

Dear friends

As we approach Easter we find ourselves once again walking the great arc of the Christian story: from wilderness and waiting, through cross and silence, and into resurrection light. It is a season that invites us to speak of hope. But not the kind of hope we so often reach for, you know, the hope that things might improve, settle down, or return to something more familiar.



The hope at the heart of Easter is far deeper than that, and far stranger too.

Christian hope does not arise from circumstances aligning in our favour. It does not depend on the world making sense, or suffering being neatly resolved. It springs instead from the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, from the utterly incomprehensible claim that God has entered fully into the brokenness of creation and has refused to abandon it.

St Paul puts it this way: *“In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself.”* Notice this isn’t simply about humanity, important as that is, but the world; all that has been wounded, fractured, and held captive by fear, injustice, and decay. This is a hope that stretches as wide as creation itself. A hope that dares to believe that nothing is beyond redemption, that nothing is finally lost, and that even death does not get the last word.

This is why Easter hope is not sentimental. It passes through Good Friday. It stands in the silence of Holy Saturday. And it trusts, sometimes with trembling hands, that resurrection is God’s faithful response to suffering, not its denial.

For us, as churches and communities in these challenging times, this is really important. Many are weary and many carry private griefs and public anxieties; then there are those doing faithful work that feels unseen or heavy. For sure Easter does not offer us easy answers but it does offer us a horizon. A promise that the tears we shed are not ignored, that the labour we offer is not wasted, and that God's reconciling work is still unfolding among us and beyond us.

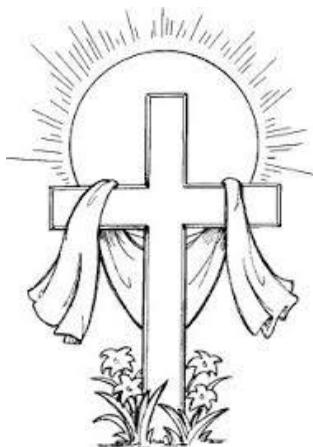
As we move through this Easter quarter, may we allow ourselves to live from that deeper hope. We are not being called to rush ahead, fix things or fret over not being able to do more than we already are. Rather we are called to trust that we are held within a story far larger than our own, a story in which Christ has already stepped into the depths and opened the way to life.

This season, then, invites us to pause, to loosen our grip on the need to fix everything, and instead to place our trust in the God who brings life out of death.

With my prayers for you, and with gratitude for all you carry and offer in this season,

Grace and peace,

Jayne Webb
Superintendent
Gloucestershire Circuit



Spring 2026

Dear Friends

After the long, damp and grey days of winter what a joy it is to see the spring flowers, the garden buds appearing and to hear the beautiful early morning bird song! However harsh our winters, spring finally emerges in all her glory there to lift our spirits and remind us that there is light after darkness. There is something uplifting and hopeful in a spring day reminding us of the constant light and joy of God's love for us.

As I write this we are enjoying some sunshine and milder weather, and looking ahead to Mothering Sunday, and Easter in our Christian calendar. Sadly world news is not good and we pray that the conflicts that abound will eventually cease – so many innocent people caught up in the wars that exist.

We have no news from Apperley or St John's for this edition but there are plenty of articles to read and reflect upon. Thanks to Martyn who gives us detailed insight into the words used around Holy Communion and to Andrew for his beautiful tribute to his grandmother. Congratulations to Andrew on his appointment as Lay Pastor and our prayers for him as he takes on this role at Bishops Cleeve.

Jan, our outreach worker, has provided a synopsis of the Easter story – best read with a Liverpool accent if you can manage it!

I hope you enjoy reading the magazine. Your comments, contributions and suggestions are always welcome.

An Easter blessing - May the glory and the promise of this joyous time of year bring peace and happiness to you and those you hold most dear.

And may Christ, Our Risen Savior, always be there by your side to bless you most abundantly and be your loving guide.

God bless –
Jean (Davies) Editor

Church Family News from Tewkesbury

We remember and send our love to all the members of our church families and particularly those who live in Residential Homes. We especially remember our friends Pat, and Geoff.



We continue to remember all those who suffer with ill health and mobility issues and hold them in our prayers. We particularly think of our friends who are embarking on further treatment and wish them the best possible outcome.

And we also remember those who struggle silently with their own personal problems. Many of us have been there, and hope that it is some comfort and support to know you are cared for and held in our prayers.

Congratulations to Jenny LeMarechal who has become a great grandmother again. Her grandson Callum and his wife Hayley have had a baby boy called Theo Stephen on 29th December weighing 5lb 6oz and Jenny's son's stepdaughter Katie had a baby boy, Max, on Christmas Day weighing 10lb 12oz.

We warmly welcomed Veronica Hardy as a member of our church at our Covenant service on 4th January 2026. Since joining our congregation Veronica has already become a great help to us as a welcomer particularly at Saturday coffee mornings. She is a true ambassador for our church! Veronica has not kept the best of health over the winter and we wish her well and hope that spring brings increased strength for her.

Welcome Space at Tewkesbury

March 2026 Update

I can't imagine that after some 7 years in the making there is anyone who hasn't heard the phrase *Tewkesbury Welcome Space Project*. In all that time we have likened the progress to a game with the old Yo - Yo. The project has been in and out in different guises like the tide. So now "Halleluiaah" the building work is under way! Thorn Homes, the appointed builder, was due to start on Monday February 9th but don't forget we are in Tewkesbury and the rivers had other ideas! Floods totally prevented vehicular access to the rear of the Church for two whole weeks and so the work eventually started on Monday 23rd February.

In one end of the Church Hall two new 3 meter square store rooms have been built with new entrance doors to the hall saved from the front of the Church. Above these stores is also a very usable second floor for further storage and/or small meeting room.

At the rear of the premises a new entrance doorway from our small carpark into the Guild Room is being constructed with external steps to it and a rising platform lift for those unable to use the steps. This will provide access to the Guild Room at any time whether or not the Church Hall is in use by another group. The Guild Room will therefore be independently hireable.

These two elements of the project are expected to be completed by late March.

Focus will then transfer to the main Church where the existing ground floor internal glazed screen under the line of the balcony will be removed, as will the existing stairway up to the balcony. A new set of stairs is to be installed making accessing the balcony easier and arriving at the top level where a new enlarged activity or meeting room, enclosed with a new glazed screen, will be constructed. Below the new stairway an additional toilet will be installed and the existing one upgraded. Opposite the toilets the existing kitchen will be converted

into an office cum reception and a new longer servery kitchen will be installed projecting further down that side of the Church. This will then complete the cafe area already in use.

Allowing for subsequent decoration and floor covering the overall completion is expected to be approximately the end of May.

Outside groups' activities and Church functions will be allocated to different areas of the buildings according to the location of the work going on. We therefore ask everyone to be extra careful during this whole period and not to wander into areas closed off or obviously part of the builders' working area. Our 3 carparking spaces will not be available during working hours on weekdays for the duration of the work.

If you have any queries about the project work please refer to Peter or Adrian or via a member of the Project Team.

Revd Diane Clutterbuck, who led our worship recently, quoted the recent words of Pope Leo – words that could end conflict if we all responded to his invitation. I find them very moving.

"I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbour. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace."

A lovely tribute to his grandmother from our contributor from Bishop's Cleeve, Andrew Maxwell. Thank you for sharing this, Andrew.

In Memory of Edith Stone 20.09.1896 - 10.01.1971 and a grandmother's wish fulfilled

I was poorly in the days leading up to the last edition of Crosspoint and so was unable to submit my intended article as part of my diary as a Geriatric Lay Worker.

Since then, the Circuit has kindly agreed that my role at Bishop's Cleeve should change to that of Lay Pastor. I feel very privileged to be given this opportunity, but I also feel emotional, as this is something my maternal grandmother would have wanted for me, more than anything else in the world.

Let me introduce you to my grandmother. Her name was Edith Fanny Stone (nee Henderson), a good Victorian name, in keeping with the era of her birth. She was born in 1896 in Clonmel in Ireland, where she grew up before moving to Liverpool. She was the second wife of William Stone, who died before I was born.

What do I remember about her, some 55 years after her death?

Well, I remember she was crippled by the worst curvature of the spine I have ever seen. By the time of her death, pain was a constant companion and with the exception of one occasion, she never questioned it, nor complained of her lot.

I remember she was wildly eccentric and vulnerable to my father's teasing.

I remember she was one of the most loving people it has been my privilege to know.

I remember the incredible closeness (bond) I felt with her.

I remember despite the threats of telling our parents of our misbehaving when she babysat my sister and I, she never did. Indeed, she protected us against criticism, although it was mostly my sister who misbehaved, as I was the near perfect child growing up.

I remember her strong Christian faith.

I remember her teaching my sister and I to pray.

I remember her encouraging us to go to Sunday school and church.

I remember her taking my sister and I to jumble sales at her church "and showing us off". That was great fun for me.

I remember her once asking me the question, "Andrew, would you ever consider becoming a vicar when you are older"? And her being disappointed with my reply "No way gran, that would be boring".

I remember my gran with great affection, as few people have touched my life in the warm loving way she did. The impact of those first 16 years of my life knowing her, have been immeasurable. Even today 55 years after her death, things remind me of her and the telling affect she has had on me and the lessons I learned from her.

I tell grandmothers (and Grandfathers) what an important role they have to play in the lives of their young grandchildren and the powerful influence for good they can have.

My grandmother never lived to see me become a person who shared her faith, became a Local Preacher, or a part time geriatric Lay Worker in the Methodist Church.

Although not in an ordained capacity, I would like to think that my special grandmother, whom I still miss, would be pleased with my recent appointment, and perhaps the fulfilment of her greatest wish for me...

CROSSPOINT MAGAZINE

I do hope you enjoy receiving your copy of Crosspoint. It is our pleasure to send it out to those friends who have either moved away or are unable to attend church. We do appreciate your continued financial support towards the production of Crosspoint, which costs about 80p a copy to prepare. There is a box in the church porch for donations or you can pop an envelope in with your regular giving. The suggested donation is £1 per copy or £4 for the year.

If you would prefer to receive your copy online if you provide me with an email address I can do this. This will help us with distribution costs but I do appreciate that many prefer to have a paper copy to browse (me included!) Thank you for your support.

The next issue of Crosspoint will be produced mid-June – please send copy for the next edition to Jean Davies (Tel: 01684 772178) no later than Sunday 7th June.

Articles including family news are welcomed. **(Please ensure you have the permission of those you write about before submitting)**. It helps if you are able to send via email. Send to Jean Davies: jed0606@yahoo.com

Please note that articles reflect the views of the writer and not necessarily those of Tewkesbury Methodist Church.



BREAKFAST CLUB - WILD GREEN CHURCH!

Wild Green Church happens the first Sunday of the month at 9.15am in the hall. Yummy Bacon baps, cereal, toast and juices are available to all. There are simple craft activities and some time reflecting on God's creation and our care of it. Everyone is welcome!

WINCHCOMBE METHODIST CHURCH REFLECTIONS

Nearly ten years ago, I snapped my Achilles tendon while playing in a competitive doubles match of a sport that might be called Whiff-Whaff, Gossima or Pom-Pom, according to where in the world you happened to be staying. This sport has also been called parlour tennis and ping-pong by its followers over the last hundred years. Today we usually call it table-tennis ... though many of the other names do give clues about the nature of this popular sport.



In a similar way, I do believe that the many different words which can be used to describe what we Methodists tend to call a 'Holy Communion' Service ... can be similarly enlightening. This article seeks to deepen our own understanding of this special regular feature on the Plan for Sunday Worship in all of our churches by focussing on some of the names used in other Church traditions for this particular Service.

1. Sacrament [from the Latin 'sanctus' = sacred] For Christians, a sacrament is a religious ceremony through which God's love, grace and peace can be received through faith by the believer. Although the Catholic Church recognises 7 Sacraments (of initiation and healing), Protestant churches only recognise two of these (baptism and Holy Communion) as being biblically commanded and therefore view them both as symbols of God's grace.

2. Holy Communion This title reminds participants that this sharing together in God's Presence expresses not a solitary experience but a 'shared togetherness' where reflective communication with God is

being actively encouraged.

3. The Lord's Supper This phrase (used in 1 Cor. 11:20) highlights the link with The Last Supper - the last meal Jesus shared with the Twelve Disciples, prior to his Crucifixion. The expression emphasises that the Lord Himself is the host and that the meal is shared to remember Him and His death. The Lord's Supper is seen as the New Testament equivalent of the annual Jewish Passover celebration in which freedom from the guilt and mistakes of the past are recalled with heartfelt gratitude, alongside God's provision of life.

4. Breaking of Bread This phrase (appearing in Acts 2: 42) reflects the fact that bread is an ancient symbol of hospitality, welcome and care. The word 'breaking' (as seen in Mark 14: 22) is a sharp reminder of Jesus' broken body on the Cross.

5. Eucharist [from the Greek 'eucharistia' = thanksgiving] The use of this word stems from the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper where Jesus, after taking the bread and again after taking the cup of wine ... gives thanks prior to offering them to The Twelve.

6. Mass [from the Latin word 'missa' = sending forth] For Catholics, the Mass is regarded as the most important type of worship, in which Jesus' willing sacrifice on the Cross is recalled. In the Mass, bread and wine are widely believed to become transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ [= transubstantiation]. Having then so received through this direct meeting with Christ by faith, the believer is then considered as being empowered and sent out into the world, to serve God.

7. Holy Sacrifice {Sacrament of} Favoured by some Eastern Orthodox churches, this phrase emphasises the sacrificial nature of Jesus' death, based on Scriptures that refer to Jesus as the 'Lamb of God' (eg. John 1:29) and 'our Passover lamb' (eg. 1 Cor. 5:7). Other key biblical texts which support this same view include the parallel between God providing Abraham with a ram to sacrifice on Mount Mariah ... with God's provision for humanity's salvation which necessitated Jesus' self-sacrifice on the Cross.

8. Sacred Mysteries {Sacrament of} In some Eastern Orthodox traditions, 'Holy Communion' is often referred to as a 'Sacred Mystery' in order to emphasise the ways that God will use our remembrance of Jesus' death to enable his Presence with us in ways that we will never

fully comprehend, certainly on this side of Heaven.

I do believe that each of the 8 words and phrases outlined above reveal an important aspect of this very important part of the worship we offer to God. We will all have our own preferred 'label' for this special time of sharing together in worship but an appreciation of the 'labels' used in other church traditions, can I think be very rewarding. In the end of course, it is our own personal response to Jesus' death on the Cross which is crucial ... and it is within this special service that we are encouraged [at best] to rededicate ourselves to serving the One who has enabled our forgiveness, peace of mind and eternal acceptance to God.

There are many hymn lines which come to mind, helping to express our heartfelt gratitude to God. Here are the opening four lines from a 1995 Stuart Townend hymn which for me capture something of the wonder of God's amazing salvation plan which we particularly recall when sharing in Holy Communion together:

*How deep the Father's love for us,
how vast beyond all measure,
that He should give His only Son
to make a wretch His treasure.*

God Bless - Martyn Smith

PASTORAL CARE - Tewkesbury

Please remember to let me or Jan Hoskins know if you are aware of anyone who may be in need of some support – whether it be practical help or just a meet-up for a chat. Jan will always be pleased to hear from you. Her email is outreach.Tewkesbury@gloscircuit.co.uk and work telephone no is 07713 880853.

Jean Davies – Pastoral secretary

HOLLAND HOUSE SECTION AWAY-DAY

Wednesday 22nd July -10am to 4.30pm

I am delighted that several of you from our section churches have signed up for our Away-Day. The numbers will be finalised shortly but there is still time to add your name if you would like to come. Please contact me at the email address below.

Just a reminder that the cost for the day is £42 to include coffee, lunch and tea and cake. (Special diets can be accommodated). I now need to collect the deposits please so if you can let me have £10 per head at your convenience that would be appreciated. Cash is fine if you see me but otherwise I can give you the church bank details if you contact me.

Deposits are non-refundable. Do please advise me of any changes to your numbers.

A reminder of the House's website – it is worth a look.
<https://hollandhouse.org/>

Jean Davies (jed0606@yahoo.com or 01684 772178)



BISHOPS CLEEVE METHODIST CHURCH

Greetings from
Bishops Cleeve



How quickly the time
of Lent seems to
have come round as I
cast my mind back to
the Christmas
Season!

A pre Christmas highlight was welcoming the classes of children from Bishops Cleeve Academy School to hear the nativity story and to see the exhibition and to be stirred up by Andrew Maxwell who has them eating out of his hand!

Jayne led a lovely Carol Service for us and we had a successful Local Arrangement Service on Christmas Day, our first ever at Christmas. It was great to welcome back some of our Sunday School Scholars , now all grown up and bringing their own children to' show and tell' the presents they received for Christmas!

A beautiful Thanksgiving Service was held in the church just before Christmas for our eldest member ,dear Kathleen Pritchard, who died peacefully at home aged 104 after a long and valiant life, it was good to share in memories of her with her family, friends and team of carers who looked after her so well in her final years.

As her church family it was a joy to celebrate her big 100th birthday with Mavis and her family after Worship on the 11th January, what a party that was!

We will have begun our Lent Course on Thursday mornings at 11.00am by the time you are reading this , hoping we will have some takers for it!

Have a peaceful and reflective Lenten time and a very Happy Easter to you.

From all of us at Bishops Cleeve Methodist Church.

Spring 2026

From Bishops Cleeve (see centre fold photos)

We had a wonderful celebration at the Methodist Church in Bishop's Cleeve on 11th January, when a much-cherished member of the congregation, Mavis West, reached the age of 100.

Mavis, who received a message from the King, attended church on her birthday with members of her family, joining with her church family, before having a party in the church hall at the end of the service. Other family members arrived during and after the service, to join her and make this momentous day, so special for Mavis.

Mavis was born in 1926 in Lincoln and at a young age, she moved to Rochester in Kent, where her father worked in the Dockyard. Indeed, many of her family travelled from Kent to be part of her special day.

Mavis was married to Syd in July 1947, and they had 3 children , Brian, Keith and Anne. Mavis lived in Chatham, Kent in the early years of her marriage before moving to Rainham in 1960.

In 1990, she left Kent for Wales before finally settling in her present home in Bishop's Cleeve in 1995. Mavis, as well as achieving this milestone age, is the proud grandmother to 8 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. We hope to have another birthday party for her, next year!

What can I eat for Easter?

Can't eat beef.....mad cow.

Can't eat chicken..... bird flu.

Can't eat eggs..... Salmonella.

Can't eat pork.....fears that bird flu will infect pigs.

Can't eat fish..... heavy metals in the waters.

Can't eat fruits and veggies..... insecticides and herbicides.

Can't eat potatoes, pasta, bread, rice.....nasty carbs.

Hmmmmmmmm! I believe that leaves.....chocolate.

(The following piece has been submitted by Jan Hoskins, our outreach worker at Tewkesbury – a true scouser! Originally written in phonetic scouse we thought the original wording might be a bit difficult for you to follow so she has adapted as shown, so we can all understand!!)

The text below has been partially copied with my style of paraphrasing from: 'The Gospels in Scouse' (The Rev D. Williams and F. Shaw. P.77-95. Revised 1977)
Jan Hoskins

Jesus sees the future. (Mark 13)

As Jesus and his disciples left the temple in Jerusalem, the disciples couldn't get over its size and beauty. The enormous stones looked indestructible. But Jesus stunned them: a day was coming when not one stone would be left on another.

Later, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him when this would happen. Jesus didn't give them a date. Instead, he painted a picture of turbulent times ahead — wars, natural disasters, chaos, and fear. False leaders would rise, claiming to speak for God. His own followers would be arrested and dragged before rulers.

But he told them not to panic. These events would be like giving birth — painful, yes, but leading to something new. Even when they would be put on trial, they wouldn't stand alone. God's Spirit would give them the words to speak. The message was clear: history might shake, but God's purposes would not fail.

The Last Judgement. (Matthew 25:1–46)

Jesus described a dramatic future scene. All nations gathered. Humanity divided into two groups, like a shepherd separating sheep from goats.

God will tell those on His right, "Come. Everything is ready for you." Why? Because they fed the hungry, gave water to the thirsty, welcomed strangers, clothed the poor, cared for the sick, and much more. They are confused —

when did they ever do these things for him? His answer is simple and powerful: Every time you did it for one of my people, you did it for me’.

To the others he says the opposite. They had seen suffering and walked past it. They chose indifference. Their failure to love and to help others revealed where their hearts truly stood.

The Last Supper (Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7; John 13.)

It was Passover in Jerusalem — a festival remembering freedom from slavery. In an upstairs room, Jesus shared a final meal with his friends.

Then he did something shocking. He knelt down and washed their feet. This was servant’s work. Peter protested saying ‘I’m not letting you lower yourself and do that Jesus!’. But Jesus insisted: greatness in God’s kingdom looks like service.

As they ate, the mood darkened. Jesus said one of them would betray him. The room fell silent. One by one they asked, “Is it me?” Judas soon slipped out into the night.

Then Jesus took the bread, gave special thanks for it, broke into pieces and gave it to His disciples saying ‘Eat this. This is my body. It’s given for you’.

He then took the wine, gave special thanks for it, and shared it with everyone. ‘All of you drink this. This is my blood. It starts a new life for men and it’s being shed so that sins can be forgiven’.

He was giving them a way to understand what was about to happen. This wasn’t an accident. It was a sacrifice.

Jesus is Arrested (Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 17)

When they walked to the Garden of Gethsemane, the night was heavy. Jesus was overwhelmed with sorrow. He asked his closest friends to stay awake and pray that they did not fall into temptation.

Alone in the darkness, he prayed to God his father asking for his suffering to be taken away from him, however, accepting that he will follow God's will.

Each time he returned to his friends they were asleep.

As noise and lights grew from by the garden gates, Judas arrived with soldiers and identified Jesus with a kiss. The arrest was swift. The disciples scattered.

Jesus is Tried (Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 22; John 19)

Jesus faced interrogation by the Religious leaders, demanding to know if he claimed to be God's Son. His lack of direct answers sealed their decision.

Meanwhile, Peter waited nearby. When accused of being one of Jesus' followers, fear took over. Three times he denied even knowing him. When a rooster crowed, Peter remembered Jesus' warning — and broke down in tears.

Jesus was taken to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. Pilate could see no crime deserving death. But the crowd, stirred into fury, shouted for crucifixion. Instead of freeing Jesus, Pilate released a criminal named Barabbas. Soldiers mocked Jesus, dressing him in purple and pressing a crown of thorns onto his head.

Under pressure, Pilate gave in. The sentence was death.

Jesus is Killed (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:24; John 19:23)

Weakened from beatings, Jesus struggled to carry the wooden cross through the streets. A passerby, Simon of Cyrene, was forced to carry it the rest of the way.

At a hill called Calvary, nails were driven through his hands and feet. A sign above him read: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

Some mocked him. Others watched in grief. Yet even in agony, Jesus spoke words of forgiveness: "Father, forgive them, they don't know what they are doing."

One of the criminals crucified beside him asked to be remembered. Jesus promised him paradise.

Jesus made sure his mother and John would care for each other.

After hours of suffering, he cried out, “It is finished.” Then, with a final prayer, he died.

Jesus Rises from the Grave (St. John 20, Acts of the Apostles)

A man named Joseph of Arimathea placed Jesus’ body in a tomb carved from rock. A heavy stone sealed the entrance.

Early Sunday morning, some women went to the tomb — and found it open. The body was gone. A young stranger told them the unthinkable: Jesus was alive and to go tell his disciples the good news.

Soon Jesus appeared to his followers. At first they were terrified. Then they saw the wounds in his hands and side. It was really him. Thomas, who had doubted, believed when he saw for himself. Jesus told them that those who believe without seeing are blessed.

In the weeks that followed, fear turned into courage. After receiving the Holy Spirit, these once-frightened disciples began boldly announcing that Jesus had risen from the dead — in the very city where he had been executed.

The disciples would suffer from sharing that message. But they no longer feared death. They believed it had already been defeated and they would have eternal life.

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

By Isaac Watts

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

I am a member of Tewkesbury Methodist Church and I attend a House group in which 8-10 members meet under the guidance of a mentor to study aspects of the bible or other Christian works.

My group is led by a lay preacher who said recently at one of our meetings, “It is not always what the bible says that it is important, but rather, how we respond to what is said, what we make of what is said, and how we act on what is said”. In other words, the word or the words contained in the bible are the “grains of mustard seed”, but it is left to the reader as to how that seed grows.

This can also be seen in the hymn, “To God be the glory”. The lines “and opened the life gates that ALL may go in” and “the vilest offender who truly believes”. There are no barriers or quotas to entry to God’s kingdom – it is accessible to everyone, even those who we may question should be granted entry.

How do we respond to these words and act upon them? Are we able to accept this from God fully and welcome all people into the church and God’s family? Truly we should “trust and obey, for there’s no other way”.

Mike Mills

APRIL FOOL’S DAY

Probably the most famous April Fool’s joke of all time was the 1960’s BBC TV broadcast feature on the spaghetti farms of Italy. A BBC reporter interviewed Italian farmers about their work and the progress of the spaghetti plants in great detail. Spaghetti plants were filmed being carefully planted, and then being harvested. And all in the BBC’s most serious documentary manner. It took a while to appreciate that this was Auntie playing games. Whatever next!

The odd thing is that no one is quite sure of the origin of this very British tradition. Most attribute it to changes in Britain’s calendar in the 1700s, when New Year’s Day moved from 25th March to 1st January. Not surprisingly, the change caused a lot of confusion and mistakes around the start of April. Others look even further back, to the ancient Roman feast of Hilaria, when the goddess Cybele was celebrated with pranks and jokes around the Spring Equinox, 25th March.

FROM SOPHIE FRANKLIN – our Eco-Church representative

Taxing wealth to tackle inequality – an article from Just Money Movement, justmoney.org.uk

What is wealth? It's not just an amount of money or possessions – it is security, opportunity, freedom from worry about paying the bills or covering an unexpected cost.

For those without wealth, life can be precarious, and the cost of living crisis, which is most sharply felt in food prices and utility bills, continues to bite. Recent research from consumer association Which? reports that over half of UK households made at least one adjustment to cover essential spending in the last month. Over a third of households on low incomes had to cut back on essentials – these households are less likely to have savings and are already buying cheaper food, so have fewer choices available.

On the other hand, the wealthiest 40 families have more wealth than the bottom 50% of the population (roughly 34 million people). The Biblical principle of Jubilee understood inequality and its consequences well. Jubilee made provision for redistribution of land ownership, as the primary source of wealth in an agricultural economy, so as to avoid the build-up of extreme wealth inequality.

As Christians we want to live in a society where everyone can flourish, and particularly where the poorest are cared for; through good things like healthcare, a social safety net, and a thriving environment. It is just and right for the super-rich to contribute more to society through taxing wealth, rather than squeezing at the lower and middle ends or making cuts.

Tax could be key to solving this problem. The very rich can afford to pay more in tax, and many want to pay more, to help fund key services and to deal with the cost of living crisis. But our current tax system is unfairly structured so that wealth is taxed at a much lower rate than work.

Government's Budgets are an opportunity to seek justice and the common good. They should be a statement about what kind of society we want and how we should pay for it.

EASTER STORY BISCUITS

A great recipe to share with your children/grandchildren!!

Prep. Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 1 day

Ingredients:

1 cup pecan nuts

1 tsp. vinegar

3 egg whites

1 pinch salt

1 cup sugar

large plastic bag

wooden spoon

tape

Bible



Instructions:

Preheat oven to 150C.

Place pecans in the plastic bag and let the children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.

Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and

brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.

So far the ingredients are not very appetising...

Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Ps. 34:8 and John 3:16.

Beat with a mixer on high speed until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the colour white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.

Fold in broken nuts.

Drop, teaspoon by teaspoon, onto non-stick baking parchment-covered baking sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matthew 27:57-60. Put the baking sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF.

Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matthew 27:65-66.

GO TO BED! Explain that they may feel sad to leave them in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers felt despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matthew 28:1-9.

CHURCH FLOWERS

Wendy Allen continues to do flower arrangements in memory or celebration of loved ones for a small donation (suggested minimum £10). We will provide flowers and endeavour to meet your specific requests if possible. There is a clipboard in the vestibule for you to sign up for dates throughout 2026.

LAKE DISTRICT HOLIDAY

One of our church family has a Lodge in the Lake District and this is available for anyone who would like to benefit from a holiday in the Lake District. It is set alongside Bassenthwaite Lake and sleeps up to 6 people. If anyone is interested perhaps they could contact Andy on 07983 516863 or andy.j.norman1@gmail.com. The link to Lakeland Retreats is <https://www.lakelandretreats.com/accommodation/troutbeck-lodge>

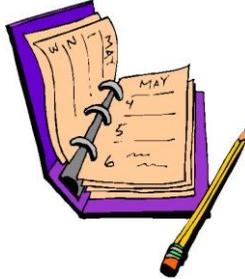
It is in a beautiful location on a park of 50 lodges. One open plan lounge, kitchen and dining area with two bathrooms and three bedrooms. Decking outside and view of the lake.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please check the weekly notices or our website for any alterations to dates/times and more detailed information about events

**PLEASE NOTE SOME EVENTS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
DEPENDING ON HOW THE BUILDING WORK PROCEEDS –
please check in weekly notices or on our website**



Coffee mornings every Saturday between 10.30am and 12.30pm

MARCH

Saturday 28th – 10am – Book Club

APRIL

Wednesday 1st – NO Holy Communion

Spring 2026

Maundy Thursday 2nd – 7pm – Short service with Holy Communion
Good Friday 3rd – 10am – Short reflection
Easter Sunday 5th – 9.15am – Wild Green Easter Breakfast Club
10.30am – Service with Holy Communion
Tuesday 7th – 2.30pm – Wives and Friends
Saturday 25th – 10am – Book Club

MAY

Sunday 3rd – 9.15am – Wild Green Breakfast Club
Tuesday 5th – 2.30pm – Wives and Friends
Sunday 31st – 6pm – United Service – venue tbc

CHURCH SERVICES – Tewkesbury

Any alteration to dates and or times will be shown in the weekly notices (also available on our website). The church is generally also open to visitors on Saturday mornings (coffee morning).

A service is held every Sunday at Tewkesbury at 10.30am service (with occasional changes to times as per the notices).

*10.30am service **with** Holy Communion is the first Sunday of each month. We also hold a short service of Holy Communion on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 10.30am followed by coffee.*

Wild Green Church with breakfast takes place on the first Sunday of the month at 9.15am.

We do not have a Junior Church as such, but all families and children are welcome to any of our services though there will be particular emphasis on involving children in our 9.15am Wild Green Church Breakfast Club.

CHURCH GROUPS AND MEETINGS (TEWKESBURY)

Please see weekly notices for dates of meetings as they are arranged

**Church Council
Worship Forum
Welcome Space
Finance/Property
Stewards**

**Pastoral
Publicity
Green group
Wives and Friends
Book Club**

Tewkesbury Churches Together

THE METHODIST CHURCH

Priorities for the Methodist Church

To proclaim and affirm our conviction of God's love in Christ, for us and for all the world; and renew confidence in God's presence and action in the world and in the church.

Main contacts for Apperley and Tewkesbury Methodist Churches

Minister: The Revd Jayne Webb

Tel: 01684 298650

Who also has pastoral responsibility for Winchcombe Methodist Church, Bishop's Cleeve Methodist Church and St Johns, Northgate

Apperley Senior Steward – Peter Stych
Tewkesbury Senior Steward - Linda Sallis
Registered Charity No: 1179000

We are in the Methodist Circuit of Gloucestershire, part of the Bristol Methodist District

Web site for Apperley and Tewkesbury Methodist Churches with links to our sister churches, Winchcombe, Bishop's Cleeve and St John's, Northgate

www.tewkesburymethodistchurch.org.uk

Tewkesbury Church phone: 01684 291101 This is situated in the vestry with an extension to the vestibule kitchen and is intended primarily for use by church officials and for emergency use.

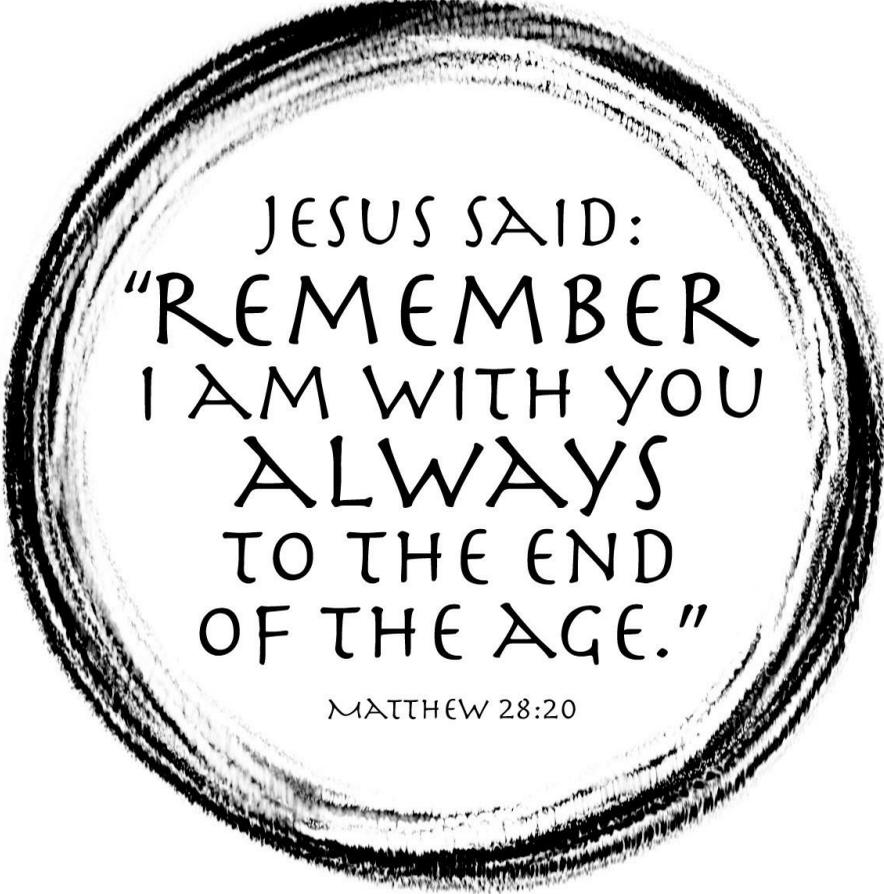


IMPORTANT Booking rooms and events

If you are arranging any event on the church premises of Tewkesbury Methodist Church, the room and time must be arranged with the bookings secretary, Andrew May email tmcroombookings@btinternet.com or (or contact Jean Davies 01684 772178 jed0606@yahoo.com)



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JESUS SAID:
"REMEMBER
I AM WITH YOU
ALWAYS
TO THE END
OF THE AGE."

MATTHEW 28:20