



Link Up!

**“Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation”
Mark 16 v 15**

Coming up in April

On Sunday 16th April, Stephen Ashby will be leading and preaching in our series from Luke's gospel.

Then, on Sunday 23rd April, we have Miriam Biggs the Youth and Family worker from United Church Ferndown to lead and preach, again in Luke's gospel.

Finally on 30th April we will be hosting a combined service with Parkstone Baptist with Dave Edwins preaching from Luke's gospel again.

Other Notices

For Church Members, a reminder that there will be an Additional Church Members meeting on Sunday 23rd April where we will discuss just one topic, 'The Way Forward for Longfleet'. Members will have received notes and an open letter from the Deacons to help them to prepare for discussing this at the meeting. As usual, please bring your lunch along to eat after the morning service prior to the meeting.

Yvonne Young's funeral will take place on Monday 17th April with a service at church at 1pm followed by the committal at Harbour View at 2.30pm and refreshments afterwards.

Email caution: A number of people in the church have received emails with attachments of photos recently that look as if they have come from other folk within the church. These are not genuine emails from the people mentioned in the title. Please do not open any attachments contained in these as they will probably introduce a virus or other nasty thing onto your laptop or other device. You can easily see if they are from the person concerned because the email address they have come from will not be the one in our church directory.

“What a relief that's over!” I am writing this on the waiting day, between Good Friday and Easter Day itself. I was imagining the feelings of some of the major characters we read about in the Gospels. For instance, having watched the scenes of absolute cruelty and mass hysteria being exhibited against Jesus; his disciples and followers, his mother and family were probably relieved that it was all over. They must have wondered what it had all been for, the three years travelling through the locality teaching, healing and meeting the people regaling them with words of comfort and wisdom, with stories involving everyday living. It had all come down to this, a bitter taste in their mouths and a sense of disappointment and disorientation. Where to now? What did the future hold? A return to the old jobs, back to the Galilean villages, to life as it was before Jesus called them to be his followers? Hopes for the future dashed to pieces (30 silver pieces in actual fact), but relief that Jesus' suffering was over. The last few days of tension ended it was time to relax, keep a low profile and rest and rethink. It was good while it lasted, but now it was back to a normal life back in the village they came from.

Meanwhile the authorities, religious and secular, were also probably spending the day relaxing and relieved that they had managed to get rid of this troublemaker and averted a rebellion all in one major event. The eyes of Rome would have been watching to see what was going on in this uneasy part of their 'empire'. The religious leaders were probably thinking that they could carry on keeping the people under the control of heavier laws and regulations because they had stopped this man before it got completely out of hand. Yes, they were quite likely sitting back and saying “What a relief” because the tension had lifted.

Coronation Celebration

Plans are now underway for our Coronation Celebration on **Sunday 7th May**. We will be starting the morning from 10.30am with coffee or tea, but if you can't get there by then, arrive between then and 11am. It will be an informal morning held in the Church with some craft activities for those who like those, some quizzes and puzzles for those who aren't keen on craft and for those who would just like to chat about the Coronation the previous day and reminisce about the previous Coronation a chance for you to do that.

All of this will take place around tables and you don't need to move too much if you don't want to. There will be a short all-age service with hymns and prayers for the King and a chance to think about Jesus as the King of kings.

When we've finished that there will be a buffet lunch provided by the church and prepared while we are doing the other activities. We'll eat our lunch in the church as well. Finally, we'll conclude the event with a bit of a singsong featuring songs from down the decades of King Charles' life.

We want everyone to come along to this and we want to invite friends of all ages, including some of those who use our premises during the week. We need you, as members of the church and congregation, to chat to those who join us and make them feel welcome. There are invitations available for you to use to invite people you think would like to come to this event.

We will also be looking for donations of cake towards the lunch. A list will be up in the entrance foyer for you to sign up with what you are able to offer.

Smile Lone Parents Fair

Each May our friends from Smile hold a Lone Parents Fair. It's an opportunity for the families who are part of Smile to come together for food, fun activities, some pampering for the Mums, Face Painting for the children, and various stalls selling things. This year's event is on Saturday 13th May between 11am and 2pm at St James' Church. They are appealing for helpers to give a hand with helping set up, help on the various activities, and clear up at the end. If you think you could help out with that then please have a chat with Janet.

That of course, all changed on Easter Morning when the reality of what Jesus had been trying to tell them became fact. The authorities, who were possibly sitting back, relaxing and enjoying their success at dealing with a threatened uprising having silenced this teacher from Nazareth for good, are suddenly confronted with news of an empty tomb and their relief disappears as they try to spread news of grave robbers.

The disciples who thought it was all over and their work was done, were also to have a big surprise. Jesus was about to give them his commission of service. It was not going to be a time to relax but a challenge to carry on the work he had started.

What about us? Now Easter has passed and we've done the Church bit, we've sung the hymns, heard about the cross and the empty grave. Can we just sit back and relax? It's over, now back to normal? In the short time the risen Jesus remained on earth, he made it clear that his followers were not to sit back and relax, but were to take up the 'cross' and carry on the work. For us now is not the time to sit back and relax. Now is the time to say "What can I do?"

Barbara Goose