

Issue 4

Spring 2024

# Spotlight

St. Mary's with St. Francis



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## **Hello!**

Welcome to the fourth edition of Spotlight, the quarterly magazine from St Mary's Church.

We hope you enjoy the variety of regular and one-off features, news, activities and information we've put together for you.

The centre page is designed for you to pull out for craft and colouring.

This edition has an Easter theme running through it as we run up to the Easter season and Jesus' death and resurrection.

We've included a questionnaire this time as we're a year old - so please do fill it in and let us know what you think!

If you would like to get in touch our email address is

[spotlightstmarys@gmail.com](mailto:spotlightstmarys@gmail.com)

Happy reading!

Sarah Hill & Elisabeth Emmett-Pace.

## **Contacts ...**

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## **Sunday Services:**

<b>8am</b>	BCP Communion
<b>10.15am</b>	All Age Service with Sunday School (2nd & 4th with communion, 1st, 3rd & 5th without)
<b>6pm</b>	Evening Service (1st and 3rd with communion, 2nd, 4th & 5th without)

## **Tuesday Communion 10.30am:**

2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month in the Lady Chapel in church

## **Tuesday Prayer Meeting 10.30am:**

1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesday of each month in the Lady Chapel in church

## **Wednesday 1.30-2.45pm - Allsorts Baby & Toddler Group :**

In the church hall, term time only, £1 Donation - contact Bev Frettsome

## Dates For Your Diary ...

### **St Mary's Choir Practice - Fridays 7.30-8.30pm:**

In church, new members always welcome - contact Peter Harris

### **Lego Swap & HDPP Photo Scanning - 3rd Sat Monthly 10-12pm:**

In church - See newsletter for more details

### **Crafty Chat - Thursdays 10.30am-12pm:**

In church coffee bar - see newsletter for more details

### **SMARTS Concert & Afternoon Tea - 6th March, 10th April, 1st May 1-1.45pm:**

In church - see page 18 and leaflets in church for more details

### **Easter Services:**

Please see page 26 for more details

### **Maundy Thursday 28th March 7pm:** Communion Service

### **Good Friday 29th March**

Children's Good Friday Club

**12.30-3pm:** Afternoon Service

**7pm:** Good Friday Choir Led Service

### **Easter Sunday 31st March - 8am, 10.15am & 6pm:**

Communion Services

### **Easter Craft Afternoon - Saturday 16th March 1-4pm:**

In church - Suitable for all ages - See page 16 for more details

### **Social Strolls - 30th March 2pm, 13th April 1.30pm, 20th May 7pm:**

See page 17 for more details

### **Sung BCP Evensong - 7th April 6pm**

### **Christian Aid Fayre - Saturday 20th April 9.30am-1.30pm:**

In church - Come and grab a bargain and support a great cause

### **This Is The Greatest Show Tribute Night -**

### **Saturday 27th April 8.15pm (doors open 7pm):**

Tickets available from church coffee bar or online - see church website

### **Roots Christians Basics Course - Beginning 1st May 6.45pm:**

In church - See page 18 or talk to Ian (vicar) for more information

### **Church Family Picnic - 6th May 1-3pm:**

Lots of fun for all ages - See newsletter for more details

**See weekly church newsletter, church website and church Facebook page for more information on 'What's Going on'!**

## Getting To Know You: Sue Moore ...

### Elisabeth Emmett-Pace

### **Who are you and where are you from?**

I'm Susan Moore and I come from Hinckley. I was not called Sue until I was about 14. I was born in Market Bosworth at Bosworth Park Infirmary which is now Bosworth Hall Hotel. The house I live in was my grandparents' house when it was built, then it became my parent's house and so I've always lived there since the day I first came home as a ten-day old baby.



### **Where did you go to school?**

I went to Westfield Infant and Junior School. I was in the first year in Hinckley not to sit the 11 plus exam, you just went to your catchment area high school which for me was Mount Grace Girls' School. At 14 I went to the grammar school for two years and then onto Hinckley College to do a secretarial course.

### **What did you used to do for a job?**

I was a secretary. I only ever worked for two firms. For 38 years I worked for Hackney and Sons Chartered Surveyors (later the firm merged with Fox Bennett). This was an extremely interesting and varied job which involved going to Market Bosworth cattle market (until it closed) and farm sales.

### **What is your history with St Mary's and how did you come to worship here?**

I was actually baptised at Holy Trinity Church when I was two months old. I started Sunday School there when I was four and was confirmed when I was fourteen. When I was older, I became a sides-person and a member of the PCC. But in early 1994 I left Holy Trinity Church and became a member of St Mary's where I am involved in church life.

### **Why did you decide to become a Guide leader?**

I was a Brownie and then a Guide at St John's as back when I used to go to Holy Trinity Church, St John's was its daughter church. After I'd left Guides, the Brownie leader asked me to go back and help. I was her assistant for a number of years before becoming the Brownie leader. I was then asked to become Division Commissioner. I did this for 7 years, during which time I didn't run a Guide unit.

I'd moved church in that time to St Mary's and they had no Guides, so my friend Lin and I re-opened St Mary's Guides in 2000 and then Rangers in 2004. I finally gave up running a unit in 2014 but I am still heavily involved in Guiding. I am chairman of the division campsite committee, as well as chairman and treasurer of Hinckley Trefoil Guild (a group of ladies who no longer run a unit) and I have just taken over as chairman of Leicestershire Trefoil Guild.

**How many years have you been involved in guiding?**

I have been involved for 57 as a leader, since 1967. And I was involved for 8 years before that as a youngster.

**What has kept you in guiding for so many years?**

I enjoy it and it's nice to put back what you've enjoyed yourself. It's lovely to see the girls develop, particularly at Rangers. You mostly have them for 4 years and you see them growing and reaching their potential, which is just a joy to watch.

**Have you won any guiding awards?**

I've been given a few awards. A Thanks Badge, The Midland Region Chief Commissioners Award, The County Appreciation Brooch, The County Brooch and The Long Service Award which I received for 50 years' service.

**What is your hope for St Mary's?**

My hope is to see the church grow, with new people joining us and staying with us.

**What makes you angry?**

A lot of things make me angry, but it particularly makes me angry when I see children, particularly young children, on TV, who are killed by the people who should be looking after them.

**What piece of music and book would you take to a desert island?**

For music it would have to be Nimrod by Elgar and The Prince Of Denmark's March.

I have two books I would take. Jane Austen's Emma, along with my Prayer Book, because my faith is important to me.

**Who are your bible heroes?**

My bible hero is Ruth. I respect her because she left everything, her home, family, everything, to go with her mother-in-law to a new country, a new life. But God looked after her.

**Who do you think we should interview next?**

Barbara Hoyte.

## Wisdom And Hope ... Mat Cobb

Imagine if you were planting your garden this spring and a neighbour says to you "Oh you're wasting your time. Nothing is going to grow this year." What would you do?

You could give up. It's easy to be put off doing things when others discourage us, and discouraging things are easy to say. Or you could ignore their comments, but it's really difficult to ignore off-putting comments. We are naturally inclined to reflect on what people tell us, even if we know this wouldn't be the right choice.

This may be something you've experienced before. It might not be with gardening, it could be anything such as painting, knitting, learning an instrument, a language, or any number of things. If you pushed through the doubt, most likely you can reflect on a proud achievement today.

This Lent, the Church of England made its theme Wisdom and Hope, and I think those qualities are very relevant to a subject close to my heart, the environment.

Hope is "being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." That is a quote from Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who has lived through some of South Africa's darkest times, yet stayed true to his principles of non-violence.

If we as a society are to overcome this climate crisis, we will first need to know that there is a future worth working towards. Try having a vision of what the ideal would look like. It's how all new achievements begin.

Wisdom has many definitions, from "knowing you know nothing" (Socrates), to "Knowing yourself" (Aristotle), but variously seems to suggest knowing the right thing to do, having good judgement, and being able to achieve the right outcome.

I think the two feed each other. While Hope gives us an objective to achieve and a compass to direct us through the discouragement, wisdom will help us discern the truth through the 'doomerism'. It will help us decide on the right things to do, or buy, or for that matter to not do or not buy.

Just as spring follows winter, and life springs from seed, let us grow in wisdom and hope for a better future.



## Easter Simnel Cake ... Bev Henderson

I love a simnel cake! To me it's part of Easter day, having a slice with a nice cup of tea. This is the recipe I have used for many years.

Heat oven to 180°C or gas mark 4. Grease and line a 20.5 cm or 8 inch round cake tin.

Ingredients:

175 g (6 oz) butter or margarine

175 g (6 oz) soft brown sugar

3 medium eggs

Pinch of salt

1 x 2.5 ml spoon (1/2 tsp) mixed spice

5 x 15 ml (5 tbsp) milk

2 x 5 ml (2 tsp) golden syrup

600 g (1lb 6oz) mixed dried fruit

25 g (1 oz) glace cherries, quartered -

I often put more in as I love cherries!

450 g (1 lb) almond paste

+ Apricot jam and beaten egg used in decorating.



Beat butter and sugar till light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, with a little flour, beating well.

Stir in salt, spice and add milk and syrup with a little flour and mix well.

Fold in remaining flour and fruit. Place half the mixture in the tin and level.

Divide the almond paste into two. Roll out 1 into approximately 20.5cm (8 inch) circle and place on top of the cake mixture. Top with the remaining mixture.

Bake for 1 hour then reduce temperature to 140°C (gas mark 1) and bake until cooked. I've not put a time on this as the original recipe I used said bake for a further 2 hours and it never ever takes that long in my oven! Keep checking with a skewer but remember that the almond paste will be soft, don't mistake it for uncooked cake mixture. Then leave the cake to cool.

Divide the remaining almond paste into two ... Now this is where if you

like marzipan as much as I do you may like to have some more at hand! One half is to cover the top of the cake, which you need to brush with the apricot jam (to help it stick). The other remaining almond paste is to make eleven small balls.

Brush the marzipan top with the beaten egg and place the eleven balls around the top edge. Brush again with the egg and then place under a hot grill to brown the marzipan. Take care as this can happen quite quickly.

I like to decorate my cake with some flowers or maybe chicks, sometimes even mini Easter eggs!

Enjoy!

## Holocaust Memorial Day ... Judy Williams

“Learning From Genocide for a Better Future”

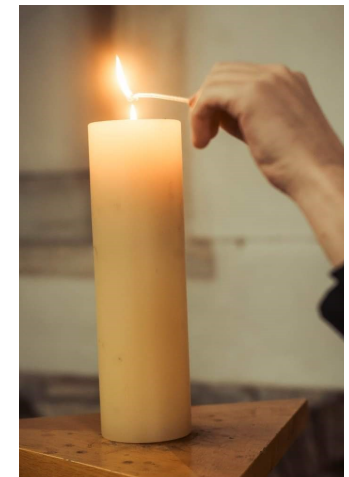
Holocaust Memorial Day took place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024. This is a day where we remember the 6 million Jews, along with millions of other innocent people, killed by the Nazis during the Second World War, but also those killed in later genocides for example in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

A display on the theme of “The Fragility of Freedom” was created in church for all to see, to pray and remember.

Freedom means different things to different people. What is clear is that in every genocide that has taken place, those who are targeted have their freedom removed, before many of them are murdered.

Freedom is fragile and cannot be taken for granted.

“Lest We Forget” ... God’s blessings on us all.



### MAF bridges the healthcare gap in Liberia

MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) is a Christian organisation reaching men, women and children in over 25 countries, operating more than 115 aircraft. MAF's pilots overcome terrain that has become inaccessible due to derelict roads, natural disaster, or violent conflict. MAF aircraft fly into more than 1,000 destinations – transporting food and water, health professionals and medical supplies, and emergency workers and Christian missionaries where they are needed most. Each flight brings practical help, spiritual hope, and physical healing to thousands of isolated people in remote communities for whom flying is a lifeline not a luxury. MAF is flying for life.

JJ Dossen Memorial Hospital is based in the coastal town of Harper, Maryland County – the most southerly tip of Liberia near Ivory Coast's border. It is the only proper hospital in the area, which has a population of around 166,000 people and is a referral hospital for other counties in SE Liberia.

80% of Harper residents are in 'absolute poverty'.

Maryland County has 'some of the worst health indicators in the world' but Partners In Health, which works with MAF, believes that healthcare is a fundamental human right regardless of geography. In response, PIH and Liberia's Ministry of Health have been improving access to healthcare across the region. They established a TB isolation ward at the hospital, which is the only ward of its kind in the country.



Thanks to PIH's expertise, the hospital now has an X-ray machine, which works for the first time in decades. An oxygen plant now supplies oxygen to other health facilities and a microbiology lab also services the whole region. The operating theatre now boasts advanced sterilisation where surgeons can safely perform caesarean sections.

During Liberia's rainy season from May to November, pothole-ridden dirt tracks turn into dangerous mud-slides. Travel to Harper by road from the capital, Monrovia, can take over a week. With MAF, the flight takes just over an hour.



Dr Toussaint – surgeon and director of clinical services at PIH: 'MAF plays a key role in PIH's work in rural areas, extending our reach and capabilities. Through our partnership with MAF, PIH can go above and beyond expectations.'

MAF flights not only bridge the distance when transferring referral patients to Monrovia, MAF also transports specimens to Monrovia three times a week for testing and facilitates swift access to patient's test results. How can we bring the benefit of modern science to our patients without the partnership?'

MAF flies around 750kg of cargo in Liberia for PIH every month including 200 pieces of medical kit.

MAF is the only way to transport such precious cargo to avoid damage: 'Some of this necessary equipment for operations is so fragile that it cannot be transported on the challenging roads of Liberia.'

Due to extreme humidity, salty air, dust and rain for much of the year, vital equipment would rust or stop functioning altogether if it were exposed to the elements for too long. In Maryland County, lifesaving drugs and pain relief are in short supply, so it's critical that they are delivered quickly from Monrovia to patients in Harper.

PIH Warehouse Officer Martin Blayon says MAF's support cannot be underestimated: 'MAF flights significantly aid PIH by transporting health workers, doctors, patients, medical equipment, and drugs swiftly from Monrovia to Harper. This hour-long journey enhances PIH's effectiveness in serving rural areas.'



## Gardening ... Kerry Alesbrook

February has arrived! The days are getting noticeably longer, and while some still feel like the depths of winter, others bring the faint promise of spring.

The garden is sodden and muddy, last year's summer plants are a memory and the trees are still bare yet suddenly, seemingly from nowhere, there are flowers - and one of the first are the delicate yet resilient snowdrops.

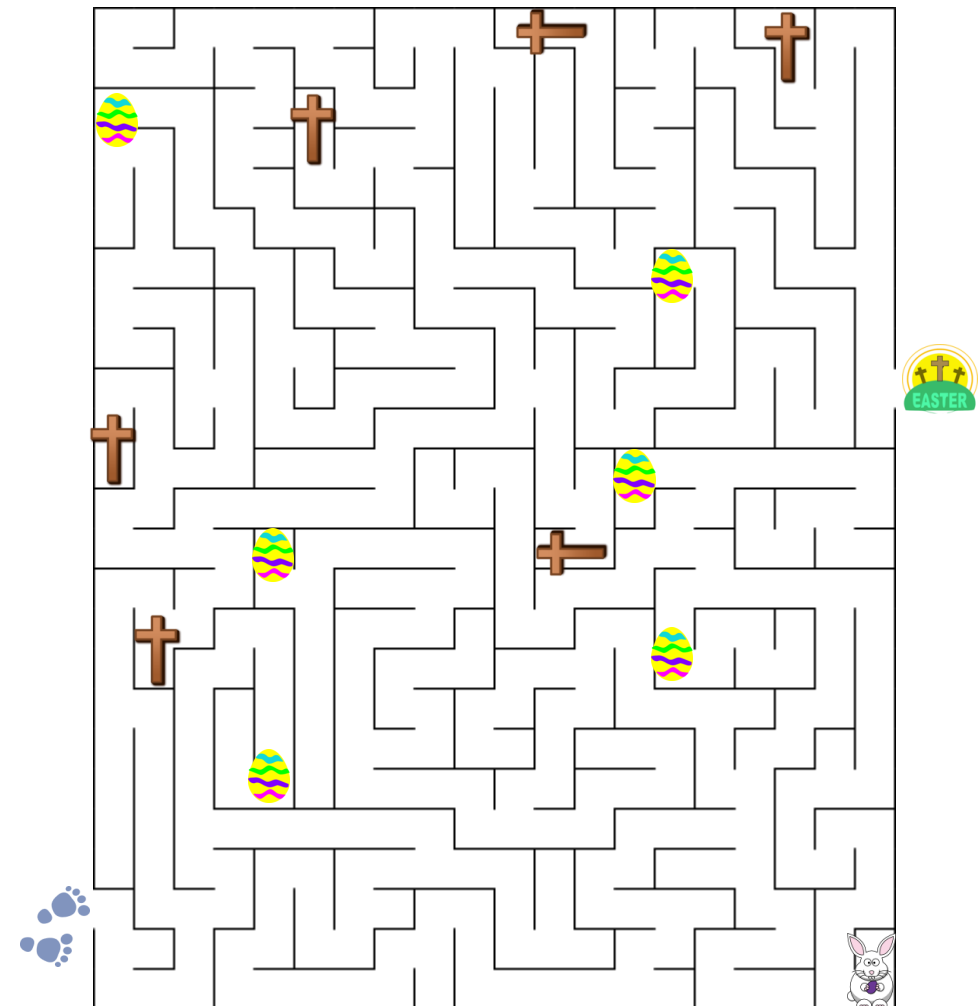
Did you know that snowdrops are also called Candlemas Bells? Their arrival in early February meant they were perfect for decorating churches at Candlemas, the festival celebrating the rite of purification that Mary observed by presenting Jesus at the temple forty days after Christmas. At this visit he was seen by elderly prophets Simeon and Anna, who then gave thanks that they had seen the Messiah.

One of the earliest stories of the snowdrop is that during the first winter on the earth, Eve was missing the summer flowers. An angel caught a flake of snow, breathed life into it and transformed it into a flower. It was said to break the spell of winter and, at the same time, offer divine mercy.

It never fails to amaze me how the snowdrops appear, year after year, increasing in number as their bulbs divide and spread. The crocus will be next - another unbelievably delicate flower in the harshness of early spring, before daffodils, the show-offs of the season arrive all bright and bold! I love the spring bulbs, and each autumn I try to plant a few more to brighten the early days of the year, but it is the Candlemas Bells that bring me the most hope for the year ahead.



## Easter Maze ... Sarah Hill



### Instructions:

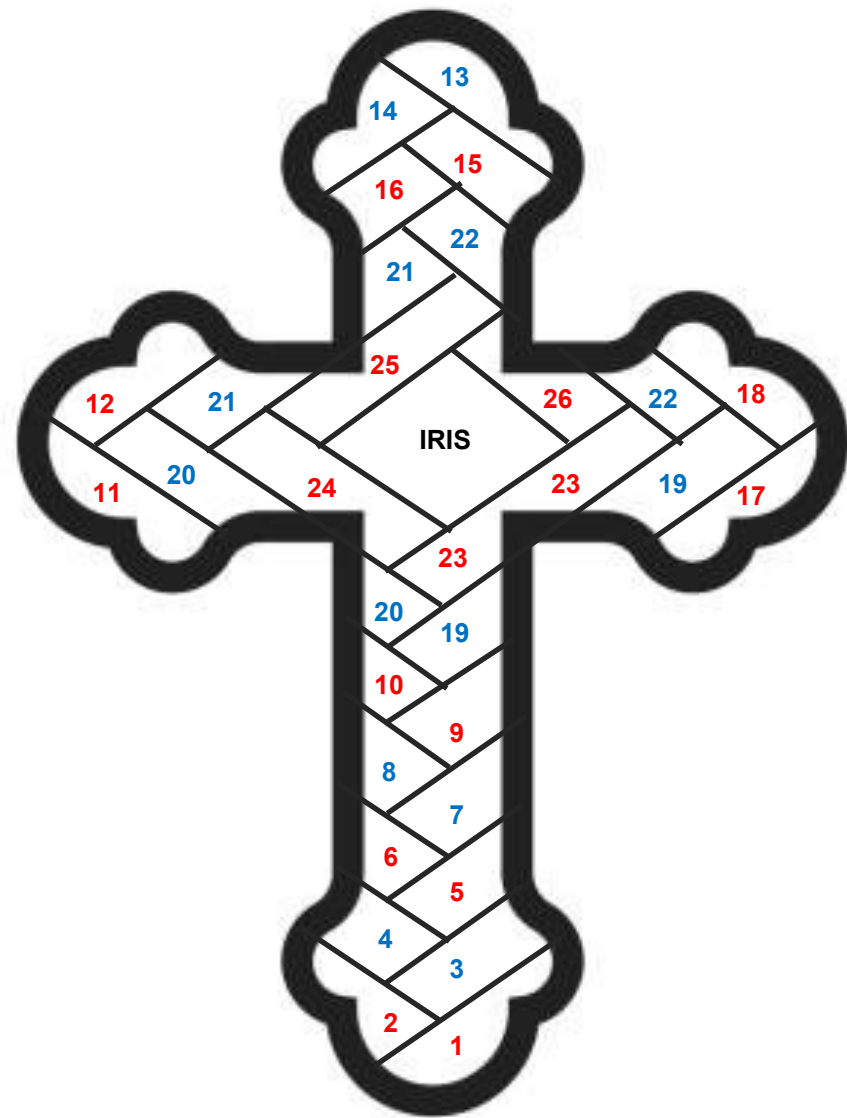
Starting at the footprints can you take the walk of faith through the maze to Easter by collecting the crosses and avoiding the coloured eggs?

Can the Easter Bunny collect his eggs without passing a cross, or is he always going to be a Hot Cross Bunny?!



Craft - Iris Paper Folding ... Elisabeth Emmett-Pace

Make an Iris Paper Folding Easter Cross ... Here's How!



Colour Key:

Colour A:

1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26.

Colour B:

3, 4, 7, 8, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Instructions:

Photocopy or tear out the cross pattern from the magazine and make a second copy of the outline to form a template. Cut out the template and trace it onto your piece of card. If you're making a greetings card trace it onto the inside. Then cut out the inside of the cross, making sure to leave the edges of the card uncut.

Place your cross aperture over the pattern so that the outside of your card is touching the paper (you are going to stick the layers of paper on the inside) and secure with a small piece of tape top and bottom to hold it in place.

Choose two contrasting colours of paper to make up your cross. Colour A and colour B. An 8x8 square of each colour will be enough to complete the design. Origami paper is ideal as it is not too thick, though square craft paper is fine if not too thick - contrasting colours work really well. You will be using folded strips of paper to make your design.

Take your first colour of paper and cut a piece long enough to cover the length needed, giving some room for it to overlap the card to stick it down. The paper needs to be deeper than the space it is filling as it needs to be folded to create a neat edge (the sharper the crease then the neater it looks). The folded edge always faces the middle. Make sure to cover the whole of the shape of number one, otherwise you will have gaps in your finished design.

Carry on filling in the spaces in number order, referring to the colour key so you know which paper to use. Your design will build up layer on layer until you reach the middle.

The part of the pattern in the centre that says 'iris', needs to be done in a third contrasting colour and this part does not need to be folded, it can just be stuck on, pattern side down.

Where the numbers on the pattern are repeated (ie they are either side of a white part), you can use one long strip of paper to complete both sides at the same time.

Once all the pieces of paper have been attached it can be helpful to place some strips of tape over the back of the design to secure them



more firmly. You can then carefully remove the pieces of tape holding the card onto the pattern and reveal your creation!!!

If you've made a greetings card, you can cover up your 'workings' with another piece of card on the inside - then give it to someone for Easter. Or just frame it!

Enjoy!

We are holding an Easter Craft Afternoon on Saturday 16th March 1pm-4pm in church. This iris paper folding cross will be one of the crafts on offer, along with others. This event will be family friendly and suitable for ages. So if you're not brave enough to try this on your own, but want to learn, come along and see us! Or come and show us what you've done - we'd love to see!

### St Mary's Safeguarding ... Kerry Alesbrook

St Mary's Church is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its ministry and mission, promoting a safer culture and the welfare of every child, young person and adult.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who may come into contact with children, young people, adults and their families has a role to play.

If you are concerned about your own welfare or the welfare of someone you know, you can speak to our vicar, Ian Hill or our parish safeguarding officer, Kerry Alesbrook for further advice. Our safeguarding email address is [sq@stmaryshinckley.co.uk](mailto:sq@stmaryshinckley.co.uk)

If you wish to learn more about safeguarding within the Church of England, there is free access to a range of online training programs at [www.safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org](http://www.safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org)



**Kerry Alesbrook**

## Christmas Tree Festival Winners & Social News ... Elisabeth Emmett-Pace

### Christmas Tree Festival 2023

Our Christmas Tree Festival was a great success again. We'd like to thank everyone who contributed in any way, from helping to displaying a tree to visiting to entertaining us! It really was a great weekend and here's to next year!

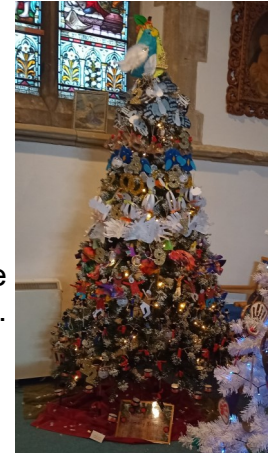


We had two very worthy winners.

Hinckley Choral Union won the adult category.

St Mary's School won the children's category.

Congratulations to both - the bar was raised yet again



St Mary's is a busy and 'living' church, so there is always a lot going on. We have lots of things coming up.

Social Strolls - get to know people while chatting (and get some exercise too - win-win!). We have a few planned!  
30th March at Mount Saint Bernard's Abbey - meeting in the Abbey car park at 2pm.  
13th April at Burbage Common - meet at the tearooms at 1.30pm.  
20th May - a touch of the blue plaques of Hinckley ending in a pub! - meet in the church car park at 7pm.

Our Easter Craft Afternoon is on 16th March from 1pm-4pm in church which is suitable for everyone of all ages - please see page 16 for more information.

Please keep an eyes on our newsletter, Facebook page and website for details of what's going on - even we can't keep up sometimes!

## St Mary's Christian Roots Course ... Ian Hill

### What do Christians actually believe?

Far too often we focus on what divides Christians, but the roots of Christianity, the fundamentals of the Christian faith, were adopted in 325 AD and are still accepted universally by Christians today from the most Orthodox and Catholic through to the freest and most evangelical.

So, if you have ever wondered what Christianity is actually about, or if you have wondered why something like Mary being a virgin when Jesus was born matters, then please put the dates of our Christian Roots Course into your diaries. You are welcome at just one if it piques your interest, or to all of the sessions to get a thorough overview.

There will be a presentation and a chance to discuss (as well as refreshments). It will be free to attend with just a plate for donations.

The dates are: May 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> & June 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>. It will be held in the Church with doors opening at 6:45pm to grab a tea or coffee, and the main sessions finishing by 8:30pm, but with time to chat on the sofas afterwards until 9pm. More details available soon!

## SMARTS Concerts

SMARTS (St Mary's Arts) hold lunchtime concerts in church, one Wednesday a month at certain times of the year. They are from 1pm-1.45pm. The next season of concerts is about to start. It begins on Wednesday 6th March, then 10th April, 1st May and 5th June.

They are an informal delight of light classical music performed to the highest standards and offer the perfect musical lunchbreak in a busy working day! Support this live music opportunity in Hinckley.

Admission (on the door) is £4.50 for adults or £1 for children/students. Season tickets can be purchased for £16, available at the first concert. Leaflets with more information are available at the back of church.

Afternoon tea is also available for you to enjoy for £10. Please book with Kerrie in the church office.

## Spotlight On Health - 'Remember To Breathe!' ... Elisabeth Emmett-Pace & Sarah Hill

Elisabeth breathes experience onto the subject as someone with lung disease and asthma ...

Having any form of lung disease is best avoided! Although that's not always possible of course, as often, as I know from personal experience, life deals you a hand that means that you 'just have them' and you didn't do anything to cause them. I've never even tried a cigarette, let alone smoked, yet I've had a chest physio argue with me that I must smoke as I had what sounded like a 'smokers cough'. People look at you when you cough and step away from you, even if you have a cough all the time or it's an asthma cough - and this is especially common since covid came on the scene! Lung disease meant shielding during covid, it makes me more nervous of catching covid or anything, because of the risks of it being worse or leading to complications.

From asthma, to COPD, to the rarer forms of lung disease and anything in-between, anything that makes it difficult to breathe is unpleasant and scary. Lung diseases don't discriminate by age, gender or anything else, they just are. Some things can trigger the symptoms to worsen and you can learn to avoid them, but sometimes you can get caught unawares. I've gone to bed ok in the past and woken up with a chest infection that has lasted weeks!

Not being able to breathe has to be one of the scariest feelings that there is. When you're gasping for air, your chest muscles are burning and you have tingly fingers and lips from too much carbon dioxide and not enough oxygen, then what else are you going to feel but scared? I can remember feeling scared as a child, as a teenager, but also as an adult. There's no shame in feeling scared, feeling like you can't breathe is scary at any age and whoever you are.

Some days, when infection hits, it's like trying to function with a lead weight sat on your chest and your lungs underwater. It is hard work. Everything takes so much more effort than it normally would - including breathing - and that has to be done!

So, look after your lungs people as, generally, you only get one set. They're a precious commodity that life relies on and trust me, lung disease is no fun.

So, how do our lungs work? Time for Sarah to exhale her medical knowledge with the science bit ...

Our lungs are an amazing bit of kit with a surface area of 70-80 square metres (about the size of a badminton court) folded up into a relatively small space, able to transfer oxygen in the air across a membrane just one cell thick into our blood stream at the same time as transferring carbon dioxide out, all in the space of a couple of seconds. They can contain up to 6 litres of air, and yet we can survive with less than a quarter of that. This is one of the reasons that smoking damage may not become apparent for many decades - we have a lot of spare capacity, but when it's gone, it's gone, although it's never too late to limit the damage!

Avoiding things that irritate such as perfumes, pollens and aerosols can help keep the larger airways open too, especially if you are asthmatic. These larger airways are like the branches of a tree. The gas exchange happens in the alveolae (little sacs that are the equivalent of leaves), but the branches are the tubes which get the air there and if they get too narrow it can be very hard to push air through them, hence the classic wheeze of an asthma attack.

As the weather gets warmer, the pollen count rises and so do sales of hay fever products. For those with lung disease it can be out of the frying pan of colds and flu and into the fire.

Sometimes it can be fluid in the lungs restricting breathing but because of heart disease, an infection or inflammation. Whatever the reason, sometimes some simple measures can be adopted to make it feel like there is more air - even if there isn't! Having air moving in front of your face such as a fan or an open window can help reduce the sensation of breathlessness. Sit down to wash, dress or cook. Avoid bending down. Use relaxation techniques to help reduce anxiety and frustration. Pace yourself.

Our lungs are an amazing gift, let's look after them so that they look after us!

## Polish Easter Traditions ... Barbara Broszkiewicz-Pike

As we look forward to Easter here in the UK, have you ever wondered how it is celebrated elsewhere? Easter in Poland is a significant celebration over 4 days.

On Good Friday we go to church, continue with Lent abstinence, and refrain from eating meat.

Prior to Easter Saturday, we decorate hard boiled eggs known as Pisanki. Natural dyes like onion skins or purple cabbage can be used to colour the eggs and a design is etched using a sharp tool, but our favourite method is using a wax crayon or applying stickers to create a design on the eggs first, then dipping them into dyes of various hues (it's not only the eggs that get dyed, it's your hands as well!).



On Easter Saturday we create the Easter Basket known as Święconka; a wicker basket is lined with a white cloth and filled with provisions.



The contents all have significance; decorated eggs for new life and Christ's resurrection, a butter or sugar lamb for goodwill towards others, salt for purification, ham for abundance, cheese for moderation in all things, and a candle for the light of the world. There's always something sweet - either a makowiec (poppy seed cake) or babka (yeast cake).

The basket is decorated with ribbons and greenery as symbols of new life and joy and then taken to church to be blessed.

On Easter Sunday we eat the contents of the basket but not before we've played Egg Battles; each person takes a boiled egg and pairs off. The egg is held with the narrow tip pointing forward and each pair knocks their eggs against the other. Whoever's egg cracks is the loser; each person with an unbroken egg continues to play against each other until there is one unbroken egg - the winner!



And on Easter Monday (known as Śmigus-Dyngus or Wet Monday), people try to sneakily drench or sprinkle others with water; the tradition dates back centuries and may have pre-Christian origins connected to the March equinox with water being a symbol of life and renewal. Originally boys could drench girls with water which sounds harsh, but was actually seen as a form of affection. It's said that being splashed with water on Easter Monday will bring you good luck throughout the year.

## What Is Prayer? ... Joy Allman

Often people will find it difficult to pray. What do you say? Can you ask for things? Do you have to kneel by the bedside?

Firstly, you don't have to say anything. You can just sit quietly in the presence of God. This may be in a church or other spiritual place, or in your home or garden. God is omnipotent, that is to say everywhere. He knows what lies heavy on our hearts. As well as listening to God, you may want to talk to him. Often people find reciting the Lord's Prayer a good place to start. It appears in two forms in the New Testament: the shorter version in the Gospel according to Luke (11:2-4) and the longer version, part of the Sermon on the Mount, in the Gospel according to Matthew (6:9-13). After you may want to pray for people you know who are sick in mind, body or soul, followed by prayer for yourself and the wider world. Prayer may be to give thanks to God for answering prayer or for the joys you have experienced.

Lord,  
teach us  
to Pray

Prayer isn't a ritual that depends on closing our eyes and putting on holy faces. We don't have to kneel or sit. We can pray whilst walking, driving or working. God responds to a two-word cry for help in the middle of busyness, just like He does to a focused prayer time after reading Scripture. Praying doesn't have to be complicated. God delights in any simple words we offer Him.

At St Mary's you can put a prayer request in the Prayer Box in the Coffee Bar and a member of the Pastoral Team will pray for you, or you can write a prayer request in the Prayer Book near the entrance to the Lady Chapel and light a candle. On the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month a Prayer Group meets for a short period of prayer and reflection. You are very welcome to join us in the Lady Chapel at 10.30am.

## Going Deeper ... Bob Stephen



What, in God's name, was going on when Jesus was arrested? By the end of the night, Jesus had given them what they wanted: the evidence for blasphemy. But the Sanhedrin couldn't act in God's name. Even if the charge of blasphemy mattered to the Roman authorities - and it didn't - nothing could change the fact that the Sanhedrin didn't have the authority to put anyone to death: that power belonged to the Governor.

Jesus stands - an oasis of calm amidst the chaos of rage. It is he who confesses to being the Messiah, fully aware that this would release the passion and the barely concealed hatred in these men of God. The spitting, the blindfolding, the whipping and the invitation to 'prophecy' knowing that there was nothing that he would say that they would listen to.

Behind the lies were complicated and undignified motives. Pilate knew that he was being set up, but his fear of Rome and of the people of Judea compromised him. The Sanhedrin have accused Jesus of treason and that was a trump card. The crowd aren't there by accident. This isn't the crowd that welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem. This is a group of people who have been conscripted to come to get Barabbas. They may not have been aware that they were choosing hate over love. They were indifferent to Jesus; he didn't matter to them.

Jesus, alone, has a quiet dignity. Pilate asks, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' 'You say so.' After that, Jesus is silent. His is a dignified silence in the face of a fate he has already embraced focused on the redemption of humanity and focusing beyond the clamour of the ambitions of the unlikely gathering united in an undignified purpose. 'Crucify Him!'

The flogging with a leather whip, with sharp pieces of lead and bone embedded into the lash, was so effective that the condemned might not survive to be crucified. The soldiers are





guilty of cruelty, but there would be no malice. Their sport makes the messy business of being a Roman executioner in a foreign land, bearable.

When the Jewish Leaders shouted at Jesus and invited him to come down and save himself, Jesus' choice was stark: save himself or save humanity. They said that, if he did this, they would believe in him. Yet, it is precisely because he didn't come down that we, 2000 years later, can believe in him.

The Romans had ritualised the act of crucifixion and so they had no choices or decisions to make, they followed the ritual and that may have helped them to cope with the brutal extinction of a human life. The victim carried their cross set in the middle of a square of four soldiers, with a fifth walking in front with the charge of the board that would eventually be transferred to the cross. They took the longest route so that the largest number of people could see. At the place of execution, the cross was laid on the ground and the victim laid on it and was nailed to the wood through the wrists. The cross was then dropped onto its socket in the ground and the soldiers gambled for the perks of their job, the clothing of the victims. Once that was done it was a waiting game: it could take up to a week to die.

The cross has stood through the ages as the sign and symbol of the limitless love of God. Yet, the bleakness of Calvary is further accentuated as creation itself darkens at the sight of Jesus on the cross.

The words of Psalm 22 are heart-wrenching: 'My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?' The only human reality that Jesus had not experienced was the consequences of sin; separation from God. In this moment Jesus became sin for us he experienced that separation. The indivisible was divided and Jesus had to die alone trusting himself and all humanity into his Father's hands.

The cry, 'It is Finished', is the cry of hope. In three hours, Jesus has fulfilled God's plan.

After the death, the burial, and after the burial the empty tomb and the beginning of hope.



Stitched by Bev Henderson

## Children's Work ... Bev Frettsome

St. Mary's welcomed various schools and nurseries into church during advent and Christmas. It was wonderful to see the church filled with excited, happy young people for the concerts, services and school tours. We shared the history of our beautiful building and explained some of our traditions, and talked about our friendship with Jesus and what that means for us today. It was great to see the children looking around and asking some brilliant questions.

Looking forward, we have lots of Lent and Easter activities at St. Mary's. All are welcome, from the youngest to the very valued grandparents who play a vital role in family life, and everyone in between! We offer a baby & toddler group, drop-in activities, Sunday school and a baking club. We also have a number of extra events, so please see our adverts. Do email any questions to [bevfrettsome@hotmail.com](mailto:bevfrettsome@hotmail.com) Everyone is welcome and we look forward to seeing new families, whatever family means to you.

St Mary's, Hinckley  
everybody welcome

  
BABY & TODDLER GROUP  
A group for babies & under 4's their parents & carers

**Wednesday's Weekly**  
(term time only)  
**St. Mary's Church Hall**  
**1.30pm until 2.45pm**  
Toys, activities, messy play,  
refreshments and a chat.  
Come along and make new friends in a  
warm space  
£1 donation

Book via email or text Bev at  
[bevfrettsome@hotmail.com](mailto:bevfrettsome@hotmail.com) 07973830668

All Welcome!

St Mary's, Hinckley  
everybody welcome

**Monthly Family Drop-In**  
**for Children, Parents/Carers and**  
**Grandparents Welcome**

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March**  
**3.30pm-4.45pm**  
**St Mary's Church, Hinckley**

Drop in for drinks & biscuits  
children's craft activities  
Toys for younger children  
Donations welcome

  
Please book by  
Text/ email  
[bevfrettsome@hotmail.com](mailto:bevfrettsome@hotmail.com)  
07973830668

## St Mary's Easter Services

During the coming Easter season, we will be holding a number of services that take us through the story of Easter, from the last supper, to Christ's crucifixion and His resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Our Maundy Thursday Service will be on 28th March at 7pm. It will be a reflective communion service with stripping of the altar.

On Good Friday, 29th March, there will be two services. Following the walk of witness, there will be a meditative service from 12.30pm-3pm, with words and organ music. Please feel able to come and go in this time. At 7pm there will be a traditional, choir led service.

On Easter Sunday, 31st March, there will be three communion services:

8am BCP Traditional Communion Service  
10.15am Contemporary Family Communion Service (with our Children's Easter Egg Hunt after the service)  
6pm Evening Communion Service

Please be assured of a warm welcome at all of our services.

Following on from the success of our BCP Choral Evensong service where the Cathedral Choir joined with us, our bi-monthly services in this style will begin on 7th April at 6pm led by our choir.

## St Francis Centre News



November and December were busy social and fundraising months for the centre, including a sellout wreath making workshop for 50 guests who were pleased with their creations.

Lunch Club had their Christmas lunch at The Longshoot where good food and many laughs were shared. Our grand raffle generated some well needed funds and some happy winners!

Your centre needs you! We are in need of more volunteers for our regular morning and lunch events. If you could spare a few hours weekly or fortnightly please let Lisa know.

Our Annual Meeting is on  
Wednesday 6th March at 7pm  
All welcome!



### Our future events include:

**Saturday 23rd March - 12-3pm**  
Pamper & Afternoon Tea (Tickets £17.50 in advance)

**Tuesday 2nd April - 11am-2pm**  
Easter Cream Tea & Bingo (Ticket £5 in advance)

**Friday 26th April - 7-9pm**  
Fashion Show (Entry £5)

**All details from Lisa or see our Facebook posts.**

St. Francis Community Centre, Tudor Road,  
Hinckley, LE10 0EQ  
Tel: 01455 617185 Centre Mobile: 07789743846  
[adminsfc@stfranciscom.co.uk](mailto:adminsfc@stfranciscom.co.uk)  
Office Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed & Thurs 9am - 1pm



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*Jesus said 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'*

*John 11: 25&26*

**Thank you for reading this edition!  
We hope you've enjoyed it.**