

**The magazine of
Fareham United Reformed Church**

The Messenger

Easter 2023



**The
United
Reformed
Church**

Refreshment for our Journey through Life

While the word 'journey' is often overused when talking about our personal relationships, careers, or events in our everyday lives, it is the perfect choice for describing the events of Holy Week and Easter which take us on a spiritual journey that reflects our life, however old or young we may be.

Our journey to Easter begins with celebrating the physical and spiritual journey that Jesus made with his followers as they travelled to, and arrived in, Jerusalem on what today is best known as Palm Sunday. The day recalls the spiritual and the physical journey that took Jesus to Jerusalem for his sacrificial death, and, in doing so, reminds us of our personal spiritual and physical journey through life.

Palm Sunday marks the start of Holy Week and is observed with special solemnity as a time of devotion to the Passion of Jesus Christ. In the Greek and Roman liturgical books, it is called the Great Week because great deeds were done by God during this week.

Our journey leads us to Maundy Thursday when many churches meet for an evening Communion service. In some traditions, the service concludes with 'the stripping of the altar' when all moveable items are removed from the church, including altar cloths, bibles, decorative crosses, candles, and flowers. They are replaced with a simple wooden cross.

The next day, Good Friday, is a time for quiet meditation. In our town, Christians Together In Fareham participate in a Service of Witness at the Podium in the Town Centre where there is a combined service of worship. Some Christians walk from their individual churches carrying a banner or a cross. This year this service is being led by Fareham URC. Thanks must be recorded to Fiona Corless for putting together the service and to all those who will be taking part. Please join us in this act of witness and worship. We will gather at the church at 10am to walk to the town centre.

All this is in preparation for Easter Eve on the following day when some Christians gather outside their church at sunset – in the Jewish tradition of Jesus, sunset marked the start of a new day. As darkness falls, the ‘Easter Fire’ is lit outside the church from which every member of the congregation lights a candle which is carried in procession into the dark church. The candles, representing Jesus, the light of the world, lights up the church and the first Holy Communion of Easter is a joyful celebration. In our church, on Easter Sunday, we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord in a service of Holy Communion at 8.15am, and at a Family service at 10.30am. Don’t miss the Easter Breakfast at 9.15am!

Our personal journeys are not, of course, over. Our celebrations are like a welcome service station on a long journey, they refresh and energise us to continue on our way with enthusiasm and energy!

Adapted from B Peters, ACE Ideas Forum



Cover Photo by [Yves Cedric Schulze](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Prayers for April



To ponder over Eastertide: John 20 v. 1 - 29

Every week: pray for our Church Officers, Elders, all who lead worship, those who provide and show the PowerPoint and work the camera and microphones, those who provide music during times of worship.

1st – 8th Give thanks for joyful times – times of gathering and fellowship with friends and family – for the excitement and happiness experienced.

3rd Messy Church

6th Maundy Thursday service

7th Good Friday Walk of Witness

Pray for those who are going through times of tears and sadness – who have lost a loved one.

Give thanks for the times of waiting that you may feel God near and rest in his presence.

9th – 15th Give thanks for Jesus who died on the cross to set us free and for the good news that he is risen – He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

11th Church Meeting - Pray asking for God's guidance through His Spirit for discussions and decisions made.

Pray for those whose lives are predictable, whose everyday life is the same.

Pray for the people of Ukraine who have left their homes and found not just shelter but friendship with families in other countries.

Give thanks for those people who make you feel special – those who are kind and loving.

16th – 22nd Give thanks for the times of anger when things are wrong – when we are moved to speak out about injustices.

Pray for those who campaign on behalf of others.

Pray for those who fight to survive hunger, pain, injustice, and hopelessness.

Pray for all struggling with ill health both physically and mentally.

23rd – 30th Give thanks for new beginnings, for the wonder of creation and the potential of growth and beauty contained in bulbs and seeds. Pray that God will help your faith to grow and reach your potential.

28th Training morning for those involved in Pastoral Care

Pray for all who volunteer in any way in our fellowship.

If our love were but more simple,
we should take him at his word;
and our lives would be all gladness,
in the joy of Christ our Lord.
(F.W. Faber 1814-63)



A Prayer of Adoration

The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need.

He lets me rest in green meadows;

he leads me beside peaceful streams.

Faithful God, watching over us with tender care, we adore you:

Loving God, nourishing us with your grace, we praise your name.

Even when I walk through the darkest valley,

I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me.

Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.

Faithful God, watching over us with tender care, we adore you:

Loving God, nourishing us with your grace, we praise your name.

You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies.

You honour me by anointing my head with oil.

My cup overflows with blessings.

Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Faithful God, watching over us with tender care, we adore you:

Loving God, nourishing us with your grace, we praise your name.

Amen

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Psalm 23 Holy Bible, New Living Translation

Holy Week

Tuesday 4 April - 7.30pm Riding Lights :“Crosslight”

Everyone is encouraged to come to Fareham URC to watch a streamed performance of ‘Crosslight’.

The performance begins with John bringing Mary to his home in Jerusalem immediately after the crucifixion. Later that evening Peter joins them having disappeared after the denial. The 3 characters discuss the death of Jesus, and remember significant incidents in Jesus’ life, focusing on the impact on the disciples and the crowds.

The performance is 1 hour 7 mins. Coffee will be available afterwards”.

Thursday 6 April

7.30pm

Tenebrae Service

A Tenebrae Service will take place on Maundy Thursday at 7.30pm.

Someone said to Joseph of Arimathea, “That was such a beautiful, costly, hand-hewn tomb. Why did you give it to someone else to be interred in?” “Oh,” said Joseph, “he only needed it for the weekend.”



April

Sat 1 Apr	9am	Men's Breakfast at Vito Lounge
Sun 2 Apr	10.30am	Palm Sunday Morning Worship led by Revd Nicky Gilbert. Prayer Ministry after the service
Mon 3 Apr	10am	Messy Church
Tues 4 Apr	7.30pm	Riding Lights 'Crosslight' (streamed performance)
Wed 5 Apr	10am	Knitwitters
Thur 6 Apr	7.30pm	Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service
Fri 7 Apr	10am	Meet at the Church for the Walk of Witness
	10.30am	Good Friday Service of Witness at The Podium
Sat 8 Apr	8.30am	Women's Breakfast in the church hall
Sun 9 Apr	8.15am	Easter Sunday service led by Revd Tim Clarke including Sacrament of Holy Communion
	9.15am	Easter Breakfast
	10.30am	Morning Worship led by the Worship Group
Tues 11 Apr	7.30pm	Church Meeting
Wed 12 Apr	10am	Knitwitters
	1.30pm	House Group at 6 Bentley Crescent
Sun 16 Apr	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Karen Tweed Prayer Ministry after the service
Tues 18 Apr	7.30pm	Zoom Bible Study
Wed 19 Apr	10am	Knitwitters
Sun 23 Apr	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Mr David Childs
Mon 24 Apr	9.30am	Ffufs
Wed 26 Apr	10am	Knitwitters
	1.30pm	House Group at 34 Bentley Crescent
Sun 30 Apr	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Pam Humphreys Prayer Ministry after the service

May

Mon 1 May	9.30am	Ffufs
Wed 3 May	10am	Knitwitters
Thur 4 May	7.30pm	Choir Rehearsal
Sun 7 May	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Mr Jeremy Hicks
		Prayer Ministry after the service
	4pm	Coronation Afternoon Tea
	5.30pm	Songs of Praise
Tue 9 May	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting
Wed 10 May	10am	Knitwitters
Thur 11 May	7.30pm	Choir Rehearsal
Sat 13 May	8.30am	Women's Breakfast in the church hall
Sun 14 May	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Sue Brown
		We welcome our friends from Fareham Methodist Church
Mon 15 May	9.30am	Ffufs
Tues 16 May	7.30pm	Zoom Bible Study
Wed 17 May	10am	Knitwitters
Sun 21 May	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Jean Antcliffe
		including Sacrament of Holy Communion
		Prayer Ministry after the service
Mon 22 May	9.30am	Ffufs
Wed 24 May	10am	Knitwitters
Sun 28 May	10.30am	Pentecost
		Morning Worship led by Revd Nicky Gilbert
Wed 31 May	10am	Knitwitters

Easter Egg-stravaganza!



We had a lovely time at the Easter coffee morning on 25 March. Cakes and crafts were enjoyed by everyone. The egg decorating competition was fun - did you pick a winner?

Huge thanks to all who supported this event, and who made items to sell, decorated an egg, served refreshments or cleared it all up.

Over £200 was raised for our church charities 'Tree Aid' and the Basics Bank.

Social & Fundraising Group



Commitment for Life: Climate Justice

Global Justice Now would like to thank Commitment for Life sincerely for its generous support throughout 2022 and into 2023.

Rich countries and polluting corporations in the global north are the most responsible for climate change. As much as 92% of the carbon emissions that are in excess of safe planetary limits come from those rich countries. These include the UK, which is historically the world's 5th biggest polluter. Billions of people across the global south are facing climate chaos, despite being the least responsible for causing it.

At the COP27 climate talks, held in November 2022, countries finally agreed to set up an international compensation fund for 'loss and damage' due to climate change.

Global Justice Now is campaigning to make sure that this compensation is paid by the big polluting corporations in the fossil fuel industry.

Global Justice Now is encouraging us to stand in solidarity with the global south in their demands. We can do this by telling the UK government to make polluters pay for loss and damage! You can do this by signing the petition addressed to the Prime Minister that is on their website:

<https://www.globaljustice.org.uk/our-campaigns/climate/>

Prayer

God of Justice, thank you that we have the privilege of serving you. Give us the courage to face down injustice, the strength to make a difference, and the wisdom to choose the right action to bring about your desire for peace, equity, and justice, especially for the poorest in the world. In Jesus we live and pray. Amen.

Sue Brown

Christians Together in Fareham

Dear Friends

It was announced this weekend that Rev Bruce Deans will be leaving St John's in June. He has been appointed as vicar of St Mary's, Sheet, with additional responsibility for leading on mission, evangelism and outreach for the deanery of Petersfield.

Bruce has been vicar of St John's since 2015. He leaves a legacy of ecumenical action in the College Pastors and the CMA Connect debt advice centre, both of which he initiated. His last Sunday with us will be 18th June.

Please join us in praying for Bruce, Caroline and their sons Joseph and Daniel, as they move to Sheet and take up their ministry there. Please also pray for the family of St John's, especially those who will take on additional leadership responsibilities, as we move forward in our mission and ministry to our community.

Yours in Christ's service

Ian Corless

Secretary, Christians Together in Fareham

Service of Witness
Good Friday 7th April 2023
Assemble 10.15am for 10.30am start
The Podium, West Street, Fareham

You may wish to walk from your church to the Podium carrying a banner or a Cross

Hot Cross Buns will be shared with visitors to the town centre at the end of the service

**CHRISTIANS
together in
FAREHAM**

You can't get away from Portland

Henry Canova Vollam Morton FRSL (known as H. V. Morton), (26 July 1892 – 18 June 1979) was a journalist and pioneering travel writer from Lancashire. He was best known for his many books on London, Great Britain and the Holy Land. This is an extract from one of his books 'In Search of England'.

Thank you to Bronwyn Mason for sending it in.

"That," said the quarry foreman, as he included the landscape in a sweep of his hand, "is where St. Paul's came from!" I looked down towards the sea from a high cliff on the eastern side of the Isle of Portland. The foreman turned, pointing towards a cosy bay that lay between steep cliffs with the wave breaking on the shingle beach.

"Some of the City churches came out of that great hole! All these old quarries on the east side were worked by Sir Christopher Wren when he rebuilt London."



We walked on together over roads so white with powdered Portland stone that the dust clung like flour to our clothes and formed a grey film on our hands. My guide pointed to a long gash in the rock.

"The Cenotaph!" he remarked casually.

He went on.

"I helped to choose some of the stones for the Cenotaph" he continued, "the top ones with the wreath on them. We picked the purest white stone in the island"

"Where is all this stone going?" I asked the foreman as we passed

between walls of it.

“That,” he replied, “is Regent Street.”

If you would like to examine the fossils in Portland Stone you will see many in the plinth of the King Charles statue at Charing Cross: it is full of sea shells.

I thought in my vanity that I knew London.

I realise now that no one understands London till he has explored the significant chasms of this white island; this mother of London.

Somerset House, St Paul’s, the Bank, the Royal Exchange, the Law Courts, the British Museum, all the Wren churches - have left their caves, gullies, arid gaps in the Isle of Portland. What an unforgettable experience it is to walk in the mighty bed from which, at the command of Wren, St Paul’s rose to stand guard on Ludgate Hill.

And this I thought: that never again will I look on London with quite the same eyes. Always at the back of my mind will be, as I walk the streets of London, knowledge of a white island lying out to sea like a great whale. When I see Portland stone in London I shall think of the sea breaking against high hills; I shall hear the scream of the gulls, the suck back of pebbles on the little stony beaches; the white dust lying over the road in the mysterious Isle of London.

Because of Good Friday you can look back and not be afraid

Because of Easter you can look ahead and not be afraid.

Because of Ascension Day you can look up and not be afraid.

Because of Pentecost you can look in and not be afraid.

Fareham United Reformed Church

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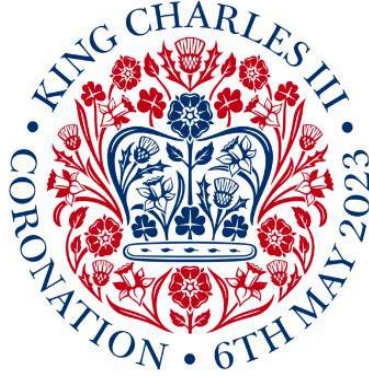
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***'Sharing Jesus' love with
the world today'***





Fareham URC
Coronation Afternoon Tea
Sunday 7 May
4pm

Followed by Songs of Praise at 5.30pm

Afternoon tea tickets £3.50

on sale from 16 April