



# Link Up!

**‘The LORD will keep you from all harm - he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.’ Psalm 121: 7-8**

## Looking forward to April

**On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April** we will be looking at the parable of the Good Samaritan – Luke 10: 29 – 37. It will also be communion on that Sunday.

**On Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April**, which is Palm Sunday we have Rev Stephen Ashby coming to preach and lead worship as Ken and family are on holiday.

**On Good Friday**, (18<sup>th</sup> April) there will be a March of Witness leaving St Mary’s R C Church at around 9am and walking into the town centre for an Open-Air service starting at 10am. If you can’t do the walk, then why not join us outside Sainsbury’s for the service.

Our own Good Friday service will start at the church at 11.15am for a short reflective time led by Ken.

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April is Easter Sunday** and Ken will be back to lead our service.

**Then on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April** we will be looking at the parable of the Shrewd Manager – Luke 16: 1 – 14.

I don’t know about you, but when I was growing up, April Fool’s Day was an important part of my childhood. Indeed, my children enjoy playing harmless tricks on each other, and their unsuspecting mother! April Fool’s Day is observed in numerous countries around the world, not just in Europe and English-speaking countries, but in Africa, South-America and throughout the Middle-East as well. No one really knows how or when the tradition started, or how it spread throughout the world.

One theory is that it originated in France during the Middle -Ages; New Years Day was usually observed at the end of March with celebrations lasting until the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. However, when the government changed New Years Day to January, some people wouldn’t believe it and were considered fools. Another theory is that it relates to Noah ‘foolishly’ sending out the raven and dove before the floodwaters had abated, on the first day of the tenth month, which was said to equate to April the 1<sup>st</sup>. To be honest, neither of these theories seem particularly convincing!

Many people today consider Christians to be foolish – this is nothing new, in his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes that our message is considered foolish, and that God uses things that are seen as ‘foolish’ by the people of the world. Our generosity, our sacrificial lifestyles, putting other’s needs before our own, and our concept of a Saviour who died for us are all considered naive by the standards of this world. Yet Jesus cautions us not to be naive, not to be foolish. Matthew 10:16 ‘I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.’ In Luke 16, in the parable of the Shrewd Manager, which we will look at one Sunday later this month, Jesus seems to commend the shrewd and dishonest manager, and remarks that ‘the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.’

**Other Notices**

**Ken and Nicky and the family will be on holiday from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April until Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April inclusive. Please contact one of the deacons if you need help.**

Rev John Good, minister of Ocean Church in Hamworthy, is running the London Marathon on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April to raise funds for the YMCA, which he also works for. There is still time to sponsor John for the run, go to this JustGiving page [https://www.justgiving.com/page/john-good-1723209662258?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR3ugkIHPCVT\\_JkVvJ-cdhNfvOC6MxT0m6Tctm-ymTm\\_vYdYGh7nYczsS30\\_aem\\_K2nQ36zuyNa9zVMCr5zr\\_A](https://www.justgiving.com/page/john-good-1723209662258?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR3ugkIHPCVT_JkVvJ-cdhNfvOC6MxT0m6Tctm-ymTm_vYdYGh7nYczsS30_aem_K2nQ36zuyNa9zVMCr5zr_A)

I don't believe that either Jesus or Paul would have us be cynical and suspicious; always worried about people's ulterior motives, but we must exercise a level of caution as we navigate this world, which at this present time is ruled by our enemy. I'm reminded of the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife in Genesis 39. Despite knowing that she wanted to go to bed with him, Joseph demonstrated a foolish naiveté by allowing himself to be alone in her presence, which made him vulnerable to her false accusations and resulted in his imprisonment.

Whilst it is good and right that as Christians we are pleasant, courteous people, who put others' needs before our own, we must be alert to the fact that there is a trickster who seeks to trip us up and make fools out of, and worse, to make a fool out of our God. 'Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.'

*Ken Adolphe*

