

# St George The Martyr Shirley

**Christ  
in the  
Community**



**A Member of Churches Together in Shirley**

**March 2024**

**50p**

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### Exploring your faith

The Book Reading Group offers a monthly opportunity to look at faith-based writing and swap your thoughts with others. See Book Reading Group section of church website and page 10.

### Little Dragons Toddler Group St George's: Monday mornings in term time

All under 5's with their parents/ carers welcome

Contact: Regina 07825 428465

### Climate Crisis

What can I do?

- Learn the facts YES
- Speak up for change YES
- Work with others YES
- Reduce my own carbon footprint YES
- Resign myself to the worst NO

### Slimming World Shirley

### St George's Church Hall: Mondays at 7 p.m.

Contact: Andrea  
07956 157275

# Services at St. George's Church

**Sundays 10 a.m. Sung Eucharist. Most Wednesdays 11 30 a.m. Said Eucharist.** The Sunday Eucharist will also be available via live-streaming. See website or newsletter for access to the on-line option. There are shared worship opportunities throughout the week. Please see centre pages. for details. We aim to avoid any changes, but illness, etc, may change things..

**While we are without a Vicar, enquiries should be made to 020 8776 0185: Parish Administrator, and the Church Wardens will contact the appropriate person.**

**Vicar: Vacancy**

**Hon. Curate: The Reverend Hilary Fife** 19 Greenview Avenue, Shirley, Croydon CR0 7QW 07931 761320

**Reader: Mr Ray Wheeler** 88 Palace View, Shirley, Croydon CR0 8QN 020 8777 5271

**Reader: Mrs Liz Bebington** 79 Shirley Way, Shirley, Croydon CR0 8PL 020 8777 4840

**Website: [www.stgeorgeschurch.co.uk](http://www.stgeorgeschurch.co.uk)**

**Parish Office: [parish.office@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:parish.office@hotmail.co.uk)**

**Mary Magdalene**



## A View from 'up the hill'

So March is here – or nearly so; depending on how quickly you get to read your magazine! I have a note that March is when I must plant some 'bee friendly' seeds I have been given. Interestingly the emphasis on the packet is that the flowers will be bee friendly – I am not told what they are called; what colour they will be or anything else about them. I have to take a leap of faith to plant and care for them, trusting the resultant flowers will be worth having. A lot of life is bit like that – a leap of faith, actions taken in trust that all will be well.

I am hoping my seeds will result in a multi coloured display; I love a wild flower meadow with all its variety of shape and colour. I think that also reflects how I feel about community. It's enriching to have friends and neighbours of all ages and backgrounds, sharing different life experiences.

The first Friday of March each year also brings the World Day of Prayer (no longer just for women)! Perhaps because I am married to someone from a different Christian tradition (Andy is a Roman Catholic) I have always been attracted to the variety of worship offered by ecumenical events and find that turning up for this annual service is always well worthwhile. There is usually at least one service accessible from Shirley.

This years' service has been prepared by the Christian women of Palestine (before the events of last October) with a focus on living with each other in love. There may be nothing we feel we can do for Palestine, but why not join me and others at Our Lady's Church in Bingham Road (near the 367 bus stop to Croydon) for 7pm on Friday 1st March, and join your prayers with the rest of the world on that day? The service, which lasts for an hour, includes music, reflection, bible readings and an insight into life in Palestine, with refreshments offered after the service.

As those following the Lent USPG course, *Who is My neighbour?* are reflecting, life is not just about the support and help we give to others ... it's also about what we receive from those around us. As we hopefully grow closer to God during these weeks approaching Easter, let us also grow closer to each other in love and prayer, and share together all that God has given us as we encounter those who may be just a bit different from ourselves.

Liz Bebington, Reader, writing from Shirley Way

## Too much reality?

"Get real!" (and other ways of saying the same thing are available) sounds like good advice. If you walk through life in a dream, there is a risk of falling over unnoticed reality. The child who imagines buying the whole toy shop, the adult who fancies the whole clothes shop, maybe needs some painful reality orientation. But can you have too much reality? I think, YES.

Imagine the church welcomers being trained to focus on reality orientation: New arrival says "Good morning!", with cheerful smile. Welcomer responds with the reality challenge: "You might not say that if you were living in Gaza...or if you had been sleeping rough last night!" Or, welcomer opens with "How are you?", and person being welcomed falls back on the conventional (and often not strictly accurate) "Fine, thanks" followed by the usual "And how are you?" Welcomer responds with truth, whole truth and nothing but truth: "You look awful! I have diarrhoea." Or, another church example: At the end of the service, the preacher, incautiously, asks "Did you enjoy the sermon". Departing member of congregation says "I switched off after the first two minutes: I don't really dig mumbling incoherence!"

In a domestic setting, the partner doing the cooking that night has invested a great deal of time and energy in something new and rather tricky: a brave but loving initiative. The cook doesn't have to ask the crucial question - the partner puts fork down, grabs drink, and says "What the h... Is this? It tastes awful!" (Having, 40 years ago, been given a very expensive but very bitter starter, I do recognise that the polite rather than painfully honest response is more convincing when accompanied by a matching facial expression.)

Civil servants briefing ministers on policy proposals are required to give an impact assessment. All I am saying is that life will be better for everyone if we try to filter what we say about reality through the sensitivity sieve. Also, before we "say it as it is", it is very healthy to think hard whether we really have pinned down the reality.....the whole reality.

## The 2024 Big Bird Count (Small birds also included): Personal View

The RSPB annual exercise was rather disappointing this year, inasmuch as the invitation to make the church grounds count a multi-person (rather than a one person) count seems to have produced no results. The one person count did produce one surprise - something of a double surprise, in the bird involved and in the numbers of that bird.

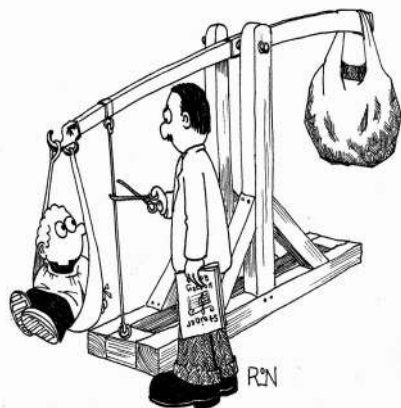
47 birds seen during the period 8 30 a.m. to 9 30 a.m. 24 of them were Carrion Crows, with two ash trees their focal points as they circled restlessly and noisily. I had assumed that the Feral Pigeons would win the numbers game (as the reducing number of garlic holders on the church roof reduces the pigeon deterrent effect). There were only four Feral Pigeons, and two Woodpigeons. Parakeets and Goldfinches came just behind the pigeons in numbers.

The total number of bird species was 13. Not bad, though I have known better results; and my home garden count produced more variety. Only two species got into the record by flying over without settling: Herring Gull and Black-headed Gull. In terms of impact, the Magpies topped the charts: Magpies just don't creep in un-observed. Predictably, the constant presence prize went to the Robin - not unrelated to there being mealworms on offer this time.

It is worth noting the obvious: for every one of these birds, the church grounds are only part of "their territory". They depend on a lot of other Shirley spaces for their food and drink and roosting and nesting. One bird-friendly space is great. The birds are not going to be there to appreciate that space unless there are quite a lot of bird-friendly spaces - especially in an area where an increasing amount of potential bird-friendly space is anything but bird-friendly. It is also worth remembering that quite a lot of the current church bird-friendly space is likely to be built on in the next few years! We must treasure what remains. As bird territory and not just human territory.

Probably realising that they wouldn't count, the non-bird wildlife stayed away. No squirrel, no fox, not even a domestic animal. No sign of insects, though they would have been discovered with close inspection....as the birds know. Fortunately for everyone and everything, the earth beneath us is rich in wildlife we seldom see.

### Convenience Conversions



Toby persistently sang flat

This is one of those cartoons I “don’t get”. But it provides an opportunity to talk about a heated topic of the moment. In a part of the world where the majority view is probably “Believe what you like, but don’t keep going on about it”, the issue of putting on a religious front but not really being a person of faith doesn’t usually loom large - though we can be very ready to call out “hypocrisy” if someone else seems to be saying it and not doing it. On the whole, putting “Christian” on your job application is not going to improve your prospects of getting a

job....outside the Church, that is. Especially as regards getting a wedding, funeral, or even Baptism in the C of E, often the local church doesn’t require anyone to stretch their imagination as to what they believe. In the not-so-distant past, St George’s had families signing up and coming in to improve prospects of getting a place in a Church secondary school. That was kinda dodgy, and awkward for the Vicar being asked to sign a recommendation; but it enhanced exposure to real faith without actually requiring pseudo-testimonies. Asylum status turning on “conversion” changes perspectives.

But let us be honest about the fact that in history, presenting yourself as a Christian, and indeed specifically a C of E Christian, brought distinct advantages. In the mission field, access to education, health care, and a good life, was in some places at some times seen as closely related to being identified as a Christian. All this was most strikingly seen when the Roman Empire became (for a time) officially Christian. A faith label that had previously brought you a violent death, now brought you distinct advantages. The same “fitting in” advantage has been, and is being, enjoyed by signed-up believers in other faiths in other countries. I’m guessing that atheists in Iran or Saudi Arabia, for example, tend to keep quiet about it. Two reflections: (1) Can we blame someone for keeping quiet about their doubts when so much depends on declared certainties? (2) Never forget all those heroes and heroines open about their faith at great risk!

### A Parish Prayer

Lord,

*Help us to spend more time asking what you want us to be, and less time asking you to help us be what we want to be. Help us to recognise that challenges are also opportunities. Help us to be open to the possibility that what we see needs doing is what we should be doing. Where we are called to carry on doing, help us to try to do better.*

Amen.

### Churches Together in Shirley

St George's  
St John's  
Our Lady's  
All Saints  
Shirley Methodist  
West Wickham  
and Shirley  
Baptist



Church of God  
Apostolic  
Shrublands Christian Fellowship  
Longheath Baptist Church

### Monthly Prayer Meetings: Live and/or on Zoom: 7 30 p.m.

Prayer notes will be Emailed to member Churches when available. Ask [dunaigh2@btinternet.com](mailto:dunaigh2@btinternet.com) if you would like a copy. Contact the same Email for link details. You can of course use the notes for private or family prayer whenever, and as often, as you want to.

### Tuesday March 5th 7 30 p.m. Prayers, 8 p.m. AGM, at St George's

We are hoping to agree at the March AGM on monthly live prayer meetings, spread across member churches, with a Zoom option: to give maximum church involvement and maximum opportunity for participation. Let's see what is possible.

**C S Lewis: *Love's As Warm As Tears***

*Love's as warm as tears,  
Love is tears:  
Pressure within the brain,  
Tension at the throat,  
Deluge, weeks of rain,  
Haystacks afloat,  
Featureless seas between  
Hedges, where once was green.*

*Love's as fierce as fire,  
Love is fire:  
All sorts—infernal heat  
Clinkered with greed and pride,  
Lyric desire, sharp-sweet,  
Laughing, even when denied,  
And that empyreal flame  
Whence all loves came.*

*Love's as fresh as spring,  
Love is spring:  
Bird-song hung in the air,  
Cool smells in a wood,  
Whispering 'Dare! Dare!'  
To sap, to blood,  
Telling 'Ease, safety, rest,  
Are good; not best.'*

*Love's as hard as nails,  
Love is nails:  
Blunt, thick, hammered through  
The medial nerves of One  
Who, having made us, knew  
The thing He had done,  
Seeing (with all that is)  
Our cross, and His*

Yes, this poem has appeared in the magazine before, and I dare say is likely to appear again!

**Some notes for you to note**

- ♥ **Deadline for the April Magazine: Sunday March 24th .**
- ♥ **The Bible Reading Group** We are reading the **Book Ecclesiasticus**. Please note that this is **NOT** the same as **Ecclesiastes**, which is also a Bible book. Your Bible may not include **Ecclesiasticus**. I'm guessing that very few of you will be able to complain "I have read this book already!" If you want the relevant paperwork and/or the link to join us on Zoom on Monday evenings for 40 minutes, contact Brian McGinnis. Why not give it a go?
- ♥ **The Book Reading Group** The March choice is "**Loving my Neighbour**" edited by **Olivia Warburton**. Saying "God loves me" is easy, and Christians say it a lot. Once we discover that it doesn't mean God always gives me what I want, it isn't all that obvious what it means. Saying "I love my neighbour" is also fairly easy...until someone says "Show me" and asks "All your neighbours?" Saying "I love myself" is a bit uncomfortable; but we are being asked to "love my neighbour as I love myself", so..... There is a great deal to explore in this book. Contact Brian McGinnis if you want to share the book. (We tend to share by letter or Email.)
- ♥ **Church Garden:** Gardening is an all year round occupation, but it becomes a bit more obviously needed, and a bit less challenging from Spring through to Autumn. It has been the St George's tradition for our 80+ years that the main work falls to those who are retired—often long retired. But anyone who can tell a "better off without" from a "better off with" plant is welcome to do a bit of gardening when time and weather and health allows. From Spring onwards, there is less risk of digging up bulbs because you can't see that the bulbs are there. We try to avoid deep digging, since this damages soil structure. Some areas are deliberately "managed wild": nature left to do its own thing; but not allowed to spread beyond the wild area. Good church service management requires a roster. Good garden management just requires volunteers.
- ♥ **Daily Zoom and Wednesday in Lady Chapel Services:** There are regular participants, but occasional participants are also welcome. We know Anna and Simeon were regulars, but maybe Jos also spotted Jesus; and she/he was just "giving it a go".

**Ecclesiasticus 44**

A taster from the best known chapter of the not very well known Bible Book that the Monday Evening Bible Reading Group is currently reading.

This is the Kig James/ Authorised Version

1. Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us.
- 2 The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through his great power from the beginning.
- 3 Such as did bear rule in their kingdoms, men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understanding, and declaring prophecies:
- 4 Leaders of the people by their counsels, and by their knowledge of learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent are their instructions:
- 5 Such as found out musical tunes, and recited verses in writing:
- 6 Rich men furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations:
- 7 All these were honoured in their generations, and were the glory of their times.
- 8 There be of them, that have left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported.
- 9 And some there be, which have no memorial; who are perished, as though they had never been; and are become as though they had never been born; and their children after them.
- 10 But these were merciful men, whose righteousness hath not been forgotten.
- 11 With their seed shall continually remain a good inheritance, and their children are within the covenant.
- 12 Their seed standeth fast, and their children for their sakes.
- 13 Their seed shall remain for ever, and their glory shall not be blotted out.

**Maybe a smile.....**

**Palm Sunday visit** It was Palm Sunday, but because of a sore throat, five-year-old Bobby was kept home from church with his granny. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds and Bobby asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by," his father explained. Bobby was aghast. "I don't believe it! The one Sunday I don't go, and He shows up!"

**Violets?** When my husband was six years old, he thought the creed included the line: "He suffered under a bunch of violets." It took him years before he realised that he should have been saying: "under Pontius Pilate."

**Destination?** Lenora, 95-years-old and in excellent health, confided that she was terribly worried: "Every one of my friends has already died and gone on to heaven. I'm afraid they're all wondering where I went!"

**Mother's reward** A man was decorating his new den and decided it was a good place to display all the awards he and his two sons had won at various athletic competitions. When he had filled two whole walls, he remarked to his wife that it was a shame she had no awards to contribute. The following day, she produced, neatly framed, the birth certificates of their two sons, and added them to the display.

**Just like mum...** That desert was delicious. Did you buy it yourself?

**Mothers and teenagers** A woman was confiding in her neighbour just how hard it was for her to get her teenagers out of bed in the morning. The neighbour replied that she never had any trouble at all with her son. "I just open the door and throw the cat on the bed," she explained. The woman was puzzled, and asked how that might help. "Easy. My son sleeps with the dog."

**Flight time** A couple going on holiday for Easter were amazed when the airplane pilot came on and advised the passengers that he had lost his way. He explained that the radar was not working, the radio beam could not be picked up, and the compass had broken. "But," he added soothingly, "you will be glad to know that we are making very good time."

**Noah had problems, too**

When Noah sailed the waters blue,  
he had his troubles same as you.  
For 40 days he drove the Ark  
before he found a place to park.



### February Saints Quiz Answers

1. Joan of Ark, 2. Francis of Assisi, 3. Andrew, 4. Margaret of Scotland, 5. Laurence, 6. Clare of Assisi, 7. John of the Cross, 8. Mary Magdalene, 9. Thomas of Canterbury, 10. Lucy (Lucia), 11. Richard of Chichester, 12. Cecilia, 13. George, 14. Mary of Nazareth, 15. David of Scotland, 16. Catherine of Alexandria, 17. Swithun, 18. Edward the Confessor.

**An Easter Picture Quiz: Can you pinpoint what connection there is between the Jesus Resurrection Easter and these familiar “secular” Easter images?**



[Some]

Answers on page 15

### That odd business of praying: Number 150: Good versus Bad?

Prayer is sometimes seen as good people saying good things to a good God to achieve good results for good people...and surely that can't be bad! There are Bible passages which seem to support the rather black and white view of good and bad: Listen to me, God, I'm a good guy doing good things and deserving good in return, and pay no (favourable) attention to the bad guys doing bad things yet still asking you, the good God, for favours. This isn't the only possible Bible message, of course: there are lots of examples of good/bad folk apologising to God, and asking for help in doing more good and less bad.

I am jotting down these thoughts at the time when UNWRA (not to be confused with the earlier UNRRA) is losing some of its national donors because a few of its [3,000] staff are suspected of having added to their emergency aid work in Gaza taking part in the brutal onslaught by Hamas from Gaza into Israel. (Incidentally killing or capturing some Israelis who were good friends of their Gaza neighbours.) Some Israeli spokespersons have welcomed the opportunity to condemn the agency and all its staff as terrorists—thereby justifying the incidental slaughter by them of [150] agency staff who probably had no connection with the terrorist incursion and had actually condemned that incursion. All this painfully complicates our simplistic notion of praying into a stark either good or bad world, filled with either good or bad people.

Had we forgotten the not all that distant concerns about international aid agency staff abusing their position by harming vulnerable people? Had we forgotten that sometimes British troops (usually the good guys) have on occasions not exactly endeared themselves to local civilians by their behaviour? Have we forgotten that not everybody representing some part of the Universal Church has always behaved in a way that is above reproach? It isn't just that there are bad eggs in good baskets. The reality is that good people can do bad things. Sometimes very good people do very bad things.....and (putting the same point the other way round) sometimes very bad people do very good things.

Our prayers are potential weapons for good in a world where good and bad rub shoulders quite a lot - even in our own lives as praying people.

### Easter objects and Easter origins

In Christian thinking, Easter is symbolised by the empty cross and the empty tomb; and, of course, by imagined pictures of the Risen Christ. (We don't know exactly what Jesus looked like, before or after the Resurrection. He wasn't a "very white" man. Bearded is quite likely. "Nazarenes" didn't have hair cuts; but Jesus having grown up in Nazareth doesn't mean Jesus necessarily had long hair.) The other familiar Easter objects might be Bible Easter related in some way; might be related to the pagan Spring goddess Eostre who gave her name to Easter; or might be more seasonal than "religious". It can all be quite confusing. For example, one of the pagan myths was a hare that laid eggs! Just to confuse you more: in the myth, the hare was originally a bird - turned into a hare by the goddess, but allowed to lay eggs each year on Eostre's birthday.

In Christian thinking, the egg has been linked (imaginatively) to the shape of the stone that sealed the tomb; and Jesus breaking from the tomb to the chicken hatching from the egg. Rabbits (more familiar than hares, but the same sort of animal) produce lots of baby rabbits, and this fruitfulness has been linked to Resurrection fruitfulness.

The Spring flowers, e.g. daffodils and tulips, might be expected to appear at a Spring festival; but there is another obvious Christian Easter link. The tulip or daffodil flower dies; the bulb is buried in the dark earth; new life springs from the "dead" bulb in the Spring.

And the chocolate of Easter? I haven't seen a convincing explanation; and of course chocolate in the West is a fairly recent thing. However, one aspect is certainly that if people give up chocolate during Lent (a relatively painless but significant sacrifice), then tucking into chocolate at Easter, immediately after Easter, is a natural escape clause. Then there is the read across to egg-shaped chocolate. The Easter egg hunt is in itself a fun thing. It also has the Bible history significance of Mary M and her friends seeking the buried Jesus on Easter morning; and, if you want to take the seeking theme further, we as disciples of Jesus are always under the obligation to look for God at work, and to look for opportunities to work for God.

Finally, the sheep. Most convincingly, Jesus the Lamb of God. Passover sacrificial lambs were very much in evidence at the time Jesus died; and the Book of Revelation emphasises Jesus as The Lamb that was Slain. In terms of seasonality, lambs of course go with Spring; and if you go Penshurst way or Woldingham way you will see lambs in large numbers.

## CHURCH DIARY FOR MARCH 2024

Sun 3 Mar LENT 3	Mon 4 Mar	Tue 5 Mar	Wed 6 Mar
10.00 Live Sung Eucharist lead by Rev. Debbie Forman 2 30 p.m. Lent Course	9.30-11.30 Little Dragons 10.30am-12.00 Pop In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group	7.30pm CTIS Prayers & AGM - Lady Chapel Lent Z	11.30am Eucharist Chapel
Sun 10 Mar MOTHERING SUNDAY	Mon 11 Mar	Tue 12 Mar	Wed 13 Mar
10.00 All-Age Live Sung Eucharist lead by Rev Hilary Fife 2 30 p.m. Lent Course	10.30am-12.00 Pop In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group	7 30 p.m. Lent Course on Zoom	11.30am Eucharist Chapel
Sun 17 Mar LENT 5	Mon 18 Mar	Tue 19 Mar	Wed 20 Mar
10.00 Live Sung Eucharist lead by AD Moira Astin 2 30 p.m. Lent Course	9.30-11.30 Little Dragons 10.30am-12.00 Pop In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group	7 30 p.m. Lent Course on Zoom	11.30am Eucharist Chapel
Sun 24 Mar PALM SUNDAY	Mon 25 Mar	Tue 26 Mar	Wed 27 Mar
10.00 Live Sung Eucharist lead by Rev. Andy Dovey 2 30 p.m. Lent Course	9.30-11.30 Little Dragons 10.30am-12.00 Pop In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group	7 30 p.m. Lent Course on Zoom	11.30am Eucharist Chapel
Sun 31 Mar EASTER SUNDAY			
10.00 Live Sung Eucharist lead by Rev Hilary Fife			



		<p>▼ Fri 1 Mar</p> <p>World Day of Prayer 7 p.m. Our Lady's</p>	<p>Sat 2 Mar</p> <p>10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement</p>
Wed 6 Mar	▼ Thurs 7 Mar	▼ Fri 8 Mar	Sat 9 Mar
Reflection - Lady			10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement
Wed 13 Mar	▼ Thurs 14 Mar	▼ Fri 16 Feb	Sat 16 Mar
Eucharist - Lady			10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement
Wed 20 Mar	▼ Thurs 21 Mar	▼ Fri 22 Mar	Sat 23 Mar
Eucharist - Lady			10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement
Wed 27 Mar	▼ Thurs 28 Mar MAUNDY THURSDAY	▼ Fri 29 Mar GOOD FRIDAY	Sat 30 Mar EASTER EVE
Eucharist - Lady	7.00pm Passover Meal & Eucharist Stripping of the Altar	10.00-12.00 Good Friday Workshop 11.00 Walk of Witness 2.00pm Liturgy of Good Friday	10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement
		<p><b>Key</b></p> <p>▼ Morning Prayer: Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri 9.00am Zoom only</p>	

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**Solon 170**

**Across**

- 1 With extra Italian I've got a supplement (8)
- 5 Run with a bit of bacon (6)
- 9 Neat game for top educators (8)
- 10 Bet on boy soprano (6)
- 12 Criminal's mobility device? (8,5)
- 15 Hate crime on soldier (5)
- 16 Do these musicians carry a money belt? (5,4)
- 17 So that devils leave violent disorder (2,5,2)
- 19 There is money in Greek letter (5)
- 20 Too passionate before poet sitting in cricket ground (13)
- 22 In the middle of the morning with the

- the papers of heartless spendthrift (6)
- 23 If trying, I'd be making a mess (8)
- 25 A French cartoonist is messy (6)
- 26 Beetle almost on the street is most desolate (8)

**Down**

- 1 Nothing in a campsite prepared to find a creature's warning property (10)
- 2 Radio Pat (3)
- 3 Con artist has too much wind (7)
- 4 Egg in struggle with old citizen losing his head for healthy food (6,6)
- 6 Spreads around Harry giving rise to dangers (7)
- 7 On board with disorderly rent-a-mob getting into Kia (11)

- 8 Retain tower (4)
- 11 He could study odd geolocations (12)
- 13 Hotlines got crossed for cultural expert (11)
- 14 Stupid match could be an oil warning (5,5)
- 18 Undertaken without a democrat fully clothed (7)
- 19 Enjoying oneself in a bolero is terrific (7)
- 21 Capital city of this country backed by degree (4)
- 24 At the outset I can expect to slip on this (3)

**Answers to February puzzles:-**

**Crossword: Across:** 1 Chickpea, 6 Roadie, 9 Droll, 10 Tiptoes, 11 Voiced, 12 Organist, 13 At length, 15 Assess, 17 Causal, 19 Detector, 21 Arm in arm, 23 Reefer, 24 Hashtag, 25 Ducal, 26 Spotty, 27 Doorways.

**Down:** 2 Hideout, 3 Crotchets, 4 Piled, 5 Antioch, 6 Repugnant, 7 Acorn, 8 Insists, 14 Gallantry, 16 Sacred cow, 18 Airship, 19 Demigod, 20 Overlay, 22 Inset, 23 Rodeo.

Thanks to Solon for puzzles  
For questions or help, contact Solon at  
Solon1across@gmail.com

**Sudoku:** 937485261/  
812967543/ 465321978/  
289514637/ 543796812/  
176832495/ 751249386/  
324678159/ 698153724

	6		2	1	7		4	
				8		7		
					6	2	5	
2	8							9
		5		6		8		
	9						1	4
	1	8	9					
		7		3				
	4		6	7	8			3

**Wisdom might be defined as knowing "the rules" and knowing when to break the rules. School rule: Don't run in the corridor. Situation: you are in the toilet when the fire alarm goes off. When you get out, the corridor is empty and the alarm still ringing. Break the rule?**

**If you are Wise, you must still be a Learner. Wisdom is not a done deal.**

# Bible Bite

## A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
Mt 21:12-16, Mk 11:15-18, Lk 19: 45-48

When Jesus reached Jerusalem he went to the Temple, built as a place where everyone could worship God, but with restrictions...

Plan of the Temple

Restrictions

- only priests
- only Jewish men
- only Jews
- every one

200m

Visitors had to change their money to shekels

They had to buy special animals to sacrifice...

and the stalls filled the only place that non-Jews could come to worship God

stalls

stalls

stalls

yet more stalls

even more stalls

The chief priests had no problem with this...

but it made Jesus very angry...

so he drove them out

This should be a place of prayer but you have made it into a den of thieves \*

\*Isaiah 56:7, Jeremiah 7:11

Hosanna!

He is upsetting everything.

We must have him killed

But the crowds love him - we must do it secretly.

## What the cartoon does not say

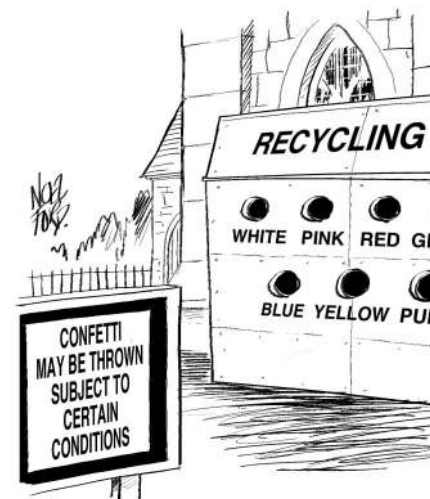
I hope you are one of those people who looks at the details. The popular saying is that *"The devil is in the detail"*. We might say, with equal justification, that *"God is in the detail"*. In other words, as with political promises, Northern Ireland Agreements, insurance policies, and the guarantee that goes with your latest purchase, we don't really know what we are getting until we get to the detail. If you have looked at the cartoon detail, you will have spotted that this story of Jesus in the Temple is told by Matthew, Mark and Luke - but apparently not by John. No surprises there: John wrote much later than the other Gospel writers, and he focused quite a lot on what he wanted to say that the others had not said. But this story is told by John: in John Chapter 2. Again if you notice detail, you will see that John is telling the story early in the ministry of Jesus, whereas the other Gospel writers tell it towards the end: as a major prompt to getting Jesus killed.

It isn't impossible that Jesus stormed the Temple twice. Bad habits are deeply engrained, and I doubt that the stall holders disappeared from the scene after they were chased out by Jesus. (Remember that Mary and Joseph probably had to buy from those traders about 30 years earlier when they brought the child Jesus to the Temple and needed a couple of over-priced pigeons to sacrifice. I doubt that they were allowed to bring their own pigeons from Nazareth.) However, the odds are that the four Gospel writers are talking about the same incident, and disagree on the timing.

Another bit of detail not captured in the cartoon is that the priests-only area had a still more restricted "only top priest" area.

Christian churches, over the centuries, have both had what were effectively "certain men only" areas, and let commercial interests trump worship interests. You can understand but maybe still feel uncomfortable about church/cathedral admission charges. There are divergent views about the "sanctuary" area around the altar being occupied by people other than those who "have to be there". What the Gospel writers and the cartoonist are inviting us to do is reflect very carefully on what our routines are saying, for good or ill, to different people. I remember many years ago a youngster asking "Could I touch the altar?" Maybe their grammar was wrong; but I said "Yes".

## Throwing things at people



Sometimes googling things gives you an explanation for those things: an explanation which is credible even if it is more guesswork than certainty. Googling confetti leaves you more puzzled than ever. I write as someone whose father was said to have threatened violence to those who threw confetti at my mother at their wedding... And as someone whose instinct would be violence rather than smiling if anyone threw stuff at me. As a best man for a younger friend, I was asked by the bride and groom to deter confetti throwers

at their wedding. Church Wardens do not enjoy trying to clear up confetti from porch and path after church weddings.

Google invites you to believe that confetti has Latin origins, and is the Italian plural of confetto = sweet. Apparently in Italian processions, both those processing and those watching threw things, including sweets, and eggs, and candles (lit candles?), and mud. Understandably, all this throwing sometimes turned into a battle - not least because the posh people tended to do the processing (in their best clothes) and the "ordinary" folk formed the watching crowd.

It seems that the throwing is kindly meant: to bring luck. I still don't understand, especially where the bride has spent a small fortune on hair-do and make-up, and, after the throwing has to rid herself of confetti stuck to the make-up and entangled in the hair.....quite apart from any which might get down the front or back of her even more expensive wedding dress.

I like the cartoon's environmentally friendly confetti disposal system - though the refuse disposal men [still always men?] are going to want all the colours in the one paper bin. On the other hand, the likelihood of folk of either sex who are dressed up for a wedding crawling around to sort out different coloured confetti

## Younger Readers Page Do we need a church?



In this country, we are used to the idea of Christians going to church, especially on Sunday; and we have some idea of what a church should look like. (Though the 8 churches in Shirley each looks very different from the others.) The church in the picture is in Brazil. There are a number of round churches in this country. But a lot of Christians don't have a church building - just as the first Christians did not have a church building. Those first Christians met in each other's houses; or carried on using Jewish places of worship - including the Jerusalem Temple. Many Christians meet in each other's houses as well as meeting in a church building. Christians also meet in halls, cafes, pubs, or a factory or office space. If you think about building costs and heating costs, a large building used only on Sundays does seem a rather expensive option. King Solomon spent huge amounts of money on building the first Jerusalem Temple; but when he sat down to think about it, he said "You can't really keep God in a building, however splendid that building is!"

**He died that we might be forgiv'n,  
He died to make us good;  
That we might go at last to heav'n,  
Saved by his precious blood.**



The familiar hymn words are at the heart of Christianity. They are not presented to us by a theologian as a doctrinal statement, but, for many of us, they probably rank alongside the Creed as what - if challenged - we believe about the Crucifixion. (The Creed we commonly say gives us "For us and our salvation he came down from heaven....For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate".)

Another hymn makes some of us much more uncomfortable: "Til on the cross as Jesus died, The wrath of God was satisfied". Angry God, horrified by sin, takes it out on His Son, instead of taking it out on us! This is, at best, a questionable way of talking about The Atonement: the mysterious process of reconciling Holy God and sinful humanity. This page can only scratch the surface: whole books have struggled to "clarify". Just some thoughts that might help you think your own thoughts.

First, if a human dad took it out on his human son, the dad might well feel bad about it, but wouldn't actually experience the son's pain. Struggle as we may with understanding the Holy Trinity, we can be absolutely certain that God the Father experiences what God the Son experiences. Father and Son are One. Second, atonement is therefore about God taking on Himself the pain associated with our sin—though if anyone thinks that humans don't suffer as a result of sin, that "anyone" is deaf and blind!

In a way, the mystery (and the thankfulness) is all about God abolishing the God/human gap that there would otherwise be between the God who doesn't sin and the humans who do, the God who doesn't experience pain and the humans

**Sunday Readings for March (Message Version): Please note that readings may change**

**Sunday 3 March: Lent 3**

**Exodus 20: 1-17:** No using the name of God in silly banter.

**Psalm 19:** The revelation of God is whole, and pulls our lives together.

**1 Corinthians 1: 18-25:** Christ is God's ultimate miracle.

**John 2: 13-22:** Stop turning my Father's house into a shopping mall.

**Sunday 10 March: Mothering Sunday**

**1 Samuel 1: 20-end:** The child was so young to be sent off.

**Psalm 34: 11-20:** Turn your back on sin, do something good.

**2 Corinthians 1: 3-7:** He comes alongside us when we go through hard times.

**Luke 2: 33-35:** A figure misunderstood and contradicted.

**Sunday 17 March: Lent 5 (Passiontide)**

**Jeremiah 31: 31-34:** I will write it on their hearts.

**Psalm 51: 1-13:** Soak out my sins in your laundry.

**Hebrews 5: 5-10:** Jesus cried out in pain and wept in sorrow.

**John 12: 20-33:** Ready to serve at a moment's notice.

**Sunday 24 March: Palm Sunday**

**Mark 11: 1-11:** Blessed is he who comes in God's name.

**Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-end:** God's love never quits.

**Isaiah 50: 4-9a:** I followed orders.

**Psalm 31: 8-18:** I place my days n your hand.

**Philippians 2: 5-11:** He lived a selfless, obedient, life; and then died a selfless, obedient, death.

**Mark 14.1 - end 15:** She did what she could, when she should.

**Sunday 31 March: Easter Day**

**Acts 10: 34-43:** God plays no favourites.

**Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24:** I didn't die; I lived.

**1 Corinthians 15: 1-11:** We spoke God's truth, and you entrusted your lives.

**John 20: 1-18:** Jesus said, "Mary".

**Please remember by name in your prayers the following people for whom prayers have been requested...**

Dan Pretty	David Lawn		
Sonia	Sue Moore	Christina	
Pam Purkiss	Jean	Julie	
Margaret Ziolek	Brian	Andy Hamilton	
Christine Lutman	Mark Hare	Martin Cook	
Ann Hobbs	Pauline Russell	Jean Wells	
Margaret Easton	Dave Boyland	Dave Ashdown	
Martin Easton	Terri Boyland	Yvonne Sussex	
Mike Wilkins	Livingston Dallas	Shirley Ashdown	
Yvonne Harris	Lindsay Morgan	Maureen Fenner	Hei-
di Alsop	Ellen Maden	Paul Oates	Bri-
an Jacobs	Bill Gibson	Heather Orton	
Garth Smith	Nahshon	Elizabeth Lovell	
Helen McMullan	Helen Aylward	Sheila Dennis	

We also give thanks for those who have experienced healing, or felt strengthened to cope with ill health or disability. Knowing that others care goes with knowing that God cares.

**Please let the Staff Team know of any additions or deletions via [vicarstgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:vicarstgeorge@gmail.com) or 020 8776 0185**  
**If the person is able to consent, please get their consent before adding their name.**



**Dear Editor - on the subject of saints**, there have been three ways a "saint" can be "canonised", the first being the current one.

The Roman Church has a process of investigating whether the Lord has performed miracles after someone has besought the help of the deceased holy person. It is emphatically not the case that the holy person does the miracle, but that they (supposedly being in heaven) can beseech the miracle from God. A number of these miracles, for example, are directly associated with Lourdes, or Canterbury, or Santiago de Compostela.

The process is resisted by a person appointed for that task, commonly called "the devil's advocate" - their task being to cast doubt on the miracles and on the holiness of the putative saint.

An earlier way was for the local people to declare someone a saint "by acclamation". - this did not involve the formal church authorities, who presumably accepted the locals' decision. St Piran (of Cornwall) may be one such, declared "a saint" by his fellow monks after his death.

An earlier "canonisation", however, trumps them all. Few have heard the name "Dismas" at all, let alone as a saint; but we have the very highest authority that he is a saint. He was the penitent thief, who said to Jesus on Calvary "Remember me, when you come into your kingdom", receiving the reply "this day thou shalt be with me in paradise".

Now when Jesus declares someone a saint, who's going to argue??

Andy Bebington  
79 Shirley Way, Shirley  
Croydon, CR0 8PL  
020 8777 4840

*Those who are not sure what a miracle is, or about the ratio of "successful" to "unsuccessful" requests made to a potential saint for support, or about what mix of good and bad is tolerable in a saint, can take comfort in the reality that Dismas didn't use an intermediary. He talked directly to God. And if being side by side with Jesus in this life and the next is sainthood....we are all (potential) saints.*

## Organisations

### St George's Table Tennis Club (in the Church Hall)

Tuesdays 8—10 p.m. Doubles Table Tennis. £3 per evening, including refreshments. New members welcome. Contact Ron 020 8656 9176, Ken 020 8654 3233.

### Whist Drive (in the Church Hall)

Wednesdays 7 45p.m. *Inquire in Hall Wednesday 7 - 7 45 p.m.*

### Medau (in the Church Hall)

Tuesdays 1.30-3.00p.m Mrs Gammon 01689 815646

**Shirley Neighbourhood Care Scheme** 020 8662 9599 info@shirleyneighbourhoodcare.co.uk

**Your Local Councillors and Safer Neighbourhood Police Teams** The dividing line between Shirley North and South Wards is roughly the Wickham Road, but some roads at the Croydon end on the south side of Wickham Road (St John's parish) are in Shirley North Ward

**Shirley South Ward - Councillors:** Jason Cummings (020 8651 2575) and Scott Roche (07783 152370) **Police Contact:** Phone 0208 721 2469 Email SNMailbox.ShirleySouthSNT@met.police.

**Shirley North Ward - Councillors:** Sue Bennett (0208 768 0561), Richard Chatterjee (07710 183564) and Mark Johnson (07716 092484). **Police Contact:** Email SNMailbox.ShirleyNorthSNT@met.police.uk Phone: 0208 721 2474.

**URGENT 999** (Other crime reports 101)

### Words

*People will find it easier to believe what you do than to believe what you say.*

*It is much wiser to choose what you say than to say what you choose.*

*Kind thoughts, kind words, kind deeds*

*Beware of using sharp words: You may have to eat them one day.*

## Organisations

### St George's Church Hall Bookings -

Mrs Jan Payne 020 8776 0185

### Overseas Missions Committee

Mr Brian McGinnis, Ms Pauline Russell 020 8654 6190

### Georgettes

Contact Mrs Jan Payne 020 8776 0185

### Beavers (Scout Hut) Boys and Girls age 6 to 8 approx.

Wednesdays 5-6.15p.m Rachel Dominguez 07956 155909

### Cubs (Scout Hut) Boys and Girls age 8 to 10.5 approx.

Wednesdays 6.30-8.00p.m Mr Trevor Thairs 07843 752895

### Scouts (Scout Hut) Boys and Girls age 10.5 to 14.5 approx.

Thursdays 6 30 - 8 p.m. Mr Darren Hawken 07903 399185

### Rainbows (Church Hall) Girls age 5 to 7

Tuesdays 5 - 6p.m Mrs Ruth Clery 020 8651 4116  
07702 870030

### Brownies (Church Hall) Girls age 7 to 10

Tuesdays 6.15-7.30p.m Miss Sheila Fenner 020 8655 0023  
fenner240@btinternet.com

### Guides (in the Church Hall) Girls age 10 to 16

Fridays 6.00 -7 30p.m Mrs Ruth Clery 020 651 4116  
07702 870030

### Pop In (in the Church Hall)

Mondays 10.30-12noon Mr Ron Bright 07972 607823

### Little Dragons (in the Church) Toddlers 0-4

Mondays 9 30a.m. -11 30a.m. Regina 07825 428465

## Words

*Why use a tub of words to express a spoonful of thought?*

*Words and feathers are easily scattered, but not easily gathered up.*

*Those who have the most to say usually say it with the fewest words.*

## St. George's Church Directory

**Churchwardens:** Mrs Jan Payne 020 8776 0185  
Mrs Heather Barker 020 8777 9280

### Members of the PCC

Mr Stephen Barker, Mr Evan Russell, Mrs Marjorie Russell, Mr Alexander Baldwin-Smith, Mrs Jan Turner, Mrs Susan Wheeler, Mrs A-I Clayton, Mrs Katie Francis, Dr Toyin Magbagbeola

### Hon. Secretary PCC.

Mr Eric Baldwin-Smith

### Treasurer

Mr Alan Chitty

**Synod Representatives (also on PCC):** Mr Ray Wheeler (Diocesan Synod), Mrs Helen Aylward, Mrs A-L Clayton, Mrs Liz Bebington (Deanery Synod)

### Stewardship Covenant Secretary

Miss Sheila Fenner 020 8655 0023

### Electoral Roll Officer

Mr. Owen Whalley 020 8655 1349

### Organist and Choir Mistress

Miss Sophie Clayton 07703554159

### Safeguarding Representatives

Mrs. Susan Wheeler. 020 8777 5271

Dr Toyin Magbagbeola

### Church Flowers

Mrs. Marion Sheehan 020 8777 7308

### Environment (ECO) Group

Mrs Jan Turner 020 8654 6552

## The Parish Magazine

### Editor:

Mr. Brian McGinnis 31 Woodmere Avenue, Shirley CR0 7PG 020 8654 6190

### Accounts

Mrs. Janet Fitt 020 87777823

### Adverts

Janet Fitt or Brian McGinnis

## ADVERTISING DIRECTORY

### Making friends with your Bible

The Monday Evening Bible Reading Group offers you Zoom joining in, or notes to support your own personal Bible reading. See Bible Reading Group section of church website and page 10.

### Shirley Neighbourhood Care

St George's Church

Elstan Way

The Glade

CR0 7PR

020 8662 9599

info@dhirleyneighbourhood-care.co.uk

Weekday mornings 10 a.m.—12 30

### Phone Sockets/Broadband

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Telephone: 020 8654 0021/8048

### Gifts to share?

if you feel that St George's is not doing something it should be doing, or that you have a gift to offer/ share that is not being used by St George's, please do not keep your mouth shut!

### Prayers on weekdays

Tuning into God doesn't require a minimum number of people: one to One is fine.! But if you want prayer Company, there are Zoom prayers at 9 a.m. Monday to Friday. All are welcome.

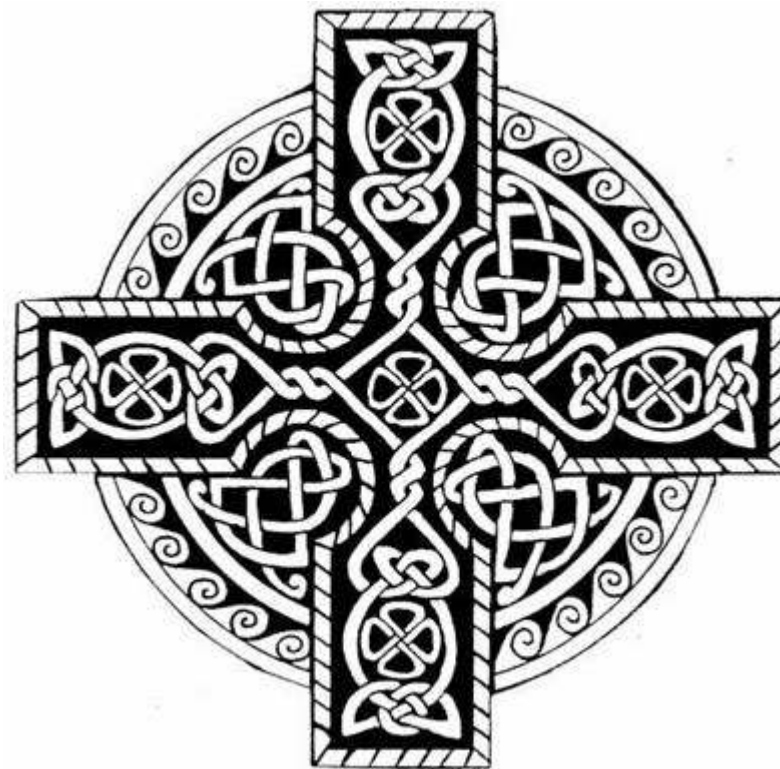
### TV Repairs

Need a Repair, Installation or User Training, Then phone Peter your local TV Engineer on Telephone: 078855 09319

### Look

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St.

### George the Martyr

Elstan Way, Shirley, Croydon. (off the Glade)

parish.office@hotmail.co.uk

www.stgeorgeschurch.co.uk

(Charity Number: 1134140)