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A Letter from Rev'd Liz Rowles

As I write this, I am planning our services for the most important week in the Church calendar, Holy Week and Easter. Unlike last year, we will be able to worship in church this year, and our services will also be available via Zoom or on Facebook. Please do tell friends and neighbours about our services, they may find accessing a service from the comfort of their own home preferable to coming into a church, especially if they are not regular church goers, and you never know, they may like what they see and want to experience more! For Zoom access codes ask Revd. Liz or Revd. Helen.

We are going through a period of change, as a country as we move out of lockdown and hopefully into a little bit more freedom, schools are now back, and we are all looking forward to a haircut and to be able to see family and friends and perhaps even enjoy a meal out! Our Church is changing too as we prepare to say goodbye to Helen and our Diocese is changing with the advent of new mission communities. If you would like to know more about the mission communities, please speak to Revd. Helen or Revd. Liz or ask your Deanery Synod reps Virginia Lloyd or Judith McGovern. However, whatever is changing around us, God's love for

us remains constant. We recall, at this time of year, that Jesus' love for us was such that he died for us and his resurrection promise, is that he is alive and remains with us always.

We have been reminded in this past year, how fragile our society can be, but is this time of change, of Easter, a time to find opportunities to draw closer to God and to encourage others to do the same? As we walk together into Holy Week and beyond let us pray for the courage to accept these changes.

O Christ, you entered the city as a poor man, not in style, but simply, yet still you caused uproar, and questions everywhere; you drew the expectations of a hungry crowd, and brought buried conflicts to the light. May we, who are sometimes swayed by the crowd's approval, and who often avoid conflict for fear of its cost to us, hold fast to the gospel of peace and justice, and follow faithfully in your way of compassion and solidarity with those who are poor and excluded, wherever it may lead us. Amen.
(Based on 'Palm Sunday is always happening', by Kathy Galloway.)



Maundy Thursday – 7.30pm a service of reflection with Holy Communion, led by Rev'd Liz at St. Johns Church, and on Zoom.

Good Friday—11.00am at St Mary's—a devotional service 'An Hour at the Cross'
Stations of the Cross—7.30pm at St. Johns Church and on Zoom, led by Revd. Liz. This will not be a traditional Stations of the Cross due to COVID restrictions. Please come along and see for yourself, all welcome.

Holy Saturday—Easter Vigil 7.30pm at St Paul's led by Rev'd Liz . We welcome the Light of Christ at this first service of Easter, with Holy Communion and on Facebook live.

Easter Sunday—10.45am at St Paul's
Service of Holy Communion

Current Services at St Paul's

Sunday: 9.00 am Service of the Word on Zoom
10.45am Parish Eucharist in church—please remember to wear a mask.

Wednesday: 9am Morning prayer on Zoom

Tuesday & Friday: 8.30pm Compline on Zoom

For further details please contact Revd. Helen:
0161 432 1227

Please note that there will be no weekday Zoom services in the week after Easter (week beginning Monday April 5th)

Helen's final service will be on Sunday 16th May at 10:45 at St. Paul's, this will be a team service and will have to be a ticketed event - please contact Revd. Liz, 07763 188149, for a ticket.



Ann Sawyer would like to thank the members of St. Paul's for their love and sympathy shown on the death of her son, Andrew.

EASTER, the most joyful day of the year

Easter is the most joyful day of the year for Christians. Christ has died for our sins. We are forgiven. Christ has risen! We are redeemed! We can look forward to an eternity in His joy! Hallelujah! The Good News of Jesus Christ is a message so simple that you can explain it to someone in a few minutes. It is so profound that for the rest of their lives they will still be 'growing' in their Christian walk with God.

Why does the date move around so much? Because the date of Passover moves around, and according to the biblical account, Easter is tied to the Passover. Passover celebrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, and it lasts for seven days, from the middle of the Hebrew month of Nisan, which equates to late March or early April.

Sir Isaac Newton was one of the first to use the Hebrew lunar calendar to come up with firm dates for the first Good Friday: Friday 7th April 30 AD or Friday 3rd April, 33 AD with Easter Day falling two days later. Modern scholars continue to think these two Fridays to be the most likely.

Most people will tell you that Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, which is broadly true. But the precise calculations are complicated and involve something called an 'ecclesiastical full moon', which is not the same as the moon in the sky. The earliest possible date for Easter in the West is 22nd March, which last fell in 1818. The latest is 25th April, which last happened in 1943.

Why the name, 'Easter'? In almost every European language, the festival's name comes from 'Pesach', the Hebrew word for Passover. The Germanic word 'Easter', however, seems to come from *Eostre*, a Saxon fertility goddess mentioned by the Venerable Bede. He thought that the Saxons worshipped her in 'Eostur month,' but may have confused her with the classical dawn goddesses like *Eos* and *Aurora*, whose names mean 'shining in the east'. So, Easter might have meant simply 'beginning month' – a good time for starting up again after a long winter.

Finally, why Easter eggs? On one hand, they are an ancient symbol of birth in most European cultures. On the other hand, hens start laying regularly again each Spring. Since eggs were forbidden during Lent, it's easy to see how decorating and eating them became a practical way to celebrate Easter.

Parish Pump

