



Holy
Trinity
WATERHEAD

March 2019

holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

Services at Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 11:00 am Parish Worship
Wednesday 7:00 pm Family Communion
Thursday 9:30 am Morning prayer in the vestry

Baptisms and marriages by arrangement with the Vicar.
Please submit items for the March magazine by 15 February.
You can e-mail files to paulmonk111@gmail.com

People at Holy Trinity Church

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Rainbows	Sarah Wilson and Natalie Morris	
Brownies	Val Lees and Moira Belcher	
Guides	Karen and Lisa Cannon	
Beavers and Cubs	Lee Thompson	(07907) 907 354
Scouts	Mark Dickinson	(07976) 666 512

Letter from the Vicar

As I look out of my window, the snow is falling and obscures the ground with a thick quilt-like covering. I struggle to remember how the scene appeared before the snow started its relentless descent because it all looks so white, clean, and fresh. It also looks beautiful.

Many of us think of snow when we think about forgiveness. As King David said in Psalm 51, 'Wash me whiter than snow!' We want to be clean; we want our lives to feel as new and crisp as fresh snow.

A scene with snow may look clean on its surface but everything remains the same below. It's as dirty as it was before. In the same way, cheap concepts of forgiveness can look good but there is no real change. Just saying 'Sorry!' is only a surface change. We need something stronger, more honest, deeper.

Forgiveness and new life are the central themes of Easter. We celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus because it enables our forgiveness. But the true forgiveness Jesus wants is bigger than just *saying* sorry. He also says we're forgiven in proportion that we forgive. And we must forgive others as well as ourselves.

Real forgiveness is a process: it starts by asking forgiveness for the small things that we admit we've done wrong. We then ask forgiveness of the bigger things, if we're brave enough to own them.

Forgiving who we *are* is the real miracle. That's why real Christianity that results in genuine forgiveness needs Easter. It requires the same power working in us that raised Jesus from death to life. It's a miracle so we therefore need God if we want complete forgiveness. Real, Christian forgiveness is a spiritual thing.

We become an entirely new person when we allow God to heal us. That's when we become *wholly* clean. This kind of forgiveness is not a mere surface layer. Also note how those who submit to God most fully are forgiven most fully, which is why they rejoice all the more.

Wishing you His peace as you yield to His Easter love:

PAUL

From the parish registers

Christian funeral

Friday 5 February

(Terrence) Michael Ackers at Oldham Crematorium.

Monday 8 February

Violet Young at Oldham Crematorium.

Burial of ashes

Thursday 18 March Norma Outhwaite in Waterhead graveyard

2021 dates for your diary

The country is in lockdown and will remain so probably until some time in Lent. The following events may or may not occur in the Church building. Consult the Church website for up-to-date information,

at <http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/barnabas/events.htm>

Sunday 14 March

Mothering Sunday

Thursday 25 March

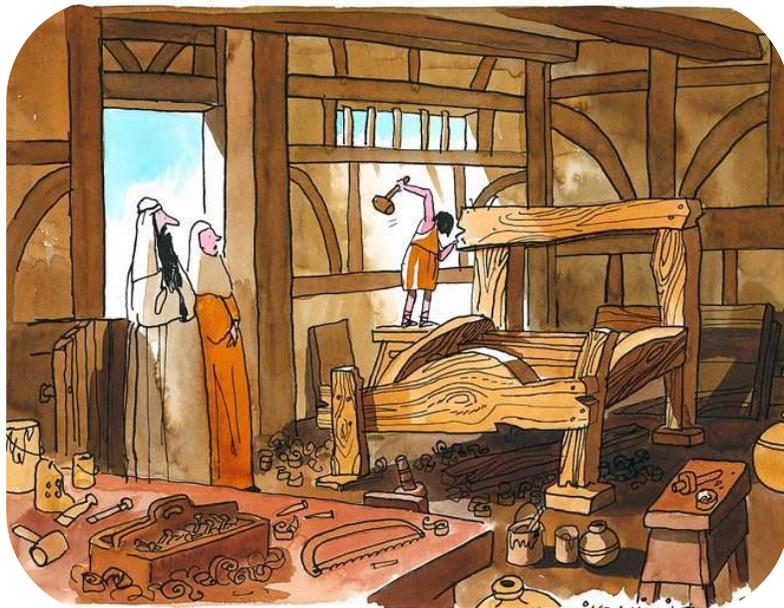
The Annunciation of our Lord ('Lady Day')

Sunday 28 March

Palm Sunday

Sunday 4 April **Easter Day**

'Let's face it,
Mary: he's
never going
to make a
carpenter!
Let's hope he
find
something
else to do,
and soon ...'



Bible readings for March

Sunday 28 February

Second Sunday of Lent

First: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Epistle: Romans 4:13-end

Gospel: Mark 8:31-end

Sunday 7 March

Third Sunday of Lent

First: Exodus 20:1-17

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Gospel: John 2:13-22

Sunday 14 March

Mothering Sunday

First: Exodus 2:1-10

Epistle: Colossians 3:12-17

Gospel: Luke 2:33-35

Sunday 21 March

Passion Sunday

First: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Epistle: Hebrews 5:5-10

Gospel: John 12:20-33

Sunday 28 March

Palm Sunday

First: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11

Gospel: Mark 15:1-39*

Thursday 1 April

Maundy Thursday

First: Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Gospel: John 13:1-17, 3b-35

Friday 2 April

Good Friday

First: Isaiah 52:13-53:1-end

Epistle: Hebrews 10:16-25

Gospel: John 18:1-19:1-end

Sunday 4 April

Easter Sunday

First: Isaiah 25:6-9

Epistle: Acts 10:34-43

Gospel: John 20:1-18

* Mark 11:1-11 is also read as the Palm Crosses are blessed and given out.

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Palm Sunday

Sunday 28 March

Service for all the family, at 11:00 am
medlockhead.co.uk

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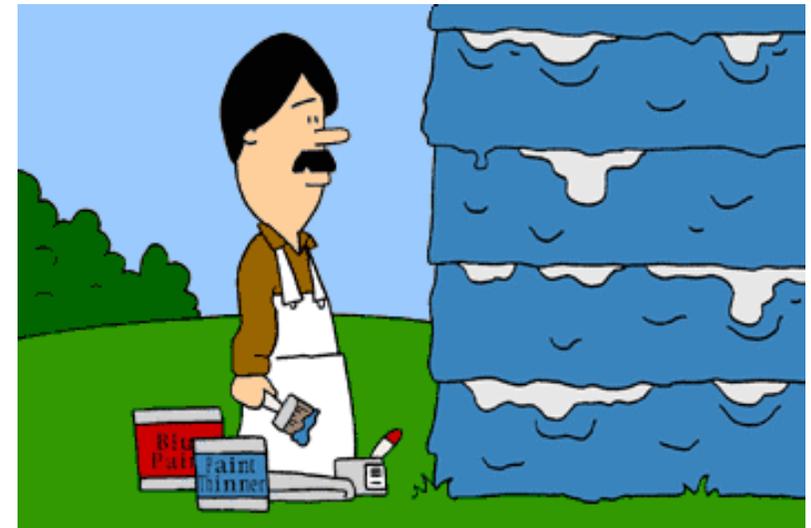
Easter Sunday

A joy-filled family service to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord

Sunday 4 April at 11:00 am

holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

*The key to the spiritual life
is remembering that everything
is interconnected—
and with God at the centre*



Johnny the decorator realised
it was time to repaint and thin no more
(with apologies to John 8:11)

Salvation to all that will is nigh;
That All, which always is all everywhere,
Which cannot sin, and yet all sins must bear,
Which cannot die, yet cannot choose but die,
Lo! faithful Virgin, yields Himself to lie
In prison, in thy womb; and though He there
Can take no sin, nor thou give, yet He'll wear,
Taken from thence, flesh, which death's force may try.

Ere by the spheres time was created thou
Wast in His mind, he is thy Son, and Brother;
Whom thou conceivest, conceived; yea, thou art now
Thy Maker's maker, and thy Father's mother,

Thou hast light in dark,
and shutt'st in little room
Immensity, cloister'd
in thy dear womb.

'Annunciation'

by John Donne

Covid permitting, we will hold our annual Lady Day service in Waterhead Church at 2:30 pm. The service is a said Eucharist. Please check the Church website beforehand: www.medlockhead.co.uk

Lady Day

'Lady Day' is the old name for the Feast of the Annunciation which celebrates the Archangel Gabriel visiting the Virgin Mary. He said she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus, the Jewish Messiah and Son of God. Gabriel told Mary to name the baby 'Jesus', which means 'God saves'. The Annunciation therefore announces the Incarnation.

Luke 1:26-38 describes the story. It starts, 'The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.'

Lady Day occurs exactly nine months before Christmas because that's the natural gestation period for a human child. We therefore celebrate it on 25 March.



Palm Sunday

Now to the gate of my Jerusalem,
The seething holy city of my heart,
The saviour comes. But will I welcome him?
Oh crowds of easy feelings make a start;

They raise their hands, get caught up in the singing,
And think the battle won. Too soon they'll find
The challenge, the reversal he is bringing
Changes their tune. I know what lies behind

The surface flourish that so quickly fades;
Self-interest, and fearful guardedness,
The hardness of the heart, its barricades,
And at the core, the dreadful emptiness

Of a perverted temple. Jesus come
Break my resistance and make me your home.

Malcolm Guite

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<https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/tag/palm-sunday>



Palm Sunday

Colour this page



Alan Richard Griffiths was born in December 1907. He had a privileged upbringing with a private education. He was always devout. In his autobiography *The Golden String*, he described his attempt to live a life of radical simplicity with two companions in a Cotswolds cottage soon after graduating in 1929. In retrospect, the venture was 'a response to romance and reason' and caused a psychological and spiritual crisis. But it did yield authentic experiences of God so, a few years later, he became a Benedictine monk at Prinknash Abbey. While there he took the monastic name of 'Bede'.

Bede was deeply content at Prinknash and hardly left the Abbey during the next fifteen years. He re-encountered anxiety and spiritual confusion after Prinknash made him guest-master, which involved helping visitors traumatised by the Second World War.

Bede spent a short time as superior of a new monastic foundation in Farnborough. He was already studying Indian philosophy and so, when the venture failed, he requested permission to go to India to live an alternative kind of Christian monastic life there. He was inspired by two French priests, Jules Monchanin and Henri le Saux, who were experimenting with new forms of Christianity rooted and nourished in the Indian monastic tradition of *sannyasa*—a life of utter poverty and abandonment to the Holy Spirit. Francis of Assisi is probably the most famous Western example. This was in 1955.

Bede lived the remainder of his long life in a simple hut beside the River Cauvery, the sacred river of South India, in his Benedictine ashram. He later said he went to India to find the other half of his soul. In a sense, his life had come full circle: he had realised his ideal of a small self-sufficient contemplative community but it had also become one of the world's great centres of inter-faith dialogue and prayer.

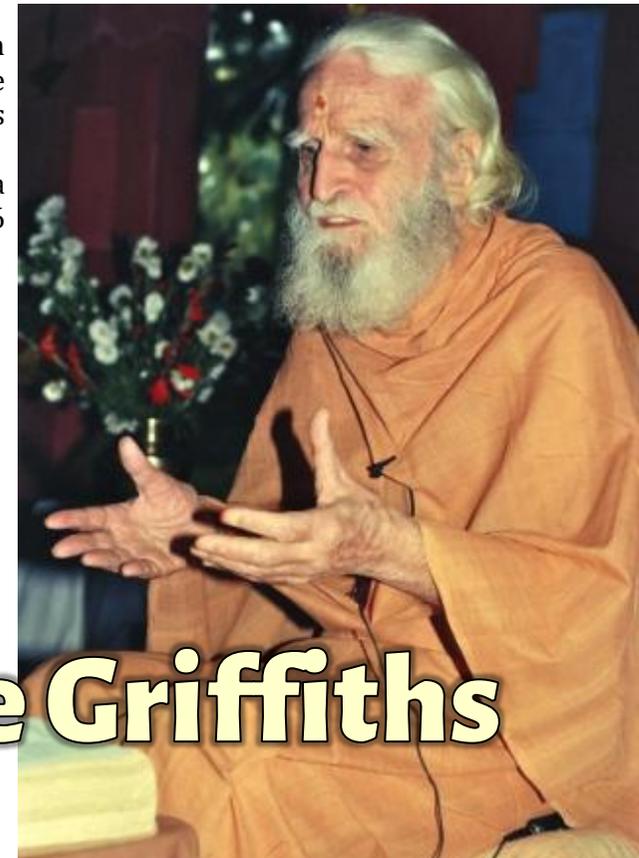
Bede's profoundest spiritual nourishment came from his use of the Jesus Prayer and his own meditation. In fact, he taught meditation as a bridge between East and West although the Indian character of his Christian life provoked suspicion and hostility, especially from the highly Westernised church in India. Nevertheless, his long life of seeking and sharing God managed to unite intellect with spirit in a way that displayed profound compassion for others.

Bede is remembered for the way he was absorbed into India. After a few years he adopted Indian customs, wearing the saffron robe of the Hindu holy man, walking barefoot, sitting on the floor and eating with his hands. He learnt its philosophy and its sacred language, Sanskrit, but without losing his intellectual objectivity, his Christianity, or indeed his English accent and Oxford manners! In fact, he maintained a life of intellectual rigour as well as that of the spirit. For example, he met C.S. Lewis while an undergraduate at Oxford and maintained the relationship through correspondence and occasional visits until Lewis' death nearly forty years later.

Bede developed a vision of modern life infused with religion. He developed this idea most fully in his acclaimed book *A Marriage of East and West* published in 1982. In it, he explored ways of recovering a living, authentic form of spirituality. And he showed himself to be one of the great religious prophets of modern times. He wrote many books which all discuss his appreciation of the crisis facing modern humanity combined with a sense of hope, humour and purpose. For example, he saw clearly the consequences of separating science from religion, and his thoughts on how to re-unite them informed his vision of religion that is more spiritual.

Bede's legacy is a new form of consecrated religious life that transcends many of today's institutions.

Bede Griffiths died in India on 13 May 1993. He was 86 years of age.



Bede Griffiths

More information

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-dom-bede-griffiths-2322954.html>

<http://www.bedegriffiths.com/category/shantivanam>

The word 'passion' comes ultimately from a Hebrew word *pesah* (or *pesach*) which means 'Passover'.

Pesach is the Jewish Feast which celebrates the Israelites' deliverance from slavery in Egypt (as related in Exodus 12), and focuses on the tenth plague. In that tenth plague, the angel of death struck down the firstborn males of the Egyptians (both humans and animals) but 'passed over' the homes of the Israelites, so sparing their firstborn.

This led to the Israelites' release from their Egyptian captivity and opened a major new chapter in the history of salvation. The angel of death recognised the homes of the Israelites because they were marked by the blood of a sacrificial lamb, which was thereafter called the 'paschal lamb'.

The Passover prefigures God's plan of salvation. There are many parallels between the Passover and Jesus' saving work. In both cases:-

- The people lived under foreign domination: Egyptian and Roman, respectively.
- God raised up a saviour to lead them to freedom: Moses and Jesus.
- The people were given a new code of life: the Ten Commandments and the New Commandment and Beatitudes.
- They were saved by shedding innocent blood: the Paschal Lamb's and Jesus'.
- The saviour led the people from one state to another: from being slaves in Egypt to being free in the Promised Land, and from being slaves to sin to being free from sin.

But there is one important difference between the Passover and the Passion of Jesus in Jerusalem: the Passover led to incomplete form salvation which was limited to the Israelites; by contrast, Jesus' passion, death and resurrection brought about salvation for everyone who is willing to accept it.

Passion Sunday is the fifth Sunday of Lent and (this year) occurs on 21 March. It helps us identify with Jesus as we prepare for Holy Week and Easter.

What's in a word?

Because the final week of Jesus' life follows the Passover or *Pesach*, we say he lived the *pesach*.

With time, the word *pesach* became *pasch* and thence *passion*. The meaning of the word 'passion' also changed. It first pointed to Jesus living the Passover-*Pesach* but it changed to mean his suffering during the last few days of his life. The word then meant Jesus' feelings in Holy Week, thence *our* feelings (particularly when we suffer), but it now means any emotion that is very strong.

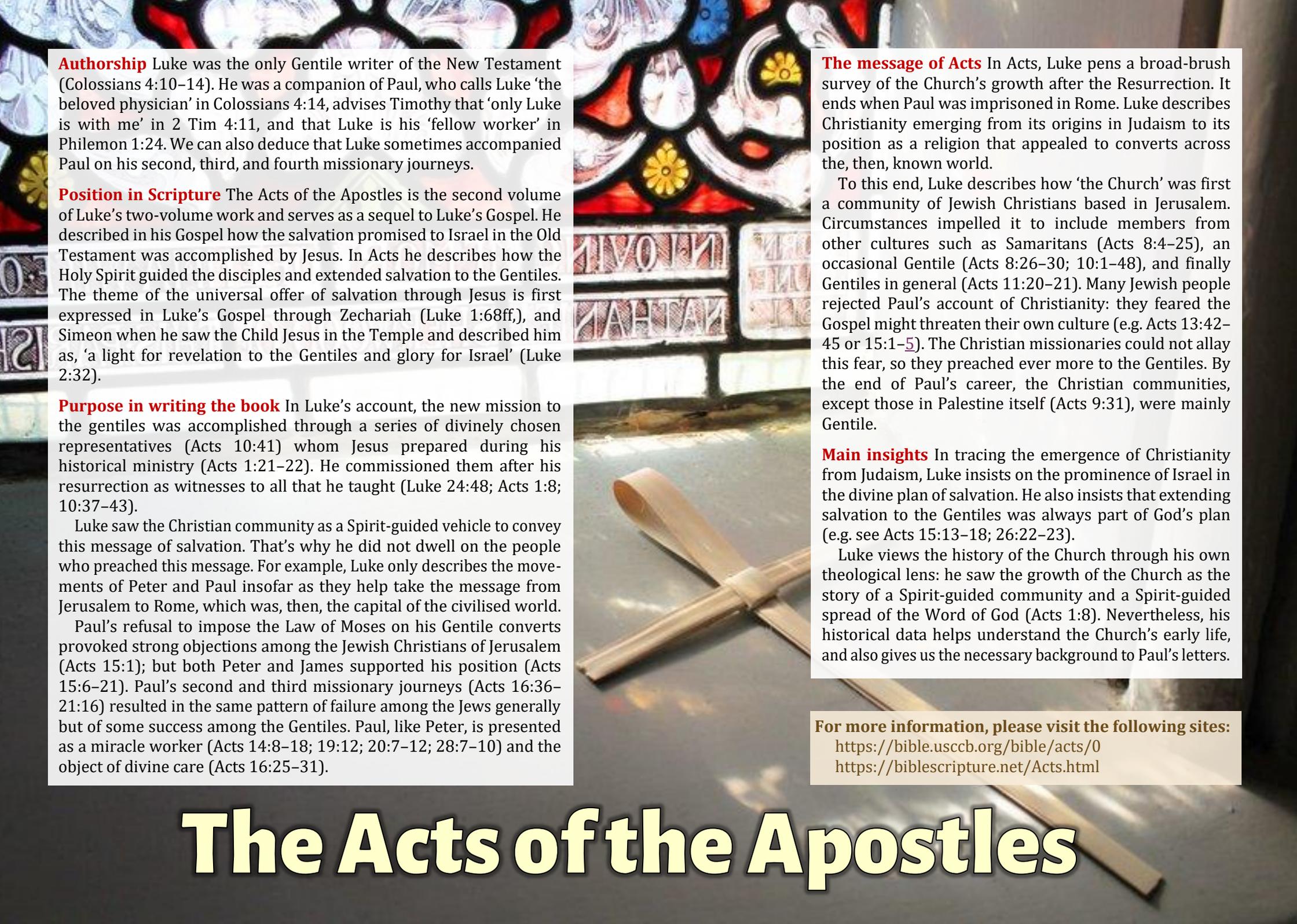
The related word 'compassion' comes from two parts, 'com' and 'passion'—with the meaning of 'sharing the passion'. Having compassion originally meant sharing Jesus' passion and death, which is surely one definition of a Christian.

The Passion of Christ



More depth

- <https://onceuponawrittenword.wordpress.com/2018/02/19/the-metamorphosis-of-passion>
- <https://www.avemariapress.com/engagingfaith/new-testament-connection-passover-and-eucharist>
- <https://int.icej.org/news/commentary/great-parallels-passover>
- https://www.smp.org/dynamicmedia/files/6373199144c2b62a4a01b759411d98dd/TX001312_1-Background-Paschal_Mystery.pdf



Authorship Luke was the only Gentile writer of the New Testament (Colossians 4:10–14). He was a companion of Paul, who calls Luke ‘the beloved physician’ in Colossians 4:14, advises Timothy that ‘only Luke is with me’ in 2 Tim 4:11, and that Luke is his ‘fellow worker’ in Philemon 1:24. We can also deduce that Luke sometimes accompanied Paul on his second, third, and fourth missionary journeys.

Position in Scripture The Acts of the Apostles is the second volume of Luke’s two-volume work and serves as a sequel to Luke’s Gospel. He described in his Gospel how the salvation promised to Israel in the Old Testament was accomplished by Jesus. In Acts he describes how the Holy Spirit guided the disciples and extended salvation to the Gentiles. The theme of the universal offer of salvation through Jesus is first expressed in Luke’s Gospel through Zechariah (Luke 1:68ff.), and Simeon when he saw the Child Jesus in the Temple and described him as, ‘a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory for Israel’ (Luke 2:32).

Purpose in writing the book In Luke’s account, the new mission to the gentiles was accomplished through a series of divinely chosen representatives (Acts 10:41) whom Jesus prepared during his historical ministry (Acts 1:21–22). He commissioned them after his resurrection as witnesses to all that he taught (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8; 10:37–43).

Luke saw the Christian community as a Spirit-guided vehicle to convey this message of salvation. That’s why he did not dwell on the people who preached this message. For example, Luke only describes the movements of Peter and Paul insofar as they help take the message from Jerusalem to Rome, which was, then, the capital of the civilised world.

Paul’s refusal to impose the Law of Moses on his Gentile converts provoked strong objections among the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem (Acts 15:1); but both Peter and James supported his position (Acts 15:6–21). Paul’s second and third missionary journeys (Acts 16:36–21:16) resulted in the same pattern of failure among the Jews generally but of some success among the Gentiles. Paul, like Peter, is presented as a miracle worker (Acts 14:8–18; 19:12; 20:7–12; 28:7–10) and the object of divine care (Acts 16:25–31).

The message of Acts In Acts, Luke pens a broad-brush survey of the Church’s growth after the Resurrection. It ends when Paul was imprisoned in Rome. Luke describes Christianity emerging from its origins in Judaism to its position as a religion that appealed to converts across the, then, known world.

To this end, Luke describes how ‘the Church’ was first a community of Jewish Christians based in Jerusalem. Circumstances impelled it to include members from other cultures such as Samaritans (Acts 8:4–25), an occasional Gentile (Acts 8:26–30; 10:1–48), and finally Gentiles in general (Acts 11:20–21). Many Jewish people rejected Paul’s account of Christianity: they feared the Gospel might threaten their own culture (e.g. Acts 13:42–45 or 15:1–5). The Christian missionaries could not allay this fear, so they preached ever more to the Gentiles. By the end of Paul’s career, the Christian communities, except those in Palestine itself (Acts 9:31), were mainly Gentile.

Main insights In tracing the emergence of Christianity from Judaism, Luke insists on the prominence of Israel in the divine plan of salvation. He also insists that extending salvation to the Gentiles was always part of God’s plan (e.g. see Acts 15:13–18; 26:22–23).

Luke views the history of the Church through his own theological lens: he saw the growth of the Church as the story of a Spirit-guided community and a Spirit-guided spread of the Word of God (Acts 1:8). Nevertheless, his historical data helps understand the Church’s early life, and also gives us the necessary background to Paul’s letters.

For more information, please visit the following sites:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/acts/0>

<https://biblescripture.net/Acts.html>

The Acts of the Apostles

He was mortal, yet God!
Of the seed of David,
but still the moulder of Adam's form.
He bore flesh, but existed outside a body.
He is Son of a mother, yet she is a virgin.
He was subject to limitation, yet beyond measure.
A manger received Him,
while Magi were led by a star as they came bearing gifts
and bending to their knees in worship.
As a mortal man he came to the struggle,
yet unconquered he prevailed over the Tempter in the threefold
conflict.
Food was laid before Him,
yet it was He who fed thousands and turned water into wine!
He was baptised,
but Himself cleansed sins and was proclaimed Son of the Eternal
by the thundering voice of the Spirit.
As a human being He took sleep,
while as God he lulled the sea to sleep
He bent His knees in weariness,
but to the knees of the palsied he restored strength.
He prayed,
yet who was it who heard the supplications of the weak?
He was both sacrifice and High Priest,
an offeror of sacrifice—yet God.
He dedicated His blood to God,
and cleansed the whole world.
Even when a cross raised Him up,
it was sin which was fixed by its nails.

*This poem about Jesus is by Gregory of Nazianzus.
He wrote it in about 340 AD.
It's trying to explore apparent paradoxes about Jesus.*

Do you prefer to think
of Jesus as divine or
as a human being?

Is it easier to worship
Jesus as a baby in a
manger or as an
adult?

**Part of the
reason for practising Lent is
to grow in our faith. Read the poem
on the left-hand page then think
about the questions
on this page.**

When you worship
Jesus, does it help
to picture him in
your mind's eye?

If Jesus is divine,
where was God when
Jesus was on the
Cross?

Who is Jesus to you?

In what ways is
praying to Jesus
different from
praying to God?

In what ways is Jesus
divine?

*Lord of dreams,
you take us off the straight and narrow
and open a new future,
a relationship of grace:
give us the courage of Joseph
to bear his world's disdain
and keep faith with the gift of life;
through Jesus Christ,
God with us.
Amen.*

**The Collect for St Joseph of Nazareth
Prayers for the Inclusive Church, Steven Shakespeare**

Joseph of Nazareth was Jesus' stepfather. He showed that he was a good man by obeying the Archangel Gabriel (Matthew 1:18-25).

The Bible lists Jesus' 'brothers and sisters' so later traditions arose that said Joseph had an earlier, first marriage before he knew Mary. He was a widower. The Bible does not support this idea.

We don't know when Joseph died but the last time we hear of him was at Jesus' bar-Mitzvah, when the boy turned twelve years of age (Luke 2:41-51).

Many years later, when the crowds speak about Jesus they call him 'the son of Mary' (Mark 6:3) rather than 'son of Joseph' implying Jesus' stepfather had died quite a long time previously.

The Gospel accounts never record Joseph saying a single word. How appropriate that the man charged to look after the 'Word made flesh' willingly agreed to look after the boy's upbringing. He fed the boy's body but did not place another word in his path.

The Church remembers Joseph on Friday 19 March.

St Joseph

I D Y D O B I Z R K G L O E Z A M E N L C S
 W T G E T H S E M A N E Q B S W E A R U R Z
 B N M G K Q C H A I S S E M O D Q I R F O X
 B A O A X X A U Y Z H T U G Q R M Q L W W T
 T V U L S T R K N I R D C P B R C H P O S F
 N R N I C E I O G A N U X E A D N R L R W D
 A E T L Y S O G Y C T I T A E S O D E R A I
 N S N E M T T E I T B A R S L P S D P O T S
 E U Q A T I R P I D R H S D H E N O S S C C
 V M D N Z M P N R T E E W E E A G P V A H I
 O V E C X O G E S E R M S W T H I I Z E X P
 C X T U U N R O E T T Y E S I R N A O U R L
 D S S W N Y R E S H E E Y H I T Q A M N S E
 S R E S L P S I A C S B P T P E N M S R S S
 A E R S E N D H D N R K E U G S B E E A E D
 D N R U A A O Z E E F I K V Z A A D S K X M
 S N A W V H E I C P P P P I L E L L L S O K
 U I S Q E V P S K L H P I T S E B I B M E Y
 J S Q K N V J A R S U E I B U S W E L P T S
 Q M C F E H A P I U P B R D B R E T D E N S
 Q O G Q D K M L Q A C G S D R A E D Q E E K
 C D B E Q K D N W K C O L F J Z R S S F E Z

***Loving God, creator of our common home,
 You fill the earth and sea and sky with life
 Forgive us our neglect of your creation
 The choking waste of our pollution
 The damage done by careless habits
 And our indifference to future generations.
 Help us to amend our lives
 To refuse more plastic if we can't reuse it
 To lift our voice for lasting change
 And to live well and gently on the earth
 To the glory of your Son, the Living Word
 Through whom you made this fragile world.
 Amen.***

Passion wordsearch

All these words appear in the passion account in Matthew 26:14-27:66

Amen, Arrested, Betrayer, Blasphemed, Body, Bystanders, Caiaphas,
 Clubs, Cock, Covenant, Crows, Curse, Cutting, Dipped, Disciples,
 Distressed, Drink, Elders, Flock, Galilean, Galilee, Gethsemane,
 Iscariot, Judas, Kissed, Legions, Messiah, Mount, Nazorean, Passover,
 Peter, prophecy, Prostrate, Rabbi, Sanhedrin, Scriptures, Servant,
 Sheep, Shepherd, Sinners, Sorrowful, Spirit, Swear, Testimony,
 Twelve, Unleavened, Watch, Witnesses, Zebedee.

Prayer

For God's creation



Curate's Corner

Lent 2021

Many people give up something for Lent—chocolate, alcohol, or TV, for example. And many others prefer to take something up—spiritual reading, more time for praying, and so on. We can explore both so, for example, using the time that was spent on television for reading the Bible and prayer.

Both ways of looking at Lenten disciplines are intended to make us into better people. The idea is that we grow to become more resilient and, by the end of Lent, we have more spiritual strength and are less easily distracted.

Lent 2021 is already a very different kind of Lent. Many of us are already doing without things because of Covid and the latest lockdown. We're probably eating less because we have less money and we've lost time and liberty to be with our friends.

Because this year's Lent is so very different, let's try a different kind of Lenten discipline: let's offer God's love to all the people we meet. Let's practise kindness and courtesy. Let's try generosity of spirit and all forms of encouragement.

A few months ago I was talking to a colleague about my perception that I didn't know the Bible as well as I could/should do. I was particularly aware that my familiarity with the Old Testament was somewhat lacking and that, when I did read Scripture, I tended to be drawn to the gospels and the more descriptive and poetic books. He suggested that I might consider purchasing the whole Bible as an 'audio book' which I could listen to in the car and/or read along with at home. What a great idea! So, for the relatively modest sum of about £25, I purchased the six CDs (80 hours) of David Suchet reading the entire Bible in a good translation (NIV).

David Suchet, best known for his television characterisation of Agatha Christie's Belgian detective *Hercule Poirot*, became a Christian at the age of forty after reading a hotel room Bible in 1986. Fittingly, his 'Road-to-Damascus' moment came as he encountered St Paul's letter to the Romans where he read (concerning God's love for us revealed in Christ) '*If God is for us, who is against us?*' (8.31). It became his dream to make an audio recording of the whole Bible and, in 2014 (the same year he finished filming the final episode of *Poirot*), he was the first single British actor to achieve this, spending over 200 hours in the recording studio.

I have enjoyed spending time listening to David's mellifluous voice reading the often beautiful words of the Bible. He injects just enough characterisation into the dramatic passages, and his reading of the more poetic books is a delight.

I am up to Luke's gospel as I write, and am really looking forward to hearing him read the opening of John's gospel where we hear of 'The Word'. And that's exactly and (in one sense) literally how David Suchet came to know Jesus. He picked up his hotel Bible and read the words that led him encounter the Word ... our Saviour Jesus Christ ... to know and love Him through the words of Scripture.

By Easter, I should have reached the end of Revelation and heard all 752,702 words. What will I do then? I'll go back to Genesis 1:1 of course! David has been a constant companion over the months and I would 'miss' him. The first time around I have encountered surprising passages, twists and turns, had 'lightbulb moments' and have reflected anew on familiar stories. I'm looking forward to discovering more in the same way, as I listen for a second time.

Revd Jane

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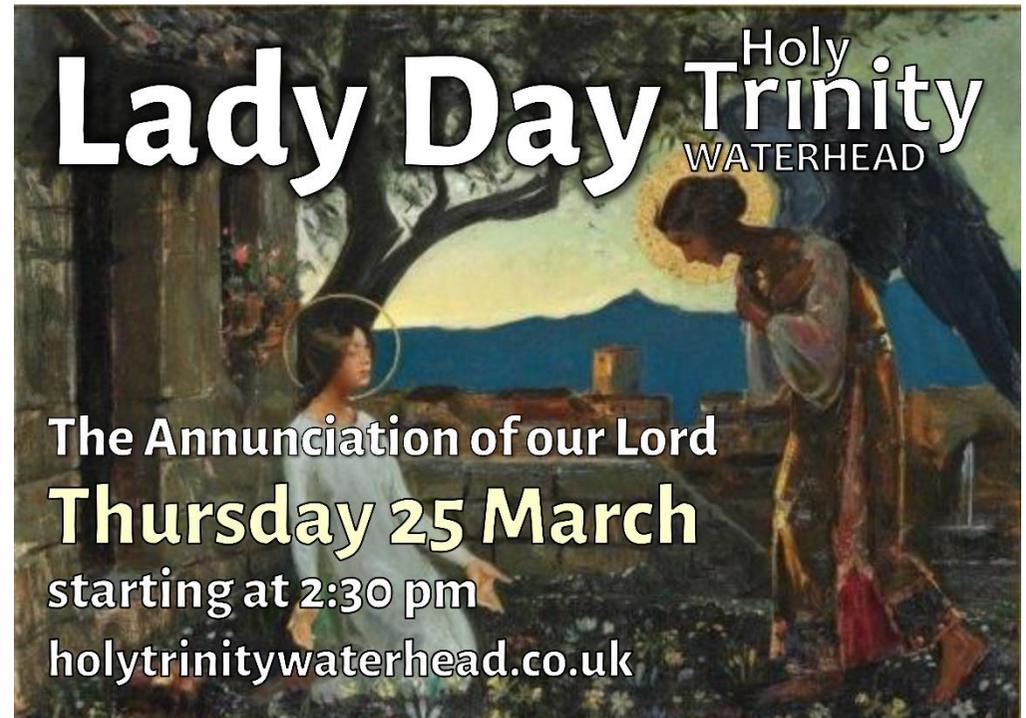
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Lady Day Holy Trinity

WATERHEAD

The Annunciation of our Lord
Thursday 25 March
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Jesus casts demons into swine
(with sincere apologies to Mark 5:1-19)

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The recent fierce blast of icy weather was preceded by some pleasantly mild days. Thrushes were singing, a woodpecker was drumming in a half-hearted manner and early flowers were starting to show. Such promises of spring were then halted by bitter cold and scything winds. The birds fell silent and garden snowdrops appeared shrivelled and lay flat against the ground, recovering completely when the wind dropped and temperatures rose.

Before the cold snap I had been pleased to see small numbers of tiny goldcrests both in the garden and flickering from tree to tree in local woodland. They are one of the smallest European bird species and their survival rates can be low in harsh winters although despite losses survivors are able to raise large numbers of chicks during the nesting season. Happily I have seen a few goldcrests this week and always feel uplifted when the golden flash on the head is visible. Their diminutive size and softly coloured plumage make them, to use an overworked superlative, exquisite. They can be seen at this time of year pecking vigorously into moss-covered tree-trunks in the search for insects and, as I learnt from the internet, moth eggs. Websites like that of the British Trust For Ornithology are vast repositories of fascinating information.



**Common polypody
Strinesdale**

One particular fern of our locality which is always admirable is the common polypody. This is sometimes abundant on stone walls, less so on tree trunks, the name being derived from poly (many) and pody (a foot), the fronds being divided up into foot-like divisions.

Like many native plants, common polypody had medicinal applications and is included in *A Modern Herbal* by Mrs M. Grieve (1931). 'This Fern was employed by the Ancients as a purgative. It was held that such Fern plants as grew upon the roots of an oak, which this Fern frequently does, owned special medicinal powers. In the

same way the mistletoe that grew on the oak was esteemed by the Druids to have special powers of which that growing on other trees was devoid'. On the downside polypody 'sometimes produces a rash, but this disappears in a short time and causes no further inconvenience'.

The group of three roe deer active near to the church continues to interest walkers. Yesterday the largest deer, possibly the mother of the other two was warily keeping watch while grazing among the trees flanking Culvert Street. Also visible and sideways on was one other deer. Only when a second pair of ears could be glimpsed was it apparent that one young deer was screening the other from view. Eight legs perfectly aligned to look like four. They are masters of stealth and concealment.

Evidence

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From the memorial book

- 1 Birthday memories of **Michael John Allen** who died on 8th April 2013. We miss you Michael – Mum Clara and family
- 3 **Harold Norton** died this day 1992. 'Remembered with Love.'
Mary Gorton died this day 1996 aged 89 years. 'Her life a beautiful memory, Her absence a silent grief.'
- 4 **Dr Ada Shaw, nee Aspinall**, wife of the Vicar, was buried this day, 1958. 'Full of Good Works.'
Esther Wolfenden died this day 1995. Loved and Remembered Always.
- 6 **Gladys Jennie Tattersall** died 1959. Wife of **Frank Harrison Tattersall** who died 21st October 1966.
Robert (Bob) Kirkpatrick born this day 1909, passed to higher service 6th August 1998. 'Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord.'
- 9 **Clarice Fitton** died this day 1982 aged 82. Former Secretary and Enrolling Member, Mothers' Union.
- 13 **Florence Buckley**, a dearly loved mum, grandma and great grandma. Died this day 1988 in her 90th year. Treasured memories of you Mum. Remembered and loved always. From all her family.
Edith Graham died 2005 aged 89 A dear Mum, Grandma and Great Grandma. Loved and remembered every day.
- 14 **Joseph Flynn** died this day 1989, aged 78 years.
- 15 **Marjorie Connell** died this day 2014 aged 92. Always remembered.
- 23 **George Henry Taylor M.M. (Harry)** died this day 1947. Beloved Husband of **Hannah Elizabeth (Annie)** died April 20th, 1956. Loving parents of Norman and Ivan. Dearly Remembered.
- 25 **Fred Belshaw** died 1989. 'Sleep in Heavenly peace.' Remembered always by daughters Audrey and Joan.

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Advice and resources

The Country is in lockdown as a result of Covid so the Church Council suspended all services as a precaution against spreading the virus. We will revisit this decision regularly as the situation evolves. Please consult the Church website, at www.medlockhead.co.uk/virus



This image is entirely monochrome except for the slightly off-white sheep beside the low hedge. But against such a backdrop it looks like an explosion of colour. It's a bit like offering love to anyone who feels un-lovable. Even human-strength love can make a difference.



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