

CALNE METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER APRIL 2025



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Items for future editions can be sent to:

Jan Sayers

The deadline for the May 2025 issue is

Sunday 27th April

Ministers Musings from the manse.....

I recently received an observation from a good friend who remarked that the path of life this year has been markedly wonky. Having mulled over that observation, within my own context, I concluded that was a definite and correct assumption. I also decided that most of the journeys, in which we learn truths, are the ones on the windy paths.... Those less travelled and importantly less easy.

We are living in challenging times, and as we approach Holy Week it set me thinking about how the disciples must have felt as they saw themselves on a path towards Jerusalem. They travelled with a teacher who was confronting and challenging authority and religious practice on a regular basis. They must have found themselves experiencing fear and doubt about what their future may hold.

Yes, they had seen Jesus do wonderful and miraculous things. They had witnessed the signs of something that was truly amazing, even if they didn't understand everything too clearly. And yet they were not quite sure of what they were being taught. Not sure or comfortable, as they wished to be, when confronted with the reality found in the threat of imprisonment, punishment and death. Their faith sometimes wavered, and even Jesus himself was forced to say after all his teaching and wonders, that still the disciples didn't understand.

The threat of financial uncertainty, viral infections, conflict and danger are real and also an immediate one. The world has seen and faced such threats many times before but here's the thing, many of us in society today haven't. Our world is one of immediate revelation through the media, and the invisible technical variety of instant communication that we inhabit.

With such medium we learn instantly of tragedy, disaster, wars and famine. The good stuff often does not make the cut, because it does not sell as well. How sensationalised have the reports of war, disease, and threats become in the media. For many this increases personal anxiety and depression. The future of many societies becomes uncertain, as life changes dramatically, physically, emotionally and financially.

So how is your faith?

I reflect that life and the outcome of our life on earth has not changed. It is the same as it was, even before Covid 19, bird flu and a multitude of increasing dilemma. We are not in control of the outcomes ...we never have been or ever will be. That is God's and God's alone. I find if I *really trust* in the God I follow, then the worry of what will be, falls away.

Yes, I do what is required of me, perhaps to self-isolate, protect, to help others and pray for all manner of people and things. But in the end, I can never say with any certainty where and when my journey will end.....nor yours.

I have to walk in faith.

In Mark 10 we read, *'They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him'*

They knew what was going to happen, but they went anyway. They had a walking faith, a faith that kept moving...even if their feet didn't really agree. In the next couple of weeks, we approach Jerusalem once again, together and yet also in isolation. We are connected by the one thing that binds us all...Jesus Christ. He alone can bring hope, strengthen faith, remove doubt and eradicate fear.

A long time ago, I answered the call to follow Jesus Christ, never dreaming where such a journey would take me.

It brought me to you.

Together, calmly and with confidence, we can face the future without fear because we are his... truly his... and his alone.

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you, wherever you go."

I sit writing this reflection looking out into the garden, important to me as another one was so many centuries ago. For in the garden is found life, if and when, you look closely and understand.

I watch as the birds, the squirrels, the bees and other insects travel their journeys without worrying about the future. The sun that repeatedly crosses the sky to be replaced by the moon and the stars. These things will be there long after I have gone.

I see beauty in the world around me more clearly, for the business and irrelevance of much in our lives has ceased. The beauty can still be found in the silence. And the intricacies of nature we now have time to appreciate and see.

The closeness of God is found in the love shown by many to those in need, which reveals that Christ is again amongst us all, guiding and leading, suffering and saving. So, if you find your path is a little bit wonky find solace in the scripture, be still, trust and believe that we are never really alone, even in isolation.....

2 Corinthians 4:17-18

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

God bless you and keep you.

Craig

Forthcoming Services:

6th April	Rev Craig Manley including Holy Communion
13th April	Mrs Jenny Colby Palm Sunday
17th April	Tenebrae Service at 7.00pm – please sign up in the hall as we will begin with a time of sharing over soup and rolls.
18th April	Good Friday service with our friends at the Baptist Church followed by the Partnership Of Churches Walk of Witness at 12.00pm starting at the Zion Chapel
20th April	Easter Sunday Service starting at 9.30am
27th April	Mr Eric Clifford
	6.00pm Partnership Of Churches Joint Service at Calne Methodist Church



Refugee Prayer Focus April 2025

We pray for all who flee in fear seeking peace and safety, and a future for loved ones; merciful God, heal their wounded lives and kindle compassionate hospitality in the lands to which they travel. Amen

Taken from the Methodist Prayer Handbook 2016/17

Calne Food Bank

Calne Food Bank – Please visit their website for details of their opening times - www.calnefoodbank.co.uk

They are currently asking for: Tinned vegetables Tinned tomatoes Instant noodles Small Pasta Sauces
Please make sure that any food donated is in date.

Pastoral News



Wow!

What a Spring Meal!

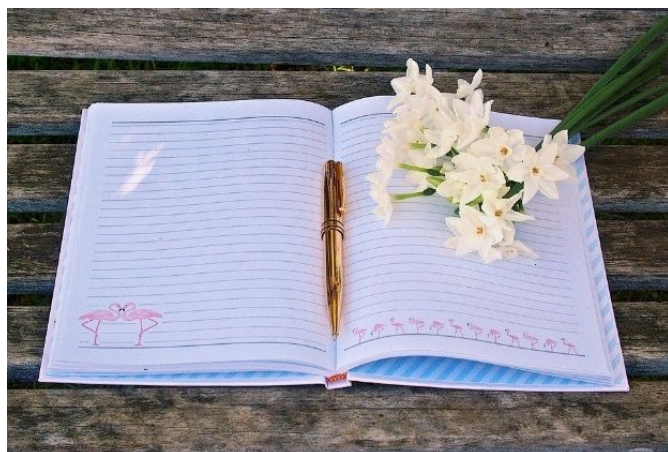
Grateful thanks especially to Caroline, Jacky, Lyn and Julie for providing us with such delicious food. Thanks also for all the other helpers with preparing fabulous desserts, laying tables and clearing away. One of our congregation enjoying the meal said, 'It was such a pleasure to be a part of the fellowship and there was such a buzz about it all.' Thank you Lord for the good times.

We pray for those who have been in and out of hospital recently and are now home recovering; for those going through cancer treatment; for those waiting for treatment of various kinds. May the Lord hold them all in the palm of his hand.

We pray for those in our community who are already living on a tight budget who once again will feel the burden of increased utility bills and other costs of living.

Our thoughts and prayers are always with all our church family. Throughout April we pray particularly for Lyn Cooper's pastoral group: Glenis Ansell; Carolyn and Andy Cameron; Jenny and Steven Colby; Hilary Eatwell; Doris and Darkie Haddrell; Sue Johnstone; Marion and Mike Pitman; Jacky and Simon Purtell; Vera and Stephen Steadman.

It is part of our Christian commitment to care for and support each other, so if you have any joys or sorrows that can be shared in our pastoral news please let Ursula know. Thank you.



Dates for your diary

All are very welcome to come along and join in.

Tuesday April 8th, 15th & 22nd

Coffee and Chat

Time: 10.00am - 11.30am

Venue: Church Hall

Wednesday April 2nd, 9th, 16th 23rd & 30th

Warm Spaces Free food and drink for all

Time: 10.00am - 4.00pm

Venue: Church Hall

Thursday April 17th

Tenebrae Service for Maundy Thursday

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: Church Hall

Friday April 18th

Good Friday Service

Time: 10.00am

Venue: Baptist Church

Thursday April 24th

Poetry Evening

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: Church Hall

Including refreshments

Sunday June 1st

Summer Meal

Time: 12.30pm

Venue: Church Hall

Saturday July 26th

Charity Concert Tickets £8

Time: 3.00pm

Venue: Methodist Church

Including refreshments

LENT STUDY COURSE



LIFE SOURCE

A 5-session course on prayer for lent

Based on Robert Warren and Kate Bruce study course.

10th April - Source of Love- Prayer as care

2.00pm at Calne Methodist Church

All are Welcome.

Dear Friends

As many of you will know, I am currently undergoing chemotherapy for Hodgkin lymphoma – a blood cancer. Having been admitted to hospital in January and spending 15 days waiting to find out what was wrong with me, the diagnosis was quite a shock and overwhelming at first. However, the care I have received has been excellent and I am now two months into my six month treatment plan.

I would like to say a huge thank you to you for all your love and support for both me and Derek during this time. The cards, messages and gifts have been very special and the prayer support you are giving us very humbling and much appreciated. It is wonderful to know that we have such a community of support and, together with family, colleagues from the hospice and friends from wider afield, both feel surrounded by love during these testing times.

I know there are many of us going through tough times at the moment – undergoing treatments, awaiting results and consultations, worrying about the cost of living or keeping anxiety to ourselves, I have found my relationship with God growing and deepening as I face this new journey. I have particularly held on to John 1 v5: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. As long as there is a glimmer of light in the darkness and I have the faith to know the darkness cannot overcome it, your prayers, love and support can keep me going.

With love and blessings, Michele Gard



**Sunday
13th April**

**Calne Methodist Church
3.00pm – 6.00pm**

**A relaxed and informal church with a warm welcome
for everyone. Crafts, songs, games and a chance to
make a mess and enjoy tea together.**

No need to book – just come and join in!

Children must be accompanied by an adult please.

A Calne Partnership of Churches activity

LENT AND EASTER SYMBOLS



During Lent we have been using objects in worship to centre our thoughts on the Lenten journey. We started with a depiction of the desert representing Jesus facing his temptations. The Second week we had a chicken with her eggs and chicks representing how God takes us under his wing and reflecting the reading from Luke (13: 34 & 35) for that day. On the third Sunday we had a weeping fig to represent Jesus's parable about the barren fig and how every chance is given to it by allowing it to grow for another year, to allow for it to fruit, This reflects on how we are given every chance by God to be his people. Luke (13: 6-9) We also left a sheep for the fourth week whilst we were worshiping at Corsham to represent the Lost sheep and the lost parables, including the prodigal son. This reflects that even one person, how ever they have gone astray, is still important to God.

In the following weeks we will add further symbols until we reach Easter Sunday.

Symbols play an important part in our faith and traditions, especially at this time of year.

Easter, the single-most important day in the Christian faith, is rich with symbolism. Embraced for centuries, the symbols also include adaptations of non-Christian traditions and practices.

It got me wondering about the origins of these traditions. Here are a few:

■ **Easter eggs:** The egg has long been a symbol of life in many cultures and religions. In modern times, making Easter eggs has become more of a commercial exercise, but that does not diminish its Christian symbolism.

On Easter, breaking the eggshell represents the opening of the tomb. The hardboiled egg white symbolizes Jesus' burial shroud, and the yolk it encases represents Jesus, the source of life itself.

Easter eggs have been traced back to the 13th century. Because eggs were prohibited during Lent, Christians coloured and decorated eggs to celebrate the end of Lent.

In Christian Orthodoxy, Easter eggs are dyed red to represent the blood of Christ. According to Greek Orthodox tradition, some people believe the practice references a story about Mary Magdalene in which she brought eggs to share with others during a vigil at Jesus' tomb, but the eggs turned red when they learned he had risen from the dead.

■ **The Cross:** The singular most recognizable sign of the Christian faith, the Persians are credited for creating this form of lengthy and cruel public execution during the fifth century B.C.

During a crucifixion, a person suffers from slow suffocation and a loss of blood. The crucified often were left on their crosses for days after their deaths as a way of discouraging others tempted to rebel or commit crimes.

Alexander the Great brought it back from the Middle East in 400 BC.

The Romans adopted it from the Phoenicians in 300 B.C.

According to historians, veneration of the cross took hold in earnest during the fourth century.

The style of crosses varies. Protestant churches display an empty cross, denoting that Jesus is no longer dead. Crosses in Catholic churches include the body of Jesus as a visual reminder of his suffering and sacrifice. The Orthodox Christian cross includes a slanted footrest symbolizing the two thieves who flanked Jesus at the time of his crucifixion. The side tilted upward represents the thief who asked Jesus to have mercy on him. The downward slant represents the one who rejected Jesus even as they were dying.

■ **Nine-Inch Nails:** Symbolic of the cruelty inflicted on Jesus by the Romans who used nails to impale his body to the cross.

■ **Lily of the Valley:** Jesus described himself as this spring perennial, which represents innocence and perpetual life.

■ **The Lamb:** In religion, lambs are the embodiment of innocence and sacrifice. Lambs were roasted and eaten during the first night of Passover. Their blood marked the doors of the Hebrew slaves so they would be spared from the curse of death which struck their Egyptian slave masters, precipitating their release. During Passover, a lamb shank or bone is displayed on the Seder plate. In the Gospel of John, John the Baptist announced that Jesus was "The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. "Today, leg of lamb is a popular Easter dish.

■ **Hot Cross Buns:** According to some, hot-cross buns predate the church. Ancient Saxons ate them in honour of Oest, the goddess of spring and fertility. Other cultures also made them to honour their gods. The church adopted them to commemorate Jesus' death, the spices representing those used to prepare his body for burial.

Because they were considered holy, Queen Elizabeth I forbade the making of hot cross buns except during Easter and Christmas. Anyone caught with them any other time of the year was forced by law to give their batch to the poor.

Anything that can help us remember and reflect on our faith is useful.

So, this Lent and Easter when you look at the front of the church and see the symbols/objects displayed let's use them to reflect on our faith, the God we worship and the Christ who died and rose for each one of us.

Derek

TENEBRAE MEAL AND SERVICE

Thursday 17th April – 7.00pm

Please sign up on the list in the hall



DUCK RACE PLANT STALL

SATURDAY 17th MAY



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Please sign up on the poster in the hall if you can provide plants or help on the stall on the day.

PROPERTY UPDATE



Carpet and floor in Vestibule.

We have placed the order with the carpet company in December and they were hoping to start the work in January. Unfortunately, we have found a problem with damp in the floor in the little kitchen and the vestibule. These need to be replaced and I'm pleased to say the Sovereign damp will do the work during the week commencing 5th May. Once this has been done the new carpet will be laid. The work will include new door jams. In the meantime, we need to use the route laid out through the vestibule for safety reasons.

De-Humidifier

The Church Council agreed last year to the purchase of a larger dehumidifier to replace the portable one that we use in the church. The new one will be plumbed into a drain at the rear of the church. This has now been purchased and we are waiting for the kitchen floor to be repaired before we can complete the plumbing in and use it.

Damp to rear corridor adjoining the Vestry.

This has now been completed. All the plaster up to the damp line, Approximately 4 feet in the corridor and in the Alan Bristow and Vestry has been removed. They have treated the wall with a damp proof barrier and replastered the walls. The good news is that they looked under the floor and there was no sign of a damp problem. They have fitted air vents in the floor to improve air flow. We are now going to decorate the walls in the near future.

Blinds in the Kitchen

We have been let down by Hillary's who we placed the order with and have had to start again. We have received a new quote from our carpet supplier who also does blinds which was remarkably similar to Hillary's. The work will be done in the next month. We are incredibly grateful to Calne Lions who have paid for this.

Dishwasher

If you remember the dishwasher in the kitchen stopped working. This has now been replaced, thanks to Caroline for organising this. The cost for this has been covered by a bequest from Marigold Treloar and fundraising.

Ursula and Derek

'An Easter Carol' by Christina Rossetti



Spring bursts to-day, For Christ is risen and all the earth's at play.

Flash forth, thou Sun, The rain is over and gone, its work is done.

Winter is past, Sweet Spring is come at last, is come at last.

Bud, Fig and Vine, Bud, Olive, fat with fruit and oil and wine.

Break forth this morn In roses, thou but yesterday a Thorn.

Uplift thy head, O pure white Lily through the Winter dead.

Beside your dams Leap and rejoice, you merry-making Lambs.

All Herds and Flocks Rejoice, all Beasts of thickets and of rocks.

Sing, Creatures, sing, Angels and Men and Birds and everything.

All notes of Doves Fill all our world: this is the time of loves.

EASTER JOKES



What's a proper toast at Easter? Ears to a great Easter!

What do you call a baby who's a little too warm on Easter?

A hot cross bun(dle) of joy.

Why is Easter breakfast so fun?

Everyone's cracking yolks.

How does an Easter chick dress for Sunday?

Im-peck-ably.

Christmas does come before Easter in one place—but where?

The dictionary!

What's the best way to make Easter easier?

Put an "i" where the "t" is.

What should you do to prepare for all the Easter treats?

Eggs-ercise!

What do you call an unconventional Easter egg?

Egg-centric!

What sport are eggs the best at?

Running!

What happened to the egg when he was tickled too much?

He cracked up.

What day does an Easter egg hate the most?

Fry-day



Fellowship Buffet Lunch 1st June 2025

12:15 In Church Hall

**Ham, Coronation Chicken
Cheese
Salads / Jacket Potatoes
Coleslaws
+
Pavlova / Fruit Salad
+
Tea/Coffee**

Sign-up sheet available in Church Hall

Any profit from donations will be split between Church funds & our nominated charity.

**** Please advise Caroline of any food allergies**