

APRIL 2016

## From the Editors

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Welcome to the April 2016 edition of St. Mary's Church magazine. The big news this month is the announcement about Vision for the church and what is happening to the Church Hall. See St. Mary's news below.

April brings us April Fools Day and St. George's Day. This year on St. George's Day we celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of our greatest playwright William Shakespeare.

The weather is improving at least so maybe we can bask in warm Spring sunshine and lift our spirits.

"A gush of bird song, a patter of dew  
A cloud and a rainbow's warning;  
Suddenly sunshine and perfect blue  
An April day in the morning!"  
- Harriet Prescott Spofford



### St Mary's News

#### Clean for the Queen

As part of the preparations for the celebration of the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday communities up and down the country have been "cleaning for the Queen". On Thursday a small band from St. Mary's did a litter pick organised by Susan Simpson from South Ribble Borough Council. We cleaned up Church Wood and managed to recover around 10 bags of rubbish.

#### YOUunity @ St Mary's Penwortham .....bringing people together.

At our poetry and prose night we listened to people: some "old" some "new" reciting prose or poems that meant something to them. Dark humour: the name "James" featured prominently; thoughtful retrospectives on twentieth century wars; modern staples: church mice and love sick subalterns featured here; older classics "She walks in Beauty" being a favourite of many; modern prose outlining the ludicrous behaviour of overly ambitious mums or awkward children; all this combined into an harmonious whole helped by Prosecco and nibbles. The night was a very enjoyable one. Thank you to all who attended and contributed and thank you especially to John Wallace for John Caie's unfortunate "Puddock"!

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## ***From the Editors***

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### **Healthy Church Builds For The 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

On the 27<sup>th</sup> February the Vicar and Churchwardens announced an exciting project for our church which is to provide new facilities in the form of additional rooms in the north-west corner of church.

To finance this we will surrender the lease of land in Cop Lane where the current church hall stands. This will involve the demolition of the hall and the sale of the land to generate the necessary funds for this exciting new development. Chris, our Vicar said: "We are delighted that we have finally reached a stage where we can make this important announcement. We have been wrestling for the last two years with various options open to us and I would like to thank the Blackburn Diocese for their enlightened support in helping us to reach this stage." He commented: "At this vitally important time for the Church of England in Lancashire, as we begin our ten year journey to Vision 2026\*, it is heartening to know this project will release funding not only for the church here in Penwortham, but also for the ministry of the church in Lancashire as a whole."

The closure of the church hall will involve the relocation of a number of groups running regular services to the community of Penwortham from the current Cop Lane site, but Chris gave a message of reassurance and optimism. He said: "We are very aware of the difficulties that our tenants will have to work through during the period of closure and redevelopment. We have already initiated a dialogue with them and will assist them in any way we can. We hope that many will be able to relocate and share with us the exciting new facilities, including the potential offered by the additional space in our recently re-ordered church building."

\*Vision 2026 - Healthy Churches Transforming Communities is the new vision strategy for the Church of England in Lancashire. The Vision will be the focus for everything the diocese does for the next decade. Vision 2026 commits the Church of England in Lancashire to making disciples, being witnesses and growing leaders; helping all church communities in Lancashire to be as healthy as possible, so they can work collectively to share the good news of the Christian Faith far and wide. You can find out more about Vision 2026 by visiting [www.blackburn.anglican.org](http://www.blackburn.anglican.org) and exploring the Vision related content under the Home menu.

### **Come and Celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April we are celebrating the actual birthday of Her Majesty who reaches the age of 90 this year.

The church will open at 8.00pm with refreshments on arrival followed by Royal Quiz 20 questions. Our bell ringers will practise until 9.00pm, why not come along and hear them.

At 9.00pm we will light the beacon on top of the tower followed by the Loyal Toast, with bubbly and nibbles

Material abundance without character is the surest way to destruction. <i>Thomas Jefferson</i>
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### **Penwortham Live 2016**

On Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May we will be having Afternoon teas with a Downton Abbey theme as well as parachuting teddies, trips up the tower and a display of Royal photographs. More details next month about other events during Penwortham Live.

### **Appeal for Help**

We hope you enjoy your church magazine which has been published since 1863.

The magazine is produced ten times a year by a dedicated group of volunteers, but at the present time we are short of collators (this involves about 1½ hours per month, usually on a Wednesday lunchtime)

If you could help with this task please contact Evelyn on 01772 744947.

### **Christian Aid Week 15<sup>th</sup>- 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015**

Although it seems a long time ahead, it is not long now until Christian Aid Week. We will once again along with other churches in the Penwortham area be undertaking house to house collections in the area. These house to house collections during Christian Aid week remains a vital part of their fund raising activities providing Christian Aid with money that can be used to answer any of the emergencies that may arise.

Over the more than 70 years that Christian Aid has responded to all types of emergencies across the world, whether these be natural disasters or the result of conflicts. Without the general funds, in part created by these collections, Christian Aid's ability to respond would be more limited. The last year has highlighted the plight of many people in the Middle East and Africa, not only as a result of conflicts but also due to droughts of a similar scale to those experienced by many in 1984 and Christian Aid has responded to all of these and will not only support people during the immediate crisis but also for the long term. There are many projects that are helping people in Third World countries to become more self sufficient and better able to survive through tough times, by supporting communities to improve education, health care and agricultural practices.

While we have a stalwart band of dedicated collectors who give their time generously to visit many roads in our area, we have a continuing need for more collectors both to replace those who are no longer able to help and to enable us to reach even more potential donors. Christian Aid week remains the longest running and biggest house to house collection and continues to provide many people with an opportunity they would not otherwise have to make a donation. The need for extra finance is not diminishing, so if you are able to help please do contact me. I would be happy to talk to you, I will do my best to give you an area to collect in that matches your availability.

***Rachel Tuke***

As we go to the cradle only in order to find the baby, so we go to the Scriptures only to find Christ. - Martin Luther
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*Come and  
Celebrate the  
Queen's Real  
90th Birthday!*



St Mary's Parish Church, Church Avenue Penwortham  
Thursday 21st April, 8pm to 9.30pm  
Refreshments on arrival  
Royal Quiz  
Bell Ringing  
Beacon lighting 9pm  
Happy Birthday &  
Loyal Toast with Bubbly and Nibbles

**We Have A New Organ**

On Friday 26th February we welcomed our new electronic organ into church. Our previous one had been causing Bill some sleepless nights because of its, at times, erratic behaviour. On occasion Bill had to speak very nicely to it and to coax and cajole it to perform as it should. Now however, we have a brand new Allen organ all the way from the USA. Allen organs are very well regarded and we hope for many years of beautiful music in church at the hands of our maestro Bill.

**Christian Aid Week Roadshow 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

An invitation to all Christian Aid collectors and anyone else who would like to know more about collecting.

Come and join with Christian Aid collectors and others from across Preston and South Ribble to hear speakers from regional office. Gain spiritual and practical resources from listening to stories about how your efforts make a real difference to lives across the world. Hear ideas and tips to support you in your efforts and share your thoughts with others. Get a preview of the particular campaigns that will be featuring this year for Christian Aid Week.

Join us in the Guild Room at the Parish Hall on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April. Refreshments will be served from 7 with speakers from 7.30.

**PENWORTHAM FOODBANK**

We always need the types of food listed below.

Corned beef,

Breakfast cereals and porridge,

Hot dogs

Washing up liquid, Laundry and cleaning products, Shampoo and toothpaste

Meatballs

Fray Bentos pies, Irish stews, chilli con carne etc .

**YOUnity @ St Mary's.....bringing people together  
Coming shortly  
Watch out for details of the Canal Walk in May.**

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*Church News*

**The Queen is 'very grateful' for the nation's prayers**

In a strong statement of faith, the Queen has said that she is 'very grateful' to the nation for its prayers for her and that she has felt God's 'faithfulness' during 64 years on the throne.

The comments – rare insights into the Queen's personal thoughts and Christian faith – came in the forward to a new book, *The Servant Queen and the King She Serves*, published by Bible Society, HOPE and LICC.

Her Majesty said, 'I have been – and remain – very grateful to you for your prayers and to God for His steadfast love. I have indeed seen His faithfulness.'

The book was published to mark the Queen's 90th birthday. In her comments, the Queen referred to the changes she has seen in her life, which has made her the longest-reigning monarch in British history.

'The extent and pace of change has been truly remarkable,' she said. 'We have witnessed triumphs and tragedies.' And she alluded to the current problems in the Middle East saying that the world is now experiencing 'terrible suffering on an unprecedented scale'.

The Queen's Christian faith is well-known. In recent years, Her Majesty has referred to her beliefs in public statements, including Christmas broadcasts.

*The Servant Queen and the King She Serves* highlights the Queen's faith and how it has shaped her personal life and service to the nation. A 12-page schools version has been published by Scripture Union.

Copies of *The Servant Queen and the King She Serves* are available in packs of 10 at £1 a copy (plus p&p). Visit [www.hopetogether.org.uk/thequeen](http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/thequeen) to order copies and for ideas on how to hold a street party and Thanksgiving service.

The Lord does not shine upon us, except when we take His Word as our light. -  
*John Calvin*

## **Church News**

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### **Public support for Government to help fund church heritage**

60% of us back the idea of the Government providing financial support for churches, chapels and meeting houses, in order to protect their heritage and history for future generations.

This was the finding of a new opinion poll, commissioned by the church building repair and support charity, the National Churches Trust. The poll also found that 57% of British adults said that they had visited a church in the past year for religious services, non-religious activities or as a visitor or tourist.

Since 2014, the Government has given £130m for repairs to historic churches.

### **Saint banned from Rochester train station**

Britain's rail bosses have censored an image of a saint from a display of art inside a railway station, saying it was 'overtly Christian and would offend multi-cultural values'. Network Rail, which is partly funded by the taxpayer, banned an image of St John the Evangelist from Rochester station in Kent.

The image was inspired by Rochester's ancient cathedral and recognised the city's heritage as one of the oldest Christian ecclesiastical cities in Britain. Its cathedral was founded in 604 AD. A Network Rail spokesman said the company told the artist to remove some of the planned images to 'create a balance.' *Source: Daily Mail*

### **Restraining Sharia law in the UK**

The House of Lords is debating a Bill to restrain the operation of Sharia councils in England and Wales. The Arbitration and Mediation Services (Equality) Bill was tabled by Baroness Cox. Baroness Cox said the suffering of some women oppressed by religiously-sanctioned gender discrimination, undermines the principle of one law for all.

The Government confirmed that it would launch an investigation into Sharia councils. It said there was evidence that Sharia law is, in some cases, being 'misused and applied in a way which is incompatible with British law.'

*Visit: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/bitrationandmediationservicesequality.html>*

### **New YouTube videos explain Book of Common Prayer**

A brand new series of eight free half-hour videos has been produced by the Prayer Book Society to guide clergy unfamiliar with The Book of Common Prayer when required to conduct its most popular services. The films also will assist wedding planners, undertakers and others advising those arranging marriages and funerals.

The new videos have been produced in two formats: in one they include a spoken commentary explaining to clergy and ordinands the practicalities of conducting the services; the alternative format has no commentary, allowing viewers to concentrate on the wording used in Prayer Book services.

They are Holy Communion, Morning Prayer (or Mattins) and Evening Prayer (or Evensong) as well as baptism, marriage and funeral services.

[More details at: www.pbs.org.uk](http://www.pbs.org.uk)

**Dating website bucks the trend and features ‘real’ couples**

Twelve 'real' married couples are happily telling hundreds of thousands of London Underground travellers how they met – through an online dating site.

All 24 people met through ChristianConnection.com. “Traditionally, agencies have used beautiful models on their adverts,” said Christian Connection founder Jackie Elton. “These days, most single people have tried online dating and have become more discerning and a little wary.

'We were thrilled when, as part of our campaign, 12 of our couples were happy to have their photos on London's Underground network. It shows how online dating has developed. Far more people are happy to tell friends, parents and even the great British public. That would never have happened even five years ago. We are confident people will not only believe what they see, but act on it. It takes just a little faith.”

The Christian Connection Ads can be seen at: <http://blog.christianconnection.com/it-all-starts-with-a-little-faith/>

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**Charities**

**Teddy Updates**

Thank you to everyone who has been busy knitting teddies over the winter months—the total is now **7093**.

Thank you also to the kind people who make bags for the teddies, always much appreciated.

To all who saved stamps over the Christmas period a big ‘thank you’; these go to the Derian House Charity Shop at Hoole, and raise money for the children’s hospice in Chorley.

Please keep up your good work.

Many thanks,

Jenifer Pattinson

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**The Parish Thanks**

**ALTAR FLOWERS**

3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Vacancy
10 <sup>th</sup> April	Jim Dickinson, in memory of Betty Dickinson
17 <sup>th</sup> April	Vacancy
24 <sup>th</sup> April	Vacancy

**ALTAR LINEN**

April
Mrs Judith Kirby



## Calendar

1 <sup>st</sup>	7.00 fir 7.30 pm	Pasta and Pizza Night
2 <sup>nd</sup>	9.00-1.00 pm	Farmers' Market
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>	
	8.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 1) with Sparks (Children's Ministry)
5 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm	Mothers' Union
6 <sup>th</sup>	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation
7 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>	
	8.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 1) with Sparks (Children's Ministry)
13 <sup>th</sup>	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation
14 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>	
	8.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 1) with Sparks (Children's Ministry)
20 <sup>th</sup>	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation
21 <sup>st</sup>	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice
	8.00 pm	Celebration of the Queen's 90 <sup>th</sup> Birthday in Church
24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b>	
	8.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am	Holy Communion (Order 1) with Sparks (Children's Ministry)
	11.30 am	<b>Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Church)</b>
	3.00-5.00 pm	<b>FAB</b> Faith and Belonging

25 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Guild of St Mary
27 <sup>th</sup>	6.30 pm	Christian Meditation
28 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon	Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon	Open Church
	7.30 pm	Bell Ringing Practice

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*History Corner*

**FROM THE ARCHIVES : APRIL 1916**

**Report by a Medical man returned from a German Prison as to the food supplied to the Prisoners.**

**Morning**—300 grammes (about 10 ozs) of black bread. This was to last all day. The bread was always sour, hard and of little nutritive value. One litre of ‘coffee’ without sugar or milk. The ‘coffee’ was made from anything but coffee beans, its principal basis appeared to be acorns.

**Mid-day**—One litre of soup, made from either potatoes, carrots or beans, its nutritive value being completely destroyed by prolonged boiling. The issue of meat was practically nil. I have never seen more than the fibrils of meat in the soup. I have constantly seen lumps of meat in the cook house which has been dipped in a solution of potassium permanganate to disguise the smell. On many occasions the men were immediately sick after partaking of this soup, and there were never less than 25 per cent suffering from enteritis as a result of their dietary.

**Evening**—One litre of the same soup as the morning, except that it contained more water. Once a week one herring and four or five potatoes were issued instead of the evening soup. These herrings were raw, and often unfit for human consumption. There was no means of cooking them.

Having read ..... the account of the “Food” by a medical man, and perhaps the articles in the “Daily Despatch” called “A Prisoner of the Kaiser,” many of our people will realise how urgent the need of these men is, and will insure that until the happy day comes when the war ends, they shall have whatever comforts we, safe at home can send them, to alleviate their suffering and reduce their privation. ....

.....

The Great Easter Festival will soon be here—let no Communicant be absent from that Service, which is the memorial of the Sacrifice of the death of Christ.

Gifts of flowers, ferns or plants for Easter Decorations should be sent to the Church early on Saturday morning. Particularly acceptable will be gifts of ferns, smilax or plants; flowers should be white or yellow.

## ***All in the Month of April*** ---

It was:-

**1000 years ago:-** on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1016 that Aethelred II (Aethelred the Unready), King of England, died.

**400 years ago:-** on 23<sup>rd</sup> April (or 3<sup>rd</sup> May) 1616 that William Shakespeare died. Regarded as the most important figure in English literature, and considered the greatest dramatist of all time, as well as England's national poet. His plays include Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet.

**200 years ago:-** on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1816 that Charlotte Bronte, British novelist, was born. Best known for 'Jane Eyre'.

**175 years ago:-** on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1841 that Edgar Allen Poe's short story 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' was published. It is considered the first modern detective story.

**125 years ago:-** on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1891, that the first London-Paris telephone line was opened to the public. It included an undersea section between Dover and Calais.

**100 years ago:-** 24<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> April 1916, that The Easter Uprising, Dublin, took place. This armed Republican uprising against British rule resulted in the death of 466 people. The rebels surrendered unconditionally after the British declared martial law and suppressed the rebellion. Most of the leaders were executed.

**90 years ago:-** on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1926 that Queen Elizabeth II was born.

**70 years ago:-** on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1946 that Syria gained its independence from France.

**65 years ago:-** on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1951, that the Stone of Scone, which had been stolen from Westminster Abbey in London in December 1950 by Scottish nationalist students, was found on the altar of Arbroath Abbey in Scotland. It was returned to London. In November 1996 the stone was officially returned to Scotland and now resides in Edinburgh Castle.

**Also 65 years ago:-** on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1951 that the Peak District National Park was established. It was Britain's first national park.

**25 years ago:-** on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1991 that Graham Greene, British novelist, short story writer, playwright and journalist, died.

**10 years ago:-** on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2006 that the first case of H5N1 avian flu (bird flu) in the UK was confirmed following blood tests on a dead swan found in Cellardyke, Fife, Scotland.

## ***Organisations*** ---

### **Mothers' Union**

The next meeting will begin at 2pm on Tuesday the 5th of April in the Club Room at St Mary's Church Hall. After our Service and Business Meeting, Gwyneth Jones, the new Overseas Section Leader within the Blackburn Diocese of Mothers' Union, will speak to us about her work in Indonesia and within Mothers' Union.

Visitors will be welcome, even if they are taking the opportunity just to meet Gwyneth again. She, like several of us, was a founder pupil at PGGs. Do join us.

**P.M. Wootton**

**Guild of St. Mary**

On April 25<sup>th</sup> Mr Gordon Bartley will give us his talk and slide show entitled “Same Country, Different World?”. This is set in Cornwall and the surrounding area. There will be a general Bring and Buy stall at this meeting to raise a few funds. Please support us if you can. Most items will be welcome ,plus books, magazines and plants

*Ann Yates*

**Dramatic Society**

To all our St Mary’s friends,

This will be, of necessity, short.

A decision has been made to sell the land that the Penwortham St Mary’s Church Hall sits upon. The removal of the Hall is not 100% certain, but at the moment we aren’t able to book dates there for our 2016 – 2017 season.

This means that after 60 years of providing quality entertainment to the people of Penwortham from what used to be a lovely, warm, friendly venue, the Penwortham St Mary’s Amateur Dramatic Society could now be forced to leave its spiritual home and find a new venue.

We are trying our hardest to find a suitable venue, but there are many factors to take into account.

One thing is for certain in this Age of Uncertainty. The Dramatic Society will continue in some new form, emerging as a butterfly from a chrysalis in Spring, but we are unable to provide you all with either dates or a list of plays for the next season. Our apologies for that.

We would like to thank you all for supporting us for 60 years and want to reassure you that we are absolutely determined that we shall still be performing in Penwortham, somehow.

Please, if you do enjoy our plays, come and join us. Even if you haven’t seen our plays, come along anyway. We will need all the practical help we can muster in the weeks and months to come. Please contact our Secretary, Philip McLaughlin (01772 748941) – or come along to our next meeting in St Mary’s Church Hall Cop Lane Penwortham on Wednesday April 20<sup>th</sup> 2016 at 7:30pm.

We will have more news for you next month. Until then, brightest blessings. May the now fully returned Sun shine his blessings on you and you families... and life treat you and yours gently. Don’t forget the Bard’s birthday – William Shakespeare would have been 452 years old this month! He looks well for his age, eh!

*Graham Blackhurst*

Christians would never dream of intentionally running down other people with their cars; then why do we do it with our tongues? - *Doug Barnett*

If you believe what you like in the Gospel, and reject what you like, it is not the Gospel you believe, but yourself. - *Augustine*

## Matters of Faith

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### Our Prayers are Asked

*For those who have recently baptised*



21<sup>st</sup> February

George William Ward-Lewis, the son of William Francis and Kathryn Jane Ward-Lewis  
Imogen Dallas Rhodes, the daughter of Nicholas and Charlotte Elizabeth Rhodes

6<sup>th</sup> March

Luke Henry Sweetnam, the son of Cameron and Sarah Frances Sweetnam

### HIGH DAYS AND HOLY DAYS

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> April Richard of Chichester - wanting God more clearly, dearly and nearly**

Ever wonder where the prayer ... *'May I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly, day by day'* comes from? Richard of Chichester, a bishop in the 13th century, wrote it.

He began life as Richard de Wych of Droitwich, the son of a yeoman farmer. But Richard was a studious boy, and after helping his father on the farm for several years, refused an advantageous offer of marriage, and instead made his way to Oxford, and later to Paris and Bologna to study canon law.

In 1235 he returned to Oxford, and was soon appointed Chancellor, where he supported Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his struggles against King Henry III's misuse of Church funds. After further study to become a priest, Richard was in due course made a bishop himself. He was greatly loved. He was charitable and accessible, both stern and merciful to sinners, extraordinarily generous to those stricken by famine, and a brilliant legislator of his diocese. He decreed that the sacraments were to be administered without payment, Mass celebrated in dignified conditions, the clergy to be chaste, to practise residence, and to wear clerical dress. The laity was obliged to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days, and to know by heart the Hail Mary as well as the Lord's Prayer and the Creed.

Richard was also prominent in preaching the Crusade, which he saw as a call to reopen the Holy Land to pilgrims, not as a political expedition. He died at Dover on 3 April 1253. In art, Richard of Chichester is represented with a chalice at his feet, in memory of his having once dropped the chalice at Mass! One ancient English church is dedicated to him.

And, of course, he is author of that famous prayer, now set to popular music, which runs in full:

"Thanks be to thee, my Lord Jesus Christ for all the benefits thou hast given me, for all the pains and insults which thou hast borne for me. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly and follow thee more nearly, day by day."

**12<sup>th</sup> April Zeno of Verona - the more things change....**

Zeno of Verona (d. 371) should be the patron saint of all ministers who suspect that the more things change, the more they remain the same.

For instance: ethnic diversity...church-planting... teaching.... concern for the poor... women's ministry in the church... sound like modern-day Christian concerns? Not a bit of it – this was the life work of Zeno, bishop of Verona in the fourth century.

Ethnic diversity? Zeno was an African who had been consecrated a bishop in Italian Verona. Church-planting and teaching? Zeno had a reputation as a hard-working pastor and dedicated preacher who founded churches throughout his domain. Some of his sermons still survive.

Concern for the poor? Zeno was zealous in alms-giving, and encouraged others to do the same. Women's ministry? He founded nunneries and encouraged virgins living at home to be consecrated long before ever Ambrose did the same in Milan.

As for down-time? Zeno may well have been addicted to fishing in his spare time – he is, after all, usually represented with a fish. Nothing wrong with that: the links between fishermen and Christian leaders go back a long way!

**23<sup>rd</sup> April St George of the Golden Legend**

The Saint of an English Army before he was Patron Saint of England, St George may have been a soldier, but he was no Englishman. He was an officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror, and was martyred at Lydda in Palestine about the year 300 AD - supposedly 23 April. Over the years St George became the example of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful helper against evil powers affecting individual lives. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages, of whom remarkable deeds were reported.

In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine gave St George a handsome write-up. The story runs thus:

One day, St George rode up to the heathen city of Sylene in Lybia, where he found the citizens in great distress. A neighbouring dragon had forced them to surrender two sheep each day for its dinner, and when the sheep gave out, two of their children; and now they were about to sacrifice the King's daughter, dressed as if for her wedding. St George encountered the little party by a stagnant lake, where the dragon lived, and persuaded the sobbing Princess to tell him why she was so miserable. At that moment the dragon appeared, looking inexpressibly revolting. The Saint charged, and drove his spear into the gaping mouth. To everyone's amazement, he tumbled the monster over and over.

Then St George borrowed the Princess's girdle, tied it round the dragon's neck, and persuaded her to lead it back to Sylene herself. The sight of her approaching with the befuddled dragon on its makeshift lead emptied the town. When the inhabitants timidly crept back, St George promised to behead the dragon if they would all believe in Jesus Christ and be baptised.

## ***Matters of Faith***

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It was a most effective form of evangelism, for everybody said 'yes' at once. So 15,000 people were baptised, and four carts were commissioned to remove the dragon's body.

St George thus became a symbol of the war against evil, and is usually portrayed trampling the dragon of sin under his horse's hoofs. The Crusaders had a vision of him helping them against the Saracens at Antioch, during the first Crusade, and so brought the story of St George back with them from Palestine. Presently England put herself under the protection of the Saint. His day was declared a holiday in 1222. A red cross on a white field is the flag of St George.

## ***Miscellaneous***

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### **Deliver us from emails?**

Twitter's co-founder has called for an app that liberates us from incessant updates and delivers our emails in a single batch each day. Studies have found that a constant bombardment of work emails contributes heavily to stress and anxiety.

Now Evan Williams, one of the people behind Twitter, has co-founded Medium, a publishing platform. In a post on the latter, he envisaged an app that would remove the pressure to be constantly available and to reply immediately by delivering messages only once a day.

The British Psychology Society and the Future Work Centre surveyed 2,000 working people and found that 62 per cent left their email on all day. Their study indicated that checking email early in the morning and late at night was linked to higher levels of stress. It recommended that users turn off their notifications for part of the day.

*Source: The Times*

### **Shakespeare - the Bard of Avon**

William Shakespeare, universally recognised as the world's greatest playwright, died on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1616. The 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that event is being widely marked – the BBC is broadcasting every one of his plays, for instance.

Even people who have never read any of them are familiar with bits of their speeches: 'To be or not to be' and 'Neither a borrower nor a lender be' (Hamlet); 'Out, out damned spot!' (Macbeth); 'Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!' (Julius Caesar); 'If music be the food of love, play on' (Twelfth Night); 'Beware the green-eyed monster' (Othello) and scores more. 'Now is the Winter of our discontent' (Richard the Third) has plagued my life!

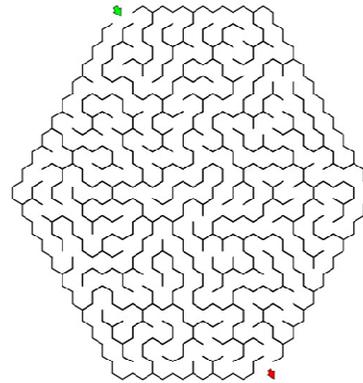
We probably endured studying his plays as teen-agers and if not then, then perhaps later found how wonderfully he tuned his words to the human spirit.

He was a jobbing actor, a script writer, a master of the sonnet as well as being a truly great dramatist. He lifted the English language to new heights. Let's celebrate him this month!

Egotism is obesity of the head. - Anon
--



...and when it comes to 'the peace' I want all those who want to stay in Europe to shake hands with all those who want to leave...



**Wages**

Seen on a church notice board:

'Despite inflation, the wages of sin remain the same.'

**Kisses**

A husband and wife go to a counselor after 15 years of marriage. The counselor asks them what the problem is and the wife goes into a tirade listing every problem they have ever had in the 15 years they've been married. She goes on and on and on.

Finally, the counselor gets up, goes around the desk, embraces the woman and kisses her passionately. The woman shuts up and sits quietly in a daze. The counselor turns to the husband and says "that is what your wife needs at least three times a week. Can you do that?" The husband thinks for a moment and replies, "Well, I can get her here Monday and Wednesday.....but Friday I golf."

**Reception**

Two television aerials met one day and fell madly in love with each other. Eventually they decided to get married and booked the local Church. Apparently the service was not up to much but the reception was excellent!

**Worry**

I have so many problems that if a new one comes along today, it will be at least two weeks before I can worry about it.

**The benefits of letter writing**

About two thirds of children in primary school and more than three quarters of secondary school children *never* write letters. In fact, only one in four (26%) said they wrote a letter once a month outside of school, with girls slightly more likely to do so. Those children who do pen letters on a regular basis are more likely to have writing skills above the average expected for their group.

The National Literacy Trust, who did the survey, points out: "Taking time to sit and write a letter by hand feels much more personal than typing an email. Young letter writers are also more likely to write every day outside school, which improves their literacy, enabling them to do better in class and throughout their lives."

**Miscellaneous**

**Easy**

2			6			3	
		1			2	5	4 7
	4			5			
4	9			8	3		5
			2	1	4		
	2		5	6			7 8
				7			9
9	1	4	8			7	
	7				6		4

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**A bit harder**

				6			3
		1		7			
		5	2			4	
7	6				3		1
		8		9		2	
9			1				7 4
		3			7	5	
						9	
1			9				

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Solution to last month's Sudoku

**Easy**

3	8	2	5	6	7	1	9	4
5	4	6	8	9	1	2	3	7
1	9	7	4	2	3	5	6	8
2	3	8	1	5	6	4	7	9
4	5	9	3	7	2	8	6	1
6	7	1	9	4	8	3	5	2
8	2	3	7	1	9	6	4	5
7	1	4	6	3	5	9	2	8
9	6	5	2	8	4	7	1	3

**A bit harder**

3	6	7	2	9	1	5	8	4
9	1	2	5	8	4	6	3	7
4	8	5	6	3	7	2	1	9
8	5	6	7	1	2	9	4	3
7	3	9	8	4	5	1	6	2
2	4	1	3	6	9	7	5	8
5	7	4	1	2	3	8	9	6
1	9	8	4	7	6	3	2	5
6	2	3	9	5	8	4	7	1

**Some miscellaneous observations on life...**

The world will never starve for want of wonders; but only for want of wonder. - G K Chesterton

Wars to end wars are an illusion. Wars, more than any other form of human activity, create the conditions which breed more war. - John Foster Dulles

Four freedoms: The first is freedom of speech and expression – everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way, everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want.... everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear... anywhere in the world. – Franklin D Roosevelt

**Happy Ending**

Comment from a parishioner: 'Our vicar's sermons always have a happy ending. The moment they've ended, everyone feels happy.'

**Who?!**

Seen in a West Country church: Whenever I see a little church, I always pay a visit. So when at last I'm carried in, the Lord won't say 'Who is it?'

**Heaven**

Seen in a parish magazine: "We shall be meeting on Wednesday when the subject will be 'Heaven - how do we get there?' Transport by bus is available at 6.45pm opposite the King's Arms.