that as not only meaning new lyrics but also musically, for as a Blues Rocker the standard fare of Worship songs leave me thinking only the music of the Carpenters or such like is pleasing God these days and maybe just maybe, he too is feeling that we could do with a tad more, dare I say it... Manliness in Worship.

For example, my all time favourite hymn : 'And Can It Be` has now been hijacked and all the strength and might of the original music has been replaced by yet another dirge.

It's like someone re writing the Beatles songs...leave them alone!

Getting back to "Took the Bullet" the idea came from an American film, not quite sure which one, but in it, the bodyguard

to the President of the USA was asked if he would "take a bullet for the President?"; which got me thinking, that's exactly what Jesus Christ did for you and me. He went to the cross and willingly died in my place, he could have said "No", he could have called on the legions of angels to come to his rescue but he said "No".

Years earlier Abraham went to sacrifice his only son Isaac but instead at the last minute a ram was sacrificed in his place. But for Jesus Christ there was no substitute... and the just died for the unjust. He did indeed Took The Bullet for me.

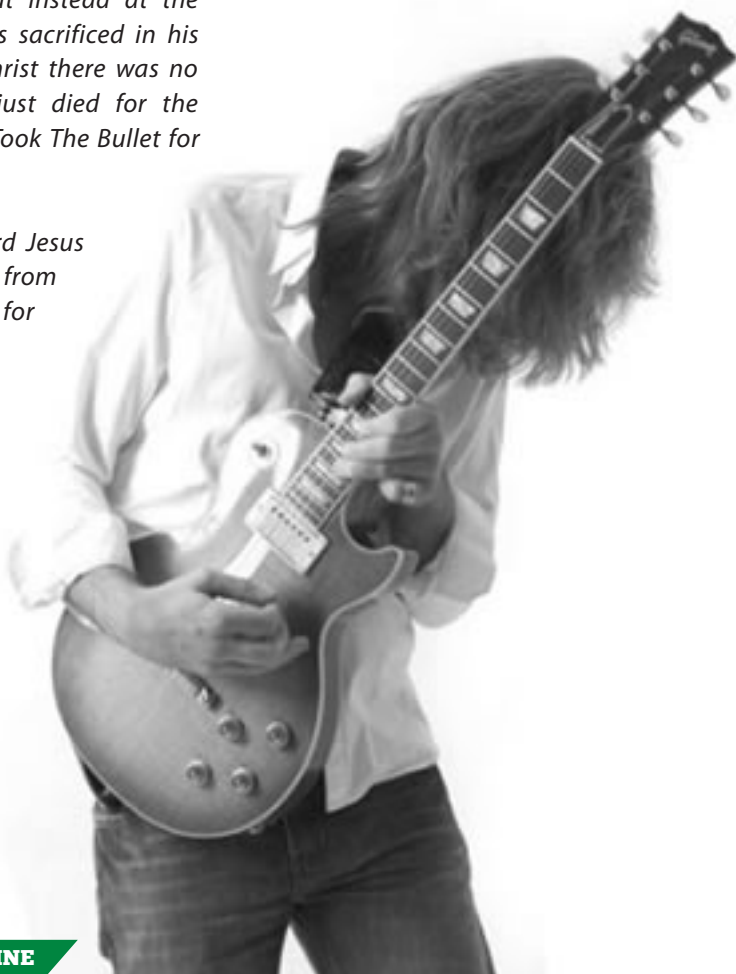
Praise God for Our Lord Jesus Christ who then rose from the dead and is Alive for evermore!

*May He bless you
and your church
Martin*

In His love

Larry

www.larrymiller.co.uk



March/April Mission



Open Doors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

For March and April we are promoting the work of Open Doors, who serve persecuted Christians worldwide. It is necessary more than ever to pray for those who suffer because they love God. May God strengthen their faith and make them victorious.

Here is some news of Christian suffering around the world

Kenya

Lawrence Kazungu Kadenge, 59, assistant pastor at the Glory of God Ministries Church in Mombasa was killed on Feb. 2 while guarding his church at night.

"It is very hard for me because we worked very closely together,"

said senior pastor Andrew Msumbi Kioko.

"His family has been hit very hard. All of us, the family and congregants, need prayers as we grieve his loss – we need God's comfort. Please pray for us."

Algeria

A Christian family in Algeria has been refused permission to bury their son in the local public cemetery because he was not a Muslim.

Freedom of religion and belief is an issue "whose time has come", the vice chairwoman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom said.

During the presentation of two reports on religious freedom at the European Parliament in Brussels on Feb. 12, commission Vice Chairwoman Katrina Lantos Swett said the prominence of the issue was highlighted by President Barack Obama's decision to choose it as the focus of his speech at the recent annual Prayer Breakfast in Washington.

In its first annual report the European Parliament Working Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief noted an increase in violations of religious freedom around the globe and recommended EU action within 15 countries labelled "serious violators". Peter van Dalen, a member of the European Parliament, said:

"Today is a sad day, as right now many millions of people are bullied, discriminated, persecuted and even killed for their faith. I hope that our work may contribute towards improving this situation."

Vera Amos

Bible Plants

We don't usually think about the land and the plants of the Bible when we look at Jesus' life, his teaching, his miracles and his first days on earth. Yet the hills, gardens and deserts of the Bible, as well as the flowers and fruits of the land illustrate God's Word, and are intertwined with Jesus' life and teaching.

Jesus referred to the "lilies of the field" to tell of God's generous bounty. Warning of false prophets he said, "Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles?"

When the Jews heard that Jesus was to enter Jerusalem they took palm branches - symbols of victory and triumph - when they greeted Him in the city.

During the Passover Supper, at which bread was eaten with bitter herbs, Jesus broke bread and shared wine, His body and blood, with His apostles. He said, "I am the vine, you are the branches". He then went on to pray in a garden on the Mount of Olives. Later when Jesus hung on the cross the soldiers gave Him a sponge soaked in wine and hyssop.

Lilies of the field, figs, thistles, bitter herbs, grapes and hyssop as well as dozens more plants are mentioned in the Bible and they symbolise God's mercy and generosity to us. They illustrate Jesus' message. Plants were widely used then, as now, for physical healing and spiritual well-being.

Many of the plants mentioned in the Bible are native to Egypt and Palestine, as you would expect. Some, however, were imported from Arabia, Ceylon and India via established trade routes. These were normally incense and spice producing plants. The Old and New Testaments mention more than 125 different species. As climatic conditions have changed little in the area for centuries, many of the native plants we read about still exist today.



The writers of the Scriptures were, of course, not botanists and often spoke in general terms using "lily of the valley" for hyacinth and iris and "lilies of the field" for anemone and crocus. Some plant names were used for more than one species, such as "erez" for the true cedar, the pine, the tamarisk and probably the juniper, while other plants were given several names.

Today, in our own gardens it would be quite interesting to have an area where we could grow a few of these plants mentioned in the Bible to remind us of God's goodness and bounty to us all!

Stuart Marsh



Sunday Services

The **9.30am** service is an opportunity for all age groups to join in a relaxed informal time. Most weeks, children leave after 20 minutes for their own activities (including crèche). Lighthouse (Junior church) is for children and young people up to age 14. Holy Communion (1st Sunday)

Coffee is served between the morning services.

The **11:15am** service is a more traditional service than at 9:30. Holy Communion (4th Sunday)

At **6:30pm** Held in the lounge this is sometimes a celebration, sometimes a quieter ministry time and sometimes an open communion service or something quite different!

Holy Communion (2nd Sunday)

Personal prayer is available after every service. We can also offer personal prayer ministry at home or in hospital.

We do not take up an offering during the services, those wishing to give are invited to place a gift in one of the bowls at the doors before or after the service.

Recordings of services can be borrowed free from the church.

Prayer Meetings

Mon	9.30am	An Hour of Prayer
Wed	9.45am	Short Service of Intercession
Thur	8.00pm	Church Prayer Evening (4th Thursday)
Sat	8.45am	Three Churches Prayer Meeting.

Venue rotates between the three churches

Prayer requests and brief statements of praise for answered prayer can be put in the blue book on the concourse table.

Regular Activities

Mon	10.00am	Art Group
	6.00pm	Boy's Brigade - Anchor Boys (5-7 years)
	6.30pm	Boys' Brigade - Junior Section (8-11 years)
	7.30pm	Boys' Brigade - Company Section (11+ years)
Tue	10.00am	Stepping Stones (Parents and toddlers - term time)
	7.45pm	In Touch (4th Tues) for women of all ages
Wed	2.30pm	The Fellowship (4th Wed) for men and women of all ages
Thur	10.00am	Pop-In Coffee and a chat
	8.00pm	Church Meeting (2nd Thur)
Fri	4:30pm	P.U.L.S.E Junior (1st and 3rd week, term time)
	7.30pm	P.U.L.S.E (Years 6-9) games, craft, tuck and a bible message (term time)
Sun	7.30pm	P.U.L.S.E +

The church is open most mornings from 10.00am to 12.30pm

April Church diary

3rd Thursday		House Groups	19th Saturday	8:45am	3 Churches Prayer Meeting, URC
5th Saturday	8:45am	3 Churches Prayer Meeting, URC	20th Easter Sunday	10:30am	Family Worship David Walters
6th Sunday				6:30pm	Joint Service Evangelical Free Church
	9:30am	Communion	21st Monday	Easter Bank Holiday	
	11:15am	Morning worship David Jones			
9th Wednesday	6:30pm	Evening Worship Rev Mervyn Weeks			
	12:30pm	Lunch Fellowship	23rd Wednesday	2:30pm	Afternoon Fellowship
				7:45pm	Elders Meeting
11th Friday	12:30pm	Lunch Fellowship	24th Thursday	8:00pm	Engine Room Prayer Meeting Lounge
12th Saturday	8:45am	3 Churches Prayer Meeting, URC	26th Saturday	8:45am	3 Churches Prayer Meeting, URC
13th Sunday		Palm Sunday	27th Sunday	9:30am	Family Worship
	9:30am	Family Worship		11:15am	Communion Alex Jeffs
	11:15am	Morning worship Dan McQuillin		6:30pm	Evening Worship John Goodway
	6:30pm	Communion David Walters			
17th Thursday	7:30pm	Maundy Thursday Communion Rev Michael Davies	29th Tuesday	7:45pm	In Touch Group (Note date change)
18th Friday	10:00am	Good Friday Joint Service at All Saints			

Further details and a full updated Church Calendar is available on our website:
www.lindfieldurc.org.uk



Hello, in this month's Good News I will tell you all about the work of the Southern Synod Youth Executive as they recruit a new team. I will also share with you some of the work going on in our local schools at the moment.

Josh

Synod Youth Executive

On the weekend of the 1st – 2nd March 2014 the brand new Synod Youth Executive met for the first time ever in Dover at the Rippledown Centre. This is an outdoor education centre which is usually used for school trips and youth group weekends away. We currently have two young people who are a part of this group; they are Alex Jeffs and Johanna Harfield.

The group was set up in 2010 and I have been a part of the leadership of this since the beginning. It was set up with the aim of enabling young people's voices to be heard in the wider church and in particular within the Synod. They are encouraged to bring issues that are relevant to them as young people in today's culture, to the forefront of people's thinking. This is something they have achieved again and again over the past four years. A few years ago, they discussed how ministers within the URC were trained in relation to working with young people. They were able to discover that there was very little training in this area within the training



establishments and because of this; they endeavoured to take this as a motion to Youth Assembly.

Through this they were tasked with putting together a pack to send out to every URC minister in the country which included ideas for engaging with young people and in particular, a video in which young people are encouraged to speak honestly about their experiences of Church and what they enjoy and which aspects they find slightly less interesting. This video includes a few of our young people and is due to be premiered in late March and due for release in April.

This will hopefully really make a difference to the way ministers think about interacting with young people and will make their job easier in relation to this aspect.

Currently the young people are very concerned about how churches respond to those suffering with mental health issues; they are exploring ways in which churches can work alongside people suffering in this way and be able to help people work through these issues in a loving, Christ-like way.

It is an opportunity not only for talking about issues the young people are concerned about, but also a time to plan events for other young people within the synod. In our denomination, young people can sometimes feel isolated and it is such an encouragement for them to see others in their age range and position worshipping God together.

The weekends are always full of fun, friendship and worship. Those involved seem to come away from their gatherings full of enthusiasm and fired up to do the work which God has placed on their hearts.

I encourage you to pray for them especially as the group has a lot of new members who are learning to work and worship together as a team.

Schools work

The work in our local schools is a hugely important aspect of my role here in Lindfield. I am currently involved in work happening at five different schools; Lindfield Primary, Blackthorns, Great Walstead, Oathall Community College and Warden Park School.



The majority of my time is spent with both Lindfield Primary School and Oathall Community College and I wanted to give you a flavour of some of the things happening within these schools.

I am currently involved in the schools' assembly team which lead assemblies every week at both Lindfield Primary and Blackthorns Primary.

We are given a topic each week to talk about and I have had topics which have varied from creation, to Noah's ark, to Balaam and his talking Donkey!

The assemblies involve five to ten minutes of an interactive talk based on the bible lesson followed by an action song and finally a prayer. Unfortunately, Blackthorns have changed their timings slightly and I have been unable to be as involved there over the past few weeks which is a shame, but hopefully this may change in the future.

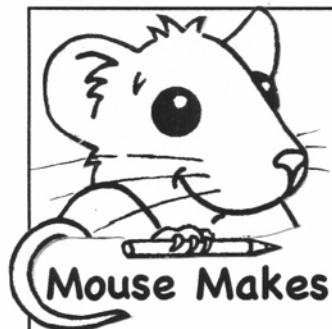
The children love hearing the stories and singing the songs and because of this connection we have seen children joining our Boys Brigade and Pulse Junior which has been excellent, and they have found seeing a familiar face a nice thing too! You don't need to be fantastically musical or creative to be a part of this team and the children enjoy hearing the bible stories so much.

If you think this is something you might like to get involved in I really recommend it so highly, come and have a chat with me!

At Oathall I am a part of the Christian Union leadership along with others from All Saints and Christ Church Haywards Heath. We go in every week and provide a safe space for Christians in the school to meet together and discuss issues that face young Christians today. We have run special outreach events before and regularly provide Bible study for those who come along as well as the obligatory snacks! We have been given a fantastic opportunity in the next few weeks to lead an assembly at the school to both promote CU but also to share the gospel message with those who may have never heard it before! Please pray for this assembly! Our connections with Oathall have been great and during the Gift FM we were able to work with the school to get students gaining work experience with us learning about the true meaning of Christmas!

The schools work is a great thing to be involved in, and although it takes up a fair amount of time, the outreach potential is huge. It is amazing to think something we say may plant the seed in a young persons head, so they want to learn more about our Saviour and King! Please pray for all those involved and if you think it is something God is laying on your heart to get involved in, please do not hesitate to come and chat to me about it.

Josh



Mouse Makes

Glue onto card, colour, cut out the cross and hang up.

**HE IS
RISEN**

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women went to Jesus' tomb. They found the stone rolled away but when they went in they did not find Jesus' body...



Jesus is risen

The angel said;
"Jesus...is not here, for he has risen, just as he said."
Matthew 28:6

Jesus is here

Jesus said;
"Where two or three come together in my name I am there with them."
Matthew 18:20

Jesus will come again

Jesus said;
"I will come back and take you to myself so that you will be where I am."
John 14:3

...Suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightening stood beside them and said,

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!"



READ the Resurrection story in
Luke 24 and
John 20 and **21**.

How many people saw the risen Jesus?

**JESUS
IS ALIVE**

Lighthouse Party

The Italian Job



On the morning of Saturday 4th January nine children and four adults descended on Pizza Express in Haywards Heath for the Lighthouse Christmas party for the children from the Glowworms, Stars and Lasers groups. We met at 10.15am and had the restaurant to ourselves for a 'Make your own Pizza party'.

The staff were very friendly and welcoming and once we had all washed our hands they got each child ready with an apron and their special pizza chefs hat, these were all numbered so that they could identify which pizza belonged to which child. Then the chef emerged from the kitchen and organised the children around a long table each with their own bit of dough and proceeded

to show them how to stretch and move the dough so that it became a (more or less) recognisable pizza shape. Once they had their dough prepared, he showed them how to fit it into the baking tray and spread it out to fill any gaps.

Then it was time to add the tomato sauce and he gave them a blob each and showed them how to professionally tap around the outside of the tray so that the sauce spread over the whole pizza. After that it was time to choose their toppings and we were provided with a variety of options from ham and chicken to olives and pepperoni as well as the necessary mozzarella cheese. Each of the children loaded up their pizza and then they were passed to the chef in numerical order ready for the oven.

All of the dough, flour and tomato sauce etc necessitated another hand wash and then we sat down with some colouring and puzzle sheets to wait for the cooking process. While the food was being prepared we also played a game of 'put the moustache on the pizza chef'.

At around 11.30am the starters were ready and the children enjoyed doughballs with salad. After that was the moment of truth, as their very own pizza creations emerged from the oven, looking truly spectacular and were put before them to be enjoyed. They rounded off their lunch with ice-cream or chocolate brownie for pudding.

The party finished at 12.15 and each child left with a balloon, any remnants of their pizza in a box to take home and share. It was good that they had acquired a new skill!

It was a really fun event and all the children and adults enjoyed themselves immensely. The staff were thoroughly impressed with the children's behaviour as they were all extremely attentive and responsible. We had a great Christmas party and would definitely recommend the pizza making experience.

Dawn Walters



Easter

So an Easter article; but what to say? Hasn't it all been said?

We all know what happened two thousand years ago, don't we? How God humbled himself and came to earth to restore the relationship with us, His creation, the sheep that had gone astray. How he died an agonising death to take the punishment for our sin. How God incarnate (God with us), Jesus, was separated from his Father as part of that punishment. But then, gloriously, how he was raised from the dead, triumphant over death and sin and now reigns with his father in heaven.

All this so that we might be able to have a relationship with God, the Holy one, Creator and Sustainer of the world.

Well, I thought, wouldn't it be good to look at how Jesus viewed that first Easter. After all he is the central character.

At this point I was reminded that my wife had already done something along these lines both in an evening service and in a recent home group study. That makes it easier in some ways as there is already some material to garner information from and I always benefit from hearing a repeated message.



So, with thanks to Val for the hard work in researching this topic and apologies if you have already heard this and taken it to heart...

In Mark's gospel Jesus teaches his disciples, at three different times, about what is going to happen to him when he gets to Jerusalem; Mark 8:31-38, 9:30-32, and 10:32-34. He starts this teaching just after Peter has recognised that Jesus is the longed for Messiah (8:29).

The content of Jesus teaching is that he, the Son of Man, must suffer, be rejected, killed, but then, on the third day, rise again. Having just confessed that Jesus is the Messiah, Peter cannot handle this view of the future! This is not how the coming of the Messiah is supposed to be! It should be the restoring of Israel to its former glory, a time when they can get rid of the hated occupying power of Rome and be free.

Peter has a limited view of who the Messiah is and has not remembered the suffering servant of Isaiah 53. It might seem that Jesus is a little harsh on Peter; "Get behind me Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but the things of man." But this shows how Jesus is being tempted to abort his mission and take the easy way out.

Andrew Page in his book "The Mark Experiment" says this:

“Only Mark's Gospel includes the detail that Jesus looked at them all (the disciples) before rebuking Peter.... Jesus, by looking at his disciples, is reminding himself that his friends can never be forgiven if he refuses to die. His love for them is what gives him the strength to go to the cross.”

Jesus does not allow Peter's misunderstanding to side track or stop him from going up to Jerusalem. In fact, he has to lead the disciples, as they are hanging back, afraid of what lies ahead Mark 10:32. Again we see Jesus determination to complete his mission and also to explain to his disciples that he must die for them to be forgiven and restored.

Going back to the first of the three passages Jesus moves on to talk about what his disciples are to be like if they want to follow him (Mark 8:34-38). This then is the challenge to us this Easter; will we set our mind "on the things of God", will we "deny ourselves", will we "lose our lives" for Jesus and the gospel (this Good News), or will we be ashamed of Jesus?

Happy Easter!

Adrian Cookney

Pleasant or Bitter?

Read Ruth chapters 1 and 2.

Here we find a story of the ups and downs of normal human life. Within five verses, a (presumably) happy family decide to move to an adjacent country to avoid famine; the father dies; his sons marry; and in their turn also die. Naomi is left a widow, with two young daughters-in-law. Whether the decision to leave Bethlehem, and God's land of promise, was a mistake, or reasonable in the circumstances, I will not comment. Nor do I suggest that the misfortune was directly attributable to their decision. Nonetheless, Naomi decides to return to her original home, where "...the LORD had come to the aid of his people....".

The dialogue between Naomi and her daughters-in-law reveals that Ruth, at least, has seen something in Naomi, Elimelek, and Mahlon of God's love and protection. Ruth's words in Chapter 1 verses 16 – 17 are a model of commitment both to Naomi but especially to God. So the two ladies set off back to Bethlehem.

On arrival, and making themselves known to the town leaders and Naomi's previous friends, there was a stir – the women could not believe that Naomi had returned, and longed to hear her

news (no email or Skype then!) Naomi's words tumble out with all that has lodged in her heart over the past few years. "Don't call me Naomi (pleasant)" she says, "I am bitter (Mara) because God has dealt me a bitter blow." Her reaction is perhaps understandable, but shows that her faith in God had slipped. Nonetheless, it appears that He is understanding, and listens to her, rather than blaming her.

Having settled into a home, there is a need for this family on the breadline to feed themselves. Ruth offers to gather leftover grain from the barley harvest. This was permitted, and indeed commanded by Jewish law (Leviticus 19 vv 9-10). God has been watching over the women, and "by chance" Ruth lands up in the fields of a distant relative of Elimelek. Boaz first reveals himself to be a man of generosity; he commands his workers to not harass Ruth, but to discretely leave a little extra for her to glean. Although Ruth was not aware of the family connection, Boaz has clearly heard of Naomi and Ruth's story, and her loyalty to Naomi, and must therefore realise that he has a distant responsibility for the pair.

Bible Verse

When Ruth returns to Naomi, with an abundance of grain, Naomi is surprised and asks “Whose fields did you glean in, and who has been so generous?” When Ruth names Boaz, suddenly the penny drops in Naomi’s mind, and she realises that God has been in this all along (Ch 2 v 20). The last two chapters describe how the story panned out, to bring Boaz and Ruth together and produce the grandfather to David, human ancestor of Jesus. However, Naomi could now use her proper name, and say with the Psalmist: “LORD, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance.” (Ps 16, vv 5-6).

We too, who have trusted in salvation through Jesus, are encouraged, when the going gets hard, to remember God’s past provision, and hope in His pleasant future, not letting sorrow and trials to make our hearts bitter toward Him.

Tim Sanderson

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

John 14: 1-2
(King James Version)

When I was in the Girls Life Brigade, funds were provided to pay for an elocution teacher to come and teach us to prepare us for an elocution examination. It was 1938 and I was nine years old.

Those were troubled times building up to the war. I can remember clearly how my mouth watered watching the teacher break open a bar of chocolate as she taught us from John 14 – chocolate was on ration! I thought it was wonderful that the organisation took the trouble to pay someone to teach us and that is where I got my grounding from. An adjudicator came to examine us and I was very thrilled to get a distinction – she was a very good teacher! I loved Girls Life Brigade.

Jessie Green

Around the World

Easter Celebrations...

Ethiopia

Mexico

In Mexico Easter consists of two weeks and two different festivals. Semana Santa (Holy Week) is from Palm Sunday until Easter Saturday, and Pascua is the period from Easter Sunday to the following Saturday. This is a popular time for people to go on holiday or to visit friends and relatives.

Semana Santa is celebrated more than Pascua. On Palm Sunday worshippers parade into their churches with specially woven palms which they often purchase outside the building. After the service many people hang the palms on the doors of their houses to ward off evil. Passion Plays are often performed during Holy Week and the person who is honoured to play the part of Jesus prepares for a whole year for the role. He also has to be very fit as the Crucifix that he has to carry weighs around two hundred pounds!

In some places there are early morning parades on each day of Holy Week, with Good Friday being the most solemn. Large statues of Jesus and Mary are carried through the streets of many towns and villages. On Easter Day there are large Easter Sunday Masses held and in some towns big celebrations follow the service in the plaza with festive food and dancing.

On Palm Sunday many Ethiopians wear bands and rings made of palm leaves with crosses marked on them. The first Easter Day service starts at 8pm on the Saturday evening and continues until around 3am on Easter Day. Most people attend the whole service dressed in their best clothes. These are often white and called "Yabesha Libs".

After the service people return home to celebrate the end of Lent with a "dabo" which is sour-dough bread. It is traditional that this bread is cut by a priest, or failing that, by the head man of the family. The main Easter meal is eaten in the afternoon and normally consists of a sour-dough pancake with a lamb or mutton stew.

Greece

In Greek Orthodox churches a tomb is often placed in the centre of the church for the Good Friday service. The worshippers process through the streets as if to a funeral. A service is held on Easter Saturday just before midnight. Candles are handed out to the congregation to signal that Easter Day has started and that Christ has Risen.

Easter is a much more important Festival to the Greeks than Christmas and is a big family occasion. Lamb is roasted and eaten at the main meal on Easter Day and a cake is made with orange and almonds in and eaten with a spicy orange sauce.

Carol Marsh

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Fiona Tingley 01444 483419

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Chris Comber 01444 482641

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Jo Bloxham 01444 483672

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Josh Thomas 07598 779553

Lighthouse (Junior Church)

Co-ordinator

Dawn Walters 01444 441601

Flower Rota

Arranging

Distributing

April

6th	Anne Parker	Heather Swann
13th	Heather Swann	Janet Sanderson
20th	Easter Flowers	Fo Tingley
27th	Easter Flowers	Nick Bingham

May

4th	Boy's Brigade	Sue Tester
11th	Fiona Tingley	Barbara Shepherd
18th	Janet Wade	Jo Bloxham
25th	Carol Walters	Iris Bingham

Around Lindfield

Thursday 3rd April

7.30pm Village Film Night in KEH - "Saving Mr Banks"

Saturday 5th April

2.00pm Horticultural Society in KEH: Spring Show of Flowers and Produce

7.45pm Amanda Buckland (soprano) and Jane Haughton (mezzo)

Musical Travels through Europe: St Wilfreds Church, HH Music Society

Wednesday 9th April

12.15pm Tiger Arts : Lunch in the Tiger

1.00pm Concert : Soprano and Piano

8.00pm Horticultural Society in KEH : "Growing and Showing Dahlias"

Saturday 12th April

9.30am Bonfire Society in KEH : Coffee Morning

Wednesday 16th April

8.00pm Lindfield Preservation in KEH :

AGM followed by talk : "Sussex Fire and Rescue"

Good Friday 18th April

7.30pm Tiger Arts in All Saints Church : Handel's Messiah

Saturday 26th April

7.30pm Vivace!, St Wilfred's Church : www.haywardsheathlive.org.uk

