

May 2020

30p

# Upton-cum-Chalvey Parish News

St Mary St Laurence St Peter



## The Vicar Writes....

Unusually, I am writing about May with no idea what is going to happen in our Parish. Will the churches re-open? Will we be able to have any kind of liturgy? Will we be able to hold our AGMs? In addition to this, we have the strange experience of our Team Rector leaving without a farewell. And the uncertainty extends beyond our churches. When will we be able to visit our friends and families? When will our schools re-open? Will our businesses survive the lockdown?

Such uncertainty is unfamiliar and uncomfortable. Many of us rely on our routines to keep us sane, and many of us like to plan. Most of us like to know what is going on. And at the moment we have no idea how long this lockdown will last, or what will happen next.

Apart from being in a lockdown, we are in Holy Week as I write.

In most years clergy spend the last few weeks of Lent encouraging people to participate in the liturgies of Holy Week; these liturgies lead us more deeply into an appreciation of the drama of the last week of Jesus' life. This year, however, we have no liturgies, but nonetheless we are in a way being brought into this mystery, through the uncertainty.

The disciples were strangers in Jerusalem, and did not know for sure what would happen when they went there with their master. They may have expected the final triumph, though the triumph that occurred was not the triumph they were expecting. So even afterwards the uncertainty continued. They had an experience of the risen Christ, but this was not something that their minds could readily compute. It was as much a shock as the crucifixion. And then what to do? Stay in Jerusalem? Go back to Galilee?

So a Holy Week and Eastertide of uncertainty can actually draw us closer to the experience of the disciples.

We celebrate Holy Week and Easter in order to strengthen and inform our discipleship. I pray that this uncertain, insecure, and unsettled Holy Week and Eastertide may similarly form us, as the uncertainty and insecurity of being with Jesus in Jerusalem formed them.

Fr Alistair

## MAY SERVICES & EVENTS

**All services at the three churches in the parish have been cancelled during the time of the coronavirus pandemic.**

**Keep an eye on church websites for updates or ask a friend to do this for you.**



Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song. *Pope John Paul II*



Our Lord has written the promise of the Resurrection, not in books alone but in every leaf in springtime. *Martin Luther*

## St Mary's Lunchtime Concerts

### The 30th Year of Saturday Lunchtime Concerts at St. Mary's!

Due to the coronavirus pandemic there will be no Saturday Lunchtime Concerts until further notice.

### 10<sup>th</sup> May: Comgall, the saint for those in education

Here is a great saint for all teachers, head teachers and principals of educational institutions, and indeed anyone whose vocation is to train and equip others.

For Comgall (c 516 – c 601) was founder and first abbot of Bangor, which became the largest monastery in Ireland. And large means LARGE – for including several daughter houses, the total population is reckoned to have been 3,000.

If you have ever run an educational institution of 3,000 pupils (!), you will know it takes a special kind of person to cope with that, and Comgall seems to have been perfect for the job. A biographer at the time called him 'the outstanding father of the monks in Ireland, known for his insistence on study and strict discipline.'

Comgall's rule had what it took to succeed. It was 'strict, holy and constant', both 'graced with the hope of salvation and made perfect in love', according to the 7<sup>th</sup> century writer Antiphoner of Bangor. Above all, followers were to love Christ, and reject the love of money.

Comgall also had a gift for friendship, for on the death of a close friend, he wrote in grief: 'My soul-friend has died and I am headless; you too are headless, for a man without a soul-friend is a body without a head.'

Like heads and principals today, Comgall knew a lot of important people. He had trained Columbanus and knew Columba, whom he visited on Iona. They even preached the Gospel together in Inverness, to the pagan chieftain Brude.

## 21<sup>st</sup> May: Helena - Protector of the Holy Places

Helena should be the patron saint of all mothers who help their sons achieve great things.

Helena was born at Drepanum in Bithynia about 250. Although only a stable-maid or innkeeper's daughter, she caught the eye and affections of a Roman general, Constantius Chlorus, while he was stationed in Asia Minor on a military campaign. She bore him a son, Constantine, in about 272.

But Constantius was ambitious, and when he became co-emperor (Caesar) in the West in 292, he abandoned Helena in order to marry the stepdaughter of his patron. Helena and her son were sent to live in the court of Diocletian at Nicomedia, where Constantine grew up as a member of the inner circle. Helena never remarried, and lived close to her son, who was devoted to her. Then, in 306, Constantius died, and Constantine became Augustus of the Roman Empire. He brought his beloved mother to live at the imperial court.

When Constantine became the first Christian emperor of Rome, Helena also became a Christian. She was devout, dressing modestly, and giving generously to churches, the poor, and to prisoners. But soon Constantine had other plans for her: they agreed that she would help him locate the relics of Judeo-Christian tradition in Palestine. To aid her, Constantine gave her the title *Augusta Imperatrix*, and unlimited access to the imperial treasury.

And so, from 326-28, even though she was very old, Helena explored the Holy Land on behalf of her son, the Emperor. She went to Bethlehem and founded the Church of the Nativity. She went to the Mount of Olives and founded the Church of Eleona. She went to Calvary and tore down a temple built to Venus over the tomb of Jesus. Constantine then ordered the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Helena also seems to have founded the chapel at St Catherine's Monastery.

Helena died in 330 in the Holy Land, with Constantine at her side. He brought her body back to Constantinople and buried her in the imperial vault in the Church of the Apostles.

We owe to this special mother and son the preservation and honouring of the most famous sites of Christianity.

## Can Science Prove God Exists?

To risk sounding like a smart aleck seven-year-old, technically speaking you can only prove things mathematically. If you need to know that one plus one equals two, don't go to a chemistry lab. The natural sciences only deal with things that can be observed and measured. Science has been so successful that it's tempting to get carried away, valuing science above any other kind of knowledge, but there are other ways of knowing that are equally important. For example, art conveys ideas, experiences or emotions that provoke us to think or do something in response.

In fact, to find answers to any of the really important questions about meaning and purpose that affect us throughout our lives, we always have to go beyond science. Some scientific data might help define the question, for example a farmer facing a drought would probably like to know some details about the current weather patterns and the availability of seeds for more hardy crops before she can start asking "What is the point of trying to grow anything at all?" But in the end, she is asking a deeper question – and so are the rest of us when we go through any significant experience in life.

So rather than asking "Can science prove God exists?", what about: "Are the findings of science compatible with the existence of a purposeful Creator?" For many scientists today, the answer to the second question is yes. They have investigated the Bible's descriptions of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and found that they make sense. They have discovered that they can interact with God – especially in prayer – and that this faith has changed their lives.

Professor Christine Done, an Astrophysicist at Durham University, writes, "for me the more we know about the vast, yet intricate and beautiful Universe we live in, the bigger and more awe-inspiring is the God who made it all." (*Thinking About: The Big Bang*, <https://www.cis.org.uk/resources/thinking/>)

Some go even further, making statements like this: "the way the universe exhibits an ordered structure, which is open to science to investigate, points to a mind behind it." (Revd Dr Rodney Holder, Astrophysicist, in *Longing, Waiting, Believing* (BRF, 2014))

The question "Can Science Prove God Exists?" turns out to be a category error – trying to use science to answer a non-scientific question. On the other hand, many scientists think there is enough evidence from a wide range of sources to warrant belief in God.

Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz

## Updated guidance for Christian Aid Week (10 – 16 May)

Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, the CEO of Christian Aid, has written to all of those involved in helping with Christian Aid Week this month:

“Many of you will have been planning house-to-house collections and events. Under the current circumstances, sadly, house-to-house collections and delivery-only collections should not go ahead. In particular, along with many churches, events such as Big Brekkies or Lent lunches, where food is shared, cannot go ahead.

“We are working on alternative plans that will allow people to take part in Christian Aid Week in different, creative ways – by post, by text and online that strengthen our communities during this challenging time. Christian Aid Week is our single-most important fundraiser, so we would welcome your ideas on how we can creatively show love for our neighbours at home and abroad, as a community.”

**As for the work of Christian Aid around the world,** “Christian Aid and our partners already have experience of limiting the spread of infection during the Ebola crisis, and we will build on this experience. People in poorer countries are already living with reduced health resilience because of extreme poverty, or in overcrowded humanitarian camps. They also do not have good healthcare infrastructures. We will be working on the ground to help prepare communities to limit the impact of Covid-19.

More at: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk>

### NEXT MONTH'S MAGAZINE

Please let me have articles for the June issue by **Sunday 10th May** at the latest!

Dave

## New Mental Health Reflections published by the Church of England

A series of reflections on how to cope with anxiety and loneliness in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, including simple Christian meditation techniques and five tips, have been published by the Church of England.

A number of actions that could help people feeling isolated or worried, as well as those who grieve, are put forward in a new guide *Supporting Good Mental Health* and written by Durham University academic Revd Professor Chris Cook with Ruth Rice Director of the Christian mental health charity ‘Renew Wellbeing’.

The booklet gives advice ranging from putting aside time to rest and eating and sleeping well, to using the phone and the internet to reach those who may be struggling on their own. Making a list of all the good things – and people – that you miss when you are on your own and thanking God for them, can be a way of helping cope with loneliness, the guide says.

Simple prayers can be said repeatedly as a means of helping to deal with stress, the booklet says, and lighting a candle, where safe, can be a helpful form of prayer for some people. Quotations from the Bible can be a useful aide to meditation and calming fears, including writing down and repeating short passages, it suggests.

A phrase such as Psalm 18:1 ‘The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer’ could be chosen for each week and used as background for a mobile phone as a ‘go to’ thought when someone is anxious.

It also suggests repeating a simple phrase from the Psalms such as Psalm 4:8 ‘I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety,’ to help calm the mind before sleeping.

The Rt Revd James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle and the Church of England’s lead bishop on health and social care, said: “I welcome publication of these further resources.

“For some time now the issues of loneliness and isolation have been identified as major problems within our society. The coronavirus pandemic will only create further challenges in this respect. So it is vital that we do all we can as a church to protect people’s mental wellbeing.

“The reflections are beautifully presented and scripturally based, with the ‘Have A Go’ sections intentionally focussing on how people should be kind to themselves. That is so important at this time. My prayer is that as many people as possible are able to draw upon these new resources over the coming weeks

and months.”

### Five Tips for Tackling Loneliness and Isolation

The Church of England has published a leaflet giving five tips to help loneliness:

Pray. Light a candle, if safe, and pray for hope, faith and strength to keep loving and caring for each other during this time of struggle.

Talk about how you feel. This may be difficult if you are self-isolating, but do use the telephone, internet, and social media. If you need to contact a counsellor this can be arranged by your GP, or via local agencies, or privately. Samaritans are there 24 hours a day, every day, and it’s free to call them on 116 123.

Focus on the things that you can change, not on the things you can’t.

Look after yourself - physically, emotionally, spiritually. Plan in things that you enjoy at regular intervals during the day – a TV programme, a phone call, a book, a favourite dish, a game.

Look after others. Even if only in small ways, but do what you can: a smile, a kind word, writing a letter or an email.

Go to: <https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-action/mental-health-resources/dealing-loneliness-and-isolation-five-top-tips>

### Mothers’ Union

Mothers’ Union knows that these are very difficult times for families.

“We know that our work and experience in re-building communities and supporting family life is going to be more important than ever once the threat of COVID-19 subsides. Our members will be ready and be some of the first in line to support those around them.” Until then, it welcomes people to stay connected with MU on social media.

More details at: <https://www.mothersunion.org/get-involved/our-response-covid-19>



### On the perils of a Scout camp

The Rectory  
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

It seems that the basics of parish ministry are no longer taught in theological colleges. Don’t you know anything about consulting your diary in public? When you are asked if you are free on a certain date, accepted practice is to open it so that the enquirer cannot quite see. You then shake your head sadly, saying you are committed to blessing a new tea urn, or on some other vital ecclesiastical activity that day. Then you regretfully give your apologies. You do not open the thing in full view of your enquirer, so he can see the blank pages! Really, it serves you right that you are now committed to going on Scout camp.

The last time I agreed to pay the Scouts a visit was when I found that there was a splendid restaurant only a mile away from their camp. I arrived and parked my car by the side of the river where they were all canoeing, wound down the car window and made encouraging noises for some minutes before explaining I had to find a garage for petrol.

Several hours later, after an excellent lunch, I drove to where they were now rock climbing, wound down the car window and made encouraging noises for some minutes before explaining that I had a standing committee to return to that evening. It was a splendid day.

You, however, will experience the charms of two days under canvas. Whatever site for your tent you choose, it will be the one that floods first. The early hours will undoubtedly find you wading about in water in the pitch dark, retrieving your sleeping bag and clothes – which you will then have to wear for the rest of the day. Watch out for the food, as well: all camp food contains grass and usually sheep droppings. This will make you ill, though for some reason Scouts thrive on it.

Whatever the weather and whatever activities you do each day, you will end up wet, chilled and bruised. At least your evenings will be warm, for you are bound to spend them at Casualty, with youngsters suffering from sprained ankles or dislocated shoulders.

My only advice is to use those hours in Casualty to practise the art of opening your diary in a way that only YOU can see it.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



*Our church warden is not letting people into the church just now*



*The twins had been doing Messy Church at home.*

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# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
Samuel 8:1-10:1, 17-24

Samuel had been a good leader of Israel but he was now old. The leaders of the twelve tribes came to talk to him...

We want a king like all the other countries



God told Samuel

It's not you they are rejecting but Me.



If you have a king, he will take your sons to be his army and your daughters to work in his palace.



He will take the best of your land, your crops and your animals



We still want a king.

Samuel sent them home.



I was hoping he would choose me..

Saul and his servant were looking for some donkeys that had run off.



They decided to ask Samuel to ask God where the donkeys were



God told Samuel that Saul was to be the king



Samuel called everyone to a meeting and told them that God had chosen a king.



God told them that Saul was to be their king...



but Saul was hiding.

He's behind the luggage.



and they found Saul.

The people cheered!



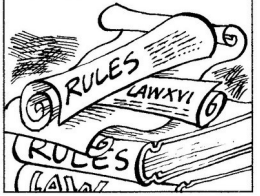
Long live the King!

# "Some tough talking"

JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ON AT LEAST ONE OCCASION JESUS BECAME VERY CROSS WITH THE PEOPLE WHO MADE LOTS OF RULES



YOU ARE BAD PEOPLE - YOU GIVE A TENTH OF YOUR HERBS, MINT, DILL AN CUMIN...



...BUT YOU FORGET ABOUT JUSTICE, MERCY AND HONESTY!



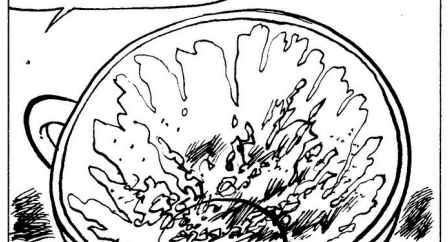
IT'S AS THOUGH YOU STRAIN AT A GNAT - BUT SWALLOW A CAMEL WHOLE!



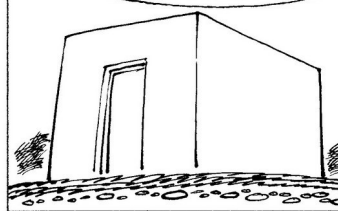
YOU ARE LIKE A CUP THAT IS CLEAN ON THE OUTSIDE...



...BUT DISGUSTINGLY FILTHY ON THE INSIDE!!



YOU ARE LIKE A WHITEWASHED TOMB - SPARKLING CLEAN ON THE OUTSIDE...



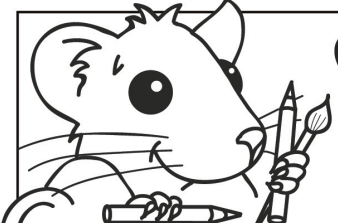
...BUT FULL OF MOULDY OLD BONES!



JESUS DID NOT LIKE PEOPLE WHO MADE IT HARD TO FOLLOW GOD.

See Matthew 23.23-27

# CHILDREN'S PAGE




**Mouse Makes**


How many other words can you find using the letters from:


**FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT?**

Which symbol goes with which fruit?




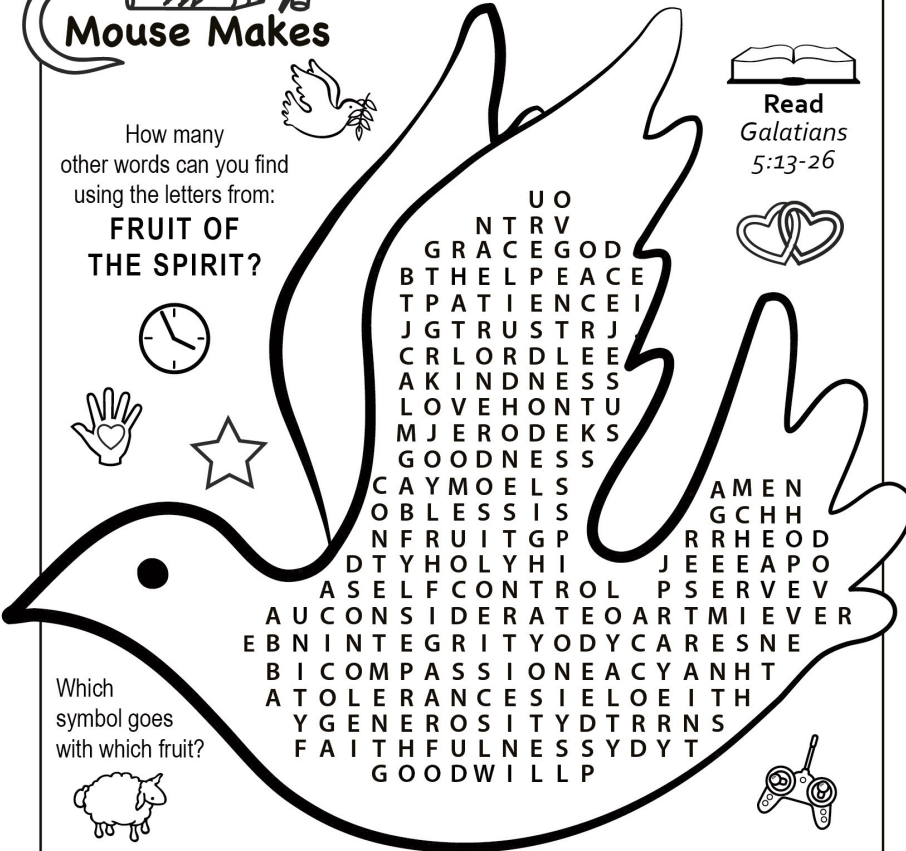
"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. If we live by the Spirit, let us also behave in accordance with the Spirit"





**Read**  
*Galatians*  
5:13-26





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

AMEN  
GCHH  
RRHEOD  
JEEEAPO  
P SERVEV

LOVE • CARE • CHERISH • JOY • DELIGHT • PEACE • ACCORD  
AGREEMENT • UNITY • CALM • CONTENTMENT • REST  
PATIENCE • TOLERANCE • KINDNESS • COMPASSION • HELP  
GOODWILL • GENEROSTITY • GOODNESS • HONESTY • INTEGRITY  
FAITHFULNESS • LOYALTY • TRUST • GENTLENESS • CONSIDERATE  
SELF CONTROL • RESTRAINT • FRUIT • SPIRIT • LIVE • SERVE

# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

## UPTON-CUM-CHALVEY / LANGLEY BRANCH PROGRAMME

*All are open meetings and are joint meetings unless otherwise stated*

**2020 Theme: "Building with Confidence"**

**Meetings with a talk, either:**

**Third Wednesday of the month at St Laurence's Upton.** Coffee and chat at 10.15am. A short service at 10.45am. Talk at 11.00am followed by a light lunch.

**OR**

**Third Monday of the month at St Mary's Church Centre, Langley, 2.00pm**

**First Tuesday of the month: 2.30-4.00pm "Mulling It Over":** Tea, Study and Prayer Group led by Revd Linda Hillier (see notice sheet for venues), open to all.

**Second Thursday of the month at St Laurence's: 10.00am** Mothers' Union Corporate Communion

**Due to the coronavirus pandemic there will be no meetings until further notice.**



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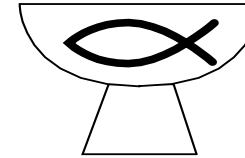
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## Parish of Upton-cum-Chalvey

The Anglican parish of Upton-cum-Chalvey includes St Mary's, St Laurence's and St Peter's churches.

Revd Andrew Allen (Team Rector)	01753 529988
Revd Alistair Stewart (Team Vicar)	01753 520725
Revd Linda Hillier (Associate Minister)	0208 8645728
Rob Walker (Licensed Lay Minister)	07447 265665
Parish Churchwarden: Andrea Sparrow	07446 187762
Parish Churchwarden:	
District Churchwarden (SM): Jean Smith	01753 862357
District Churchwarden (SM): Derek White-Taylor	Ex-dir
District Churchwarden (SL): David Kill	01628 776856
District Churchwarden (SL): Albert Lawrance	01753 523222
District Churchwarden (SP): Eddie Ijeomah	01753 857923
District Churchwarden (SP): Peter Clarke	07464 718909
Verger (SL): Allan James	01753 532425
Organist (SM): Malcolm Stowell	01628 660651
Mothers' Union: Julie James	01753 532425

### Clergy days off:

Revd Andrew Allen Friday  
Revd Alistair Stewart Tuesday

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