

# Saints ALIVE

*The magazine of:*  
*All Saints, Leighton Buzzard*  
*St. Nicholas, Hockliffe*  
*St. Michael's, Eggington*  
*St. Michael and All Angels,*  
*Billington*  
*The Good Shepherd, Sandhills*

April 2023

70p

## The Crucifixion

*by John Stainer*

A Meditation on the sacred Passion  
of the Holy Redeemer

To be sung by

All Saints Choir together with  
singers from other team churches &  
Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers

Directed by Paul Dickens

Organ: Sam Kemp

Principal soloists:

David Emerson and Edward Price



**All Saints Church**

**Good Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm**

### **Inside:**

Mother Kirsty passes on some lessons from St. George

Cake & Candles with the Bereavement Support Team

Prayer and pilgrimage – a decision of the heart as well as the will, says Don Brewin

Going Green: Pulford School & the Eco Team both have handy tips

Philip Nichols of CGS describes music as the language of worship

Lili Blofeld, also of CGS loves volunteering at the CGS Sunday Café

# All Saints Leighton Buzzard

## Team Rector & Vicar of All Saints:

### Rev'd Cate Irvine

The Vicarage,  
Pulford Road, LU7 1AB 01525 373217

### Curate:

Rev'd Kirsty Borthwick 07865 748966

### Team Vicars:

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Rev'd Dr. Bernard Minton 01525 372149  
Rev'd Steve Marsh 01525 838450

### Associate Priests:

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Canon Malcolm Grant 01525 372771  
Canon Don Brewin 01525 373644  
Canon Grant Fellows 01525 381418

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Geoffrey Huskisson 01525 757013  
Geoffrey Marchant 01525 371797  
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Leighton Buzzard LU7 1AE  
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## ***Lessons from St. George***

***By Rev'd Kirsty Borthwick***



This month, most importantly of course, we celebrate the great feast of Easter – the joyful celebration of our Lord's resurrection which begins on Easter Sunday and lasts until either Ascension Day or Pentecost (depending on which liturgist you ask!).

After Easter Day at the beginning of April, the next major festival in our calendars is that of England's patronal saint. Whilst St George's Day is traditionally marked on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, it appears on the 24<sup>th</sup> in our church lectionary this year, as our ongoing Easter celebrations always trump anything else on a Sunday (a bit of trivia to store up for the next unlikely occasion you stumble on an 'ecclesial' round in your local pub quiz!).



It makes good sense to celebrate the Feast of St George in the heart of the Easter season, for his story is one in which the death and resurrection of Christ abounds. We tend to associate St George with the various nations of which he is patron, with the crusades and with the famous dragon. The man himself was likely a Roman soldier who lived in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD, in land that now lies in the West Bank (in what we know as the Holy Land). He never met a dragon (sorry!) but he did battle the powers of evil on behalf of Christ as a martyr of the Church. Filled with confidence in Christ's resurrection, he lived for Christ in a dangerous context, under considerable persecution, and ended up giving up his life for Christ.

As we transition from Lent to Easter, St George reminds us that we are all at once called to take up our cross *and* to live filled with the joy of the resurrection. We are called to be Lent *and* Easter people throughout the year: people of sacrifice and service, who do so in the hope of the resurrected Christ. As our patronal saint, St George also reminds us of our vocation, as members of the established church, to pray for the life of our nation. This is a vocation in which we all share, and there is much happening in the coming months for which we can and should be praying – the King's coronation and our local elections to name just two.

So this Easter can I encourage you to pray for our nation, for those who lead us, and for all in need. May the Lenten principles of sacrifice and service, and the Easter principles of hope and joy, direct our common life together - across the Ouzel Valley Team and our local communities, and across our nation as a whole.

***Mother Kirsty***

## *Our present pattern of services across the Ouzel Valley Team*

### **All Saints**

#### **Sundays:**

**Please note new times which allow for cleaning between services**

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Eucharist

11.30am

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays: All Age Service

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Holy Baptism

6pm Evening Prayer

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Choral Evensong Plus

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: followed by Benediction

#### **Weekdays:**

#### **Holy Communion**

7.30pm Tuesday

(Service of Healing on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)

10.00am Thursday

9.00am Saturday

**Morning Prayer:** St. Hugh's Chapel

9.00am Tuesday – Friday

### **St. Barnabas, Linslade**

#### **Sundays:**

8am Said Eucharist

10am Parish Eucharist

6pm Evensong

[www.linslade-parish.org.uk](http://www.linslade-parish.org.uk)

### **St. Leonard's, Heath & Reach**

#### **Sundays:**

8am: Holy Communion

11am Holy Communion (in church & via Zoom)

1<sup>st</sup> Sundays: Family Service

**Tuesdays:** 7pm Holy Communion

#### **Morning Prayer via Zoom:**

9.00am Monday - Saturday

[www.saintleonardschurch.com](http://www.saintleonardschurch.com)

### **St. Michael's, Eggington**

9.30am 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays: Holy Communion

### **St. Nicholas', Hockliffe**

9.30am 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays: Family Communion

4<sup>th</sup> Sundays: Holy Communion

### **St. Michael's and All Angels, Billington**

11.15am Holy Communion

### **Good Shepherd, Astral Park Sports & Community Centre, Johnson Drive, Sandhills, LU7 4AY:**

**Sundays** at 9.45am:

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Holy Communion & CGS Juniors

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday: 'In the Community', at Astral Park

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Family Service

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Bring and share breakfast and Holy Communion

Free pop-up café every Sunday from 9.45am

**Sunday Saints:** for age 3+ year olds, meets during 9.30am Sunday service at All Saints.

**All Saints Toddler Time:** All Saints every Wednesday during term time, at 9.30am & at 1.30pm.

£1.50 per parent / carer & child; 50p extra per child; refreshments included.

**Leighton Young Singers Club:** for children in Years 2-6, meets on Fridays at 6.30 - 7.30pm.

**Bereavement Café:** a support group offering friendship and understanding.

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month, 2.30-4pm The Spire Coffee Shop, All Saints

**Choir Practice:** Friday evenings, 6.45 trebles; 7.30 adults.

**Bellringers:** Practice on Monday, 7.30pm-9.30pm.

**Spire Coffee Shop:** Tuesday, Friday & Saturday 10am-2pm.

*Contact Details on Page 2.*

# News Roundup

## Shoebox News:

An amazing 26,165 shoeboxes nationwide were filled, collected, and delivered to homes in Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, and Ukraine in time to give hope and cheer to those in need in time for Christmas last year. To all those who contributed so freely and generously to this wonderful result ... .. a very big thank you. *Rosie Dawson*

\*\*\* \*\*

## All Saints Holiday Club 14<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> August – “It’s Circus Time”

Application forms available after Easter.

\*\*\* \*\*

If you use the services of one of our advertisers, please mention Saints Alive to them, so they know their support of our magazine is worthwhile!



## Worth a smile

A vicar planning an Easter pilgrimage to the Holy Land was shaken when he found it would cost him £50 an hour to rent a boat on the Sea of Galilee.

He protested to the travel agent that the cost was ridiculous. “That might be true,” replied the travel agent, “but you have to take into account that the Sea of Galilee is water on which our Lord Himself walked.”

“Well,” said the vicar, “at £50 an hour for a boat, I am not surprised!”



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



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

Choir on strike:



Among their demands were bourbon biscuits, double fees for weddings, and Sundays off

# Parish Registers

## Holy Matrimony, February:

25: Robert Morcombe & Leia Blakesley

*'Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate'*

## Holy Baptism, February:

26: Alicia Eleanor Susan Davies

*'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'*

## R.I.P. February:

8: Joyce Lebek at Vandyke Road Chapel; 9: Shirley Green at St. Barnabas; 13: (Samuel) Joe Nunn at St. Leonard's; 15: John Loria at Berton, Cynthia Berry at Berton; 20: Malcolm Ginn at All Saints; 24: Maxwell Gash at All Saints; 28: Valerie Andrews at Berton

*'Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die'*

## Years Mind, April:

1: Frederick Saunders; 2: Betty Ransom; 3: Isabella Campbell McKee Bell, Doris Ranger; 5: Albert Woolhead, Charles Waples, Robin Boyce; 6: Ethel Higgs, Alison Austin; 7: Peter Archer; 8: William Stebbings, Elsie Hyde; 10: Florence Hyde; 11: (Sam) Henry George Dixon, Susan Moule, Graham Joynes; 12: Marjorie Bester; 13: Hugh Frank Delafield, John Coleman; 15: Stephen Royle, Stephen Aris; 17: Jean Rumbelow; 19: Mal Royle, Edith Foskett; 20: Burt Edgoose, Katie Palmer, Eddie Pool, Jamie Crossan; 21: John Macfarlane; 22: Michael Gardner, Pamela Webb; 23: Norman Warburton; 24: Penny Edwards, Sylvia Weston; 26: Kathleen Royston; 27: David Guess, Doris Hyde, Zoe Walker; 28: Travers William (Bill) Ellison; 29: Derek Windle



## LEIGHTON BUZZARD MUSIC

### LIVE PROFESSIONAL CONCERTS

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**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2023 at 7.30pm**

**Ensemble Hesperii**

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Florence Petit, *baroque cello*;

Thomas Allery, *harpsichord*

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Leighton Buzzard Music is a registered charity no: 1183681



# ***Pulford VA Lower School***

***Head Teacher: Rev'd Dave Heather, MBE***

***Office Manager: Mrs Alison Quick***

***Tel: 01525 372188***

***Website: [www.pulfordschool.org](http://www.pulfordschool.org)***

A church school for  
a whole community



## **Small hands can make big changes.**

With our awareness of the need to look after God's world, Pulford School has been working towards raising the profile of being more eco-focused. We have been striving to keep our school litter free, turning off unwanted lights and taps, and closing doors to keep the heat in. We have recently had a 'bike, scooter or walk to school' day. This had a great uptake, with benefits for health, and traffic around the school, as well as impacts on the amount of car fumes in and around the town.

The children are actively encouraged to bring in a refillable water bottle each day, to lessen the use of single use plastics. We have always strived to recycle any card and scrap paper and we continue to promote this. We have a newly established Eco Council and they are offering bi-weekly tips in our school newsletter.

Their most recent tip was...

### **Recycle your batteries**

No one likes to see batteries heading for landfill. They are toxic and not good for our planet. Take them to the nearest recycling point (Argos, Waitrose, Boots to name but a few). This way they are shipped off and reused. Using rechargeable batteries would be even better!

In recognition of the efforts made so far, we have recently been awarded the 'Eco Schools Rising Star' award from Central Bedfordshire to celebrate our achievements.

Here is our recent whole school art work promoting our eco principles, which can be seen on display in our hall.



***Mrs. T. Youngs***





## The Gentleman Gardener

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to pop round to have a chat.

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email: eileennaples50@outlook.com

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01525 372 204

## *Selections*

*Pet, gift and garden.  
Household, kitchen tools and  
electrical items.  
Calor Gas, DIY and repairs.  
Memorial.*



*selections\_pet\_garden*



# On a musical note.....

*“After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music” - Aldous Huxley*



“Lovely music” said the lady with the coffee. I was helping at our Sunday morning café. At Good Shepherd we run a cafe alongside our service on a Sunday morning. The congregation is in the building, although behind glass doors, and the café is outside serving hot drinks to those who use Astral Park on a Sunday.

They are, mainly, the parents of young footballers and dog walkers. And as we serve them coffee or tea and have a chat about who we are and why we are standing in the cold preparing them hot drinks, the sound of the service escapes the confines of the building and every now and then, captures the attention of one of our customers. What they hear will often be the music of sung worship. This Sunday the lady might have heard “How Great Thou art” (1885); “Thine be the Glory” (1923); “All Heaven declares” (1987) or “Rescuer” (2018). We love a good blend of music at Good Shepherd. Yet music that attracts, entertains, helps us to worship and even express the inexpressible can also be divisive.

We all have our preferences and sometimes in church the style of worship music may tell us something about ourselves. It is perhaps natural to think of our own interest first without asking questions such as whether this pleases God, or serves the purpose of the Church's mission.



Music may also be divisive because as someone said, we listen to sermons, but we perform worship, becoming personally involved – including our bodies and even our self-identity. We tend to like music that suits our temperament or self-image.

Music can trigger associations: a hymn may trigger a longing for a departed loved one, whereas a saxophone may evoke a dance floor.

And nowadays we are all conditioned to have our favourite music to hand as and when we like it. Yet in church we are both young and old, and people with different cultural backgrounds – we are meant, and called, to be intergenerational and inclusive. In Acts 2, tongues of fire fall on the disciples, and they begin to speak in many languages so that the crowd “*amazed and perplexed, asked one another, ‘what does this mean?’*”.



Maybe many languages also means many musics; a Pentecost of styles.

Now I don't know what the lady with the coffee heard. I was busy chatting with the next dog walker. But I know she stayed by our open door for perhaps ten minutes, coffee in hand, just listening to the language of our worship.

# Calendar of Events

2<sup>nd</sup> April

**Bereavement Support Café** Coffee Shop, All Saints 2.30pm – 4pm



Good Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 6pm

**Tenebrae Service** Billington



12<sup>th</sup> April

**Lunch Club** in the North Transept, All Saints 1pm.

Tickets £5.00 available from the Coffee Shop.



21<sup>st</sup> April

**Crafty Natter** All Saints 1.30pm - 3.30pm



22<sup>nd</sup> April

**Eggington Quiz Night:**

Contact Angela Dyer - 01525 210420



23<sup>rd</sup> April

Services as usual including **All Age Communion** 11.30am

**Bereavement Service** All Saints 3pm



30<sup>th</sup> April

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

All Saints 11am





# HOLY WEEK AND EASTER 2023

## **PALM SUNDAY 2nd APRIL**

8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am Procession with donkey from the Market Cross followed by Sung Eucharist

6.00pm Stations of the Cross

## **MONDAY, TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY HOLY COMMUNION**

8.00pm Addresses by Mother Cate Irvine Vicar of All Saints & Team Rector

## **MAUNDY THURSDAY 6th APRIL**

10.00am Holy Communion

7.30pm Sung Eucharist and ceremony of foot-washing followed by Watch of Prayer until midnight

## **GOOD FRIDAY 7th APRIL**

12.00 noon A time for reflection with music and readings

12.45pm -1.50pm Preaching the Passion - Mother Cate

2.00pm - 3.00pm The Good Friday Liturgy

7.00pm - Stainer's Crucifixion

## **HOLY SATURDAY 8th APRIL**

9.00am A quiet service of reflection

9.00pm Easter Eve Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter

## **EASTER DAY 9th APRIL**

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Festal Eucharist for Easter Day

11.30am Messy Mass for Easter Day

6.00pm Festal Evensong

# FOCUS on ...

## *Groups and activities, sustaining the Christian community of The Ouzel Valley Team*



The votive candles alight after our prayer time when we light candles for the bereaved.



Held on the first Sunday of each month from 2.30pm - 4pm, the Bereavement Café is just one of many ways in which the Bereavement Team provides support. It is a chance to come together with others who have been bereaved for company and support. There is space to talk to one of our volunteers or to pray and light a candle in church if you would like to.

If you would like someone from the Team to contact you privately, please call the Parish Office on 01525 381418.

The team also follows up funerals, visiting the bereaved & offering support & advice; and for those outside the Parish, sends a condolence letter & the Parish Magazine recording the death in the RIP. They meet regularly to pray for the terminally ill & bereaved; make contact on the 1st anniversary of their bereavement; organise a Bereavement service, inviting bereaved families to attend; and in December, erect a Bereavement tree near the Altar of Repose, where bereaved families can place stars in memory of their loved ones.

***The next bereavement service is at All Saints on Sunday 23rd April at 3pm.***



# *This month The Bereavement Support Team*



Some comments from members about the café:

"What a wonderful welcome & the lovely cakes were food for the soul"

"Wonderful 3 angels who bake lovely cakes & tea. They make you so welcome along with friends who have been down the same path; so supportive"



"Warm welcome, an amazing atmosphere, very friendly"

" I really look forward to going each month"



*Our thanks to Dave Hipwell for his photos of the team, greeting and talking with our members, and feasting on cake.*

***Dot, Thelma and Christine***



## ***Good Shepherd, Sandhills***

***Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh***

***Tel: 01525 838450***

***Churchwardens:***

***Stuart Blofeld & Katharine Reedy***



**CHURCH of the  
GOOD SHEPHERD**

Since March 2022, our church has run a weekly community café on Sunday mornings at Astral Park, staffed by a dedicated team of volunteers of all ages. We aim to serve the community and communicate God's generosity. Our customers are the children playing football on the field and their supporters, as well as dog walkers and other people who happen to be out and about. Anyone is welcome to drop by for free refreshments and a chat. Sometimes people join in with our Sunday service, though there is no obligation. Services currently take place on the first, third and fourth Sundays of the month.

Here, Lili Blofeld, one of our teenage volunteers (who also designed the poster), talks about her experience of serving at the café:

"I enjoy volunteering at the CGS cafe at lot! I started doing it a while back now for my Duke of Edinburgh - Bronze Award and have continued to do it for my own enjoyment. I loved how I learnt to make all the drinks, through other people in the Church teaching me, and now I am able to teach others how to do it as well.

My favourite part is getting to serve people in the community and the football players; if they are coming to us for the first time (because they are from an away team) they are always shocked it's free and very happy to receive warm drinks and pastries when the weather is cold.

There are always multiple people on the cafe each week, of different age ranges as well, so if we aren't on the go serving people, we can catch up and also keep warm by drinking hot chocolates, teas or coffees."

If you are reading this and think you may be interested in volunteering for the café regularly, do get in touch at [katharinereedy@gmail.com](mailto:katharinereedy@gmail.com) We're a friendly bunch, and welcome new faces.

CGS COMMUNITY  
CAFÉ

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CHURCH of the  
GOOD SHEPHERD

***Katharine Reedy & Lili Blofeld***

## **St. Nicholas, Hockliffe**

**Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney**

**Tel: 01525 237633**

**Churchwardens:**

**Brian Speller: 210565;**

**Roger Spalding: 07451 877501**



It is almost Spring, the 21<sup>st</sup> of March. Thank goodness the days are getting longer. I think Spring is one of the best seasons as everything stirs and starts to wake up, while the first snowdrops that tell us that hope is around the corner.



**Mothering Sunday:** This year we will be at Eggington for the service at 9.30am, and it will be lovely to share in the traditions of a neighbouring village.

The church celebrates Mothering Sunday each year and it has become quite a tradition at Hockliffe that the congregation receive a small posy of colourful primroses and daffodils. I always think of the primroses as delicate children and the daffodils as guiding parents. The flowers somehow remind me of my responsibilities as a parent. These are a mark of thanks, and in earlier times they were specifically for mothers. But as time has moved on, we have recognised the importance of caring and nurturing in that service, giving all the congregation a small posy last year to say thank you to all who care and nurture.



**Easter Day:** Spring is always a busy time for the church and Easter Day is the most important day of the Christian calendar. This year our Easter Service on 9<sup>th</sup> April will be a Family Service followed by refreshments and Easter eggs for the children.

**Coronation Picnic: Monday, 8 May Picnic lunch in the churchyard** (in the church if wet) to celebrate the coronation, 1pm to 4pm. Church to provide drinks and cakes. Crafts for the children and a crown making competition.



For many of us in this country and the wider Commonwealth Nations we will be celebrating our first Coronation so we can be part of this little bit of history. Towns and villages will be holding community events which allow us to celebrate but also to get to know our neighbours. The 10 commandments tell us to love our neighbours, but for many communities this is hard as lives have changed and paths do not cross in the same way as they would in years gone by so we would love you to join us and meet new friends and neighbours on 8<sup>th</sup> May.

**Rose Price**



## ***St. Michael & All Angels, Billington***

***Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh***

***Tel: 01525 838450***

***Churchwardens:***

***Sandra Brewin 373644;***

***Julia Haviland 850380***



Snow, sleet and gale force winds greeted Billington on the day before our intended Churchyard and Church Spring Clean. Rumours abounded that the clean-up would be cancelled in spite of everybody in the village receiving a flyer advertising the event. However, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March dawned bright and sunny, an ideal day for working outdoors. Lots of people ignored the inclement weather of the past day or two and turned up with their tools, their energy and most of all their generosity to help take care of Billington's greatest asset. Julia Haviland and Jean Albertella were the main movers and shakers. David Thompson and Don Brewin determinedly made a bonfire of the heap of combustible material that had collected over the year, and others worked hard all morning. The youngest member of the team was Alfred, only a few days old, who brought his Mum and Dad, Pippa and Olly, with him. Thank you so much to all who turned out to help.

We were sorry to hear from Rev'd Steve Marsh that our pioneer minister for the Ouzel Valley Team, Tom Button, will be leaving his post. We are sure that if circumstances had been different and Tom had been able to stay in the team, he would have made an impact throughout the area. We do wish him the very best in the future and pray that he will be able to use his gifts in the way that God leads him.

Something has happened to many of the garden hedges in Billington. They are brown and apparently lifeless at present, and show no signs of new buds. Is it the drought of last summer? The lack of rain in February? Or the recent cold weather that is causing this unusual condition? We will wait and see whether new life will emerge.

One thing we do know is that Easter is approaching when we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. May this be a time of rising from darkness into light, a time of hope, a turning from war to peace, and a determination to bring new life into our world and to conquer the influences which lead to death and destruction. Only God can help us.

### **Diary Dates:**

Good Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 6pm:

Tenebrae Service in church. All welcome.

Easter Day 9<sup>th</sup> April: Family Communion at 11.15 am.

Flowers to decorate the church for this service will be gratefully received.



***Sandra Brewin***

## ***St. Michael's, Eggington***

***Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney***

***Tel: 01525 237633***

***Church Officers:***

***Carol Hart 384634; Paul Brown 751861***



### ***Eulogy to Joan Elsie Alcock, an Eggington girl.***

The funeral of Joan Elsie Alcock, aged 106, was held on Friday 3rd March. Born on 3rd September 1916, daughter to Gertrude and village carpenter Harold Price, Joan lived at the house adjoining the carpenter's workshop opposite the Churchyard. She grew up in the village and had many fond memories of her childhood. After education Joan took an apprenticeship as a seamstress in Leighton Buzzard; and in 1939, married Victor Alcock of Dunstable in Eggington Church. Their wedding reception coincided with a coach load of Evacuees from Whitechapel, arriving to be billeted at the White House. In typical no-nonsense form, Joan immediately changed from her wedding dress and went to help settle in the arrivals.

After her marriage Joan lived in Houghton Regis and worked in munitions at AC Delco. But she missed Eggington and her family and after her shift cycled back nearly every day, her sausage dog Rupert keeping watch over the top of her bicycle basket.

After her parents died in 1957 Joan moved back to Eggington, into Russet Cottage where she lived for the next 61 years. Always busy, she was a keen member of the WI, skilled at all sorts of handicraft, enjoyed flower arranging, whist drives, village outings, played the organ at Church or Chapel events and was always willing to help out anyone who needed it. At times she could have a cantankerous side to her nature but underpinning all was great kindness and sense of humour. After Vic died and her mobility became a problem, she sat for many hours in her parlour at Russet cottage, the door permanently unlocked so she could enjoy people's visits. She loved to reminisce and tell stories of old village life. When advised against keeping her door open, in true Joan form, she said she had a big knobbly stick by the side of her chair and if anybody gave her any trouble she would whack them.

Joan achieved her 100th Birthday in her own home and enjoyed a wonderful day. But in January 2018 she had to leave Russet Cottage for Westlands Care Home in Leighton Buzzard. She found this quite difficult at times, but bravely made the best of her lot. Well cared for at Westlands, she celebrated her 106<sup>th</sup> birthday in September last year.

The manager of Westlands said "Joan is an amazing person and an inspiration on how to age gracefully and still be able to laugh and enjoy life even when you are 106 years old."

Eggington has lost a character. We can be grateful for her life and reflect that Joan Alcock, true Eggington Girl, has come home to rest, for ever, in her beloved village.

***Harry Sear***



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## CHRISTIAN AID: 14-20 MAY 2023

Soaring costs due mainly to climate change are affecting people around the world & families are paying the price for this global crisis.

This year Christian Aid is helping farmers in Malawi to plant better seeds, secure a fairer price for their crop and build a happier future for their children. Food, fuel, fertiliser & school fees have doubled in the last 12 months. Hard working farmers are seeing their harvests fail as the climate crisis brings increasingly erratic weather.

### **ESTHER'S STORY**

For 10 years Esther grew pigeon peas on her farm, but struggled to obtain a fair price for her crop. In 2021 her crops were washed away by cyclone Ana, leaving Esther desperate. But when she joined a pigeon pea programme run by Christian Aid partner NANDOLO FARMERS ASSOCIATION and started selling as part of a cooperative, she was able to earn much more, which provided her with financial stability.

Esther and her husband worked together on their land. When he fell ill, they talked about how she could continue to grow the pigeon peas after his death. Esther feels that she is continuing his legacy.

With the money Esther is making she has been able to:

- 1 feed her family & buy carpentry tools for her daughter Ziwone, & pay for her other daughter Rashida's school costs;
- 2 store the peas in a warehouse safe from floods & storms;
- 3 buy a herd of goats who provide manure for her crops;
- 4 buy a sewing machine.

Through the cooperative & its equipment, Esther can bake pigeon pea flour bread to sell, & boost her income.



### **So what are pigeon peas?**

Pigeon peas are grown in pods rather like our own peas. They are not very high in calories but high in nutritional content. One cup of cooked green pigeon peas provides 209 calories & 11 grams of protein & can be ground to make bread or added to food.

Please help Christian Aid to change lives for people like Esther in Malawi.

There will be Christian Aid envelopes available on the table inside the North door and also in the Saints Alive magazine in May.

***Pauline Lyon***



## ***Tell out my soul:***

*A series exploring how elements of our worship  
What we do and why we do it.*

*This month:*

### ***Intercession ...***

***by Rev'd Canon Don Brewin***

“The Intercessions” are a key element in every Eucharist. We are used to the leader giving details of who we should pray for – in the church, in the world, those who are sick, and those who have recently died. Usually the leader shows that he or she has really sought to lift to God the needs of those nearby and far away. But it is only when we dig deeper – and the person leading intercessions demonstrates that they have a real gift for this ministry - that we can begin to understand how our prayers relate to the heart of God.

It is salutary to recall that when Jesus prayed for different individuals, he went beneath the surface – whether or not they spoke about their need – to the real issue.

Christians are called to express our dual citizenship – members of God’s kingdom and our human nation state – through an acceptance of pilgrimage. There are three remarkable verses in Psalm 84 (vv 5-7):

*“Blessed are those whose strength is in you,  
who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.  
As they pass through the valley of Baca,  
they make it a place of springs;  
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.  
They go from strength to strength,  
till each appears before God in Zion.”*

Some years ago, we (SOMA) took a team to Southern Sudan when it was at war with the North. The Khartoum Government sent bombers to try to kill us. Thank God they did not succeed – but it was challenging! Later that day, the Mayor of the town where we were called us together. I will never forget what he said: “When you came into our country you passed a sign which said ‘danger’ [a skull and crossbones by the side of the road, indicating land mines]. You are Christians – are you ready to die?”

For most of us in this country, this is not a meaningful question – but we need to remember, in our intercessions as well as in other times – those for whom this is a daily reality.

Jesus calls us to follow Him - pick up our cross [daily] and to go wherever He leads. This is going to become more challenging as time goes on, and for some of us who read this article, we need to respond to the challenge.

There is however another call, which takes us back to Jesus weeping over Jerusalem – a city he prayed for without using words. Psalm 84:5, above, says *“Blessed are those who have set their heart on pilgrimage”* – the willingness to travel light, to follow the Holy Spirit’s leading. The next verse says *“As they pass through the Valley of Baca [a dry wilderness], they make it a place of springs”*.

How does this happen? How do spiritual wildernesses, like part of every community, become fertile again? Matthew Henry’s commentary gives the clue. It is when God’s people, especially those called to be intercessors, feel God’s pain for their community, and weep God’s tears. Then these tears are the means whereby the dry spiritual wilderness becomes fertile again.

The Lord is calling each of us to make a decision of the heart as well as the will - “to be a pilgrim”. The pilgrim has begun the journey, but knows he has not arrived. She has met with Jesus, and begun to discern the reality of forgiveness, but knows that she is still wounded and sinful.

The pilgrim has to travel light. He knows that there are no safe places; that to stop moving is to return to the old way. He has rejected the desire for status on the way through this passing world, trusting in resources beyond his own. She has learnt the purging effect of pain, the purifying effect of the desert sun, the directness of the encounter with God.

*“Going through the vale of misery, use it for a well...”* (Psalm 84:6)\*. The pilgrim has begun to learn how to dig blessings out of the rock of hardship, by catching his or her own tears, and using them to water the desert plants.

We can no longer leave the running of the world to secular governments, whose value-systems are radically non-Christian. If we are to be true followers of Jesus, who inaugurated the kingdom of God here on earth, we must be transformed by the Spirit, to become agents of transformation – of churches, communities, nations, and the created order itself ...

This calling will not attract large numbers. It will not be heard by those who separate Sundays from Mondays, who rejoice in the superficial certainties of some Sunday preaching, but turn a blind eye to the sacrificial implications of the Gospel in our homes, work places, supermarkets and petrol stations...

Are we willing to face the consequences of this prophetic stand? - to face the fact that the result of obedience to the Gospel will be suffering: not occasional, in some countries where Christianity is a minority religion, but normal, ongoing, here and now? The suffering will not necessarily be physical, but more often emotional, as we feel the pain of those less fortunate than ourselves, and express it in our prayers.

May the Lord give us strength to discern the Spirit in the midst of the chaos we face, and to follow His leading, whatever the cost.

**Don Brewin**

\* [*Baca means “weeping” so some translations have “the valley of Bac” as “the vale of misery”.*]

## ***Have you calculated your Carbon Footprint?***

***Fifth mark of mission:  
To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation,  
and sustain and renew the life of the earth***

As you may have heard All Saints have achieved a Silver award in the Eco Church project run by A Rocha. (You can find out more at [www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)) The scheme helps us to celebrate what we are doing to express our care for the world. Part of this is to enable personal responses.

One of the tools for achieving this is encouraging the use of carbon footprint calculators. Our carbon footprint is a measure of the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of a particular individual, organization, or community.

There are many calculators on the internet, some take a minute, others go into much more detail and therefore take longer. We have found the WWF one to be very easy and quick to use:

<https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/>

By using the calculators, we are thinking about the impact our activities have on the environment, and we can make informed choices about how we travel, where and how our food is grown, etc. Another result of this effort is that we can save money.

Please consider using one of the carbon footprint tools and using the results to show your commitment to caring for God's earth.

There are many small, simple things we can do to reduce our impact on the environment: using a car less frequently, sharing car journeys with others, turning off appliances when not in use, washing up/ laundering with full loads, reusing jars, plastic bags and other "disposable items", shopping locally, limiting use of single use plastics (including wipes), repairing, buying from Charity shops ... whatever small things we can do to reduce our individual carbon footprint will be of benefit to our environment.

***Alison Dobbie***





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