

Link Up!

‘For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.’ Psalm 103: 11-12

Coming up for Easter:

Good Friday is on 3rd April and those of us who are able to will be joining with the other churches in Churches Together in Poole for the annual Open-Air service at 10.00am outside Sainsbury’s supermarket. We will be making our way there with a March of Witness together with our local friends from St George’s Oakdale C of E and St Mary’s R C Churches This will leave St Mary’s at around 9.00 – 9.15am.

Following this, at 11.15am, we will hold our own Good Friday reflective service.

On Easter Sunday, 5th April we will have our Easter Sunday All Age service to once again celebrate Jesus’ resurrection and all that his death on the cross and resurrection means for us. Do invite family and friends to join us for this service. Communion will be part of this service.

I remember having a conversation with an individual who was adamant that the reason the date for Easter moves each year, is because it’s a pagan festival. I pointed out that in fact Jesus was crucified during the Jewish Passover festival and that the Jews used a lunar calendar to calculate the date of Passover. Easter always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon, after the Spring Equinox. Today in the West, Easter and Passover usually overlap with one another, although due to differences in measuring time and the fact that Easter must always fall on a Sunday, they don’t always – since 2000 there have only been four years where they haven’t.

There are of course other areas where Easter and Passover overlap:

They are both multi-day festivals with various rituals, observances and traditions. Passover is an eight-day festival that commemorates the Exodus story and the Israelites’ liberation from slavery in Egypt. The first two days and the seventh day are major holidays for the Jews with special prayers and rituals.

Easter is of course preceded by Lent, which lasts for 40 days and is a time of fasting, prayer and penance in preparation for Easter Sunday. The week leading up to Easter Sunday, Holy Week, includes Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday – although as Baptists we may not observe these as strictly as other Christians. Easter Sunday marks the culmination of Holy Week and the celebration of Jesus’ resurrection.

The Last Supper, as described in the New Testament, is generally considered to be a Passover Seder. According to the Gospels, Jesus and his disciples gathered to celebrate the Passover together in Jerusalem. During this meal, Jesus instituted the sacrament of Communion, using bread and wine to symbolize his body and blood. The Gospel of Luke specifically mentions that the Last Supper took place during the time of the Passover feast.

The rest of April:

On Sunday 12th April we will be starting a short series on Jesus' post resurrection appearances by looking at Luke 24 – The Road to Emmaus.

Then on Sunday 19th April we will be looking at Jesus encounter with Thomas in John 20.

Finally, on Sunday 26th April we have a break from the series as Ken is on retreat during the week and we have Stephen Ashby coming to lead our worship.

Ken is away on retreat from Monday 20th – Thursday 23rd April.

Other Notices:

Carri Hall is still selling her home-made cakes after services to raise funds for her visit to the Orfund home in Malawi. Donations for cakes should be left in the box on the table by her cakes.

Alissa Ford is starting her own cake making business and her price list and a selection of cakes she can offer are on the noticeboard in the lobby at church. Please complete the Order Form next to her list of cakes on the board including when you want your cakes by.

Don't forget that we are now recording the Sunday sermons and putting these onto our website. So, if you are missing from church on a Sunday you can catch up online during the week. The web address is www.longfleetbaptistchurch.co.uk.

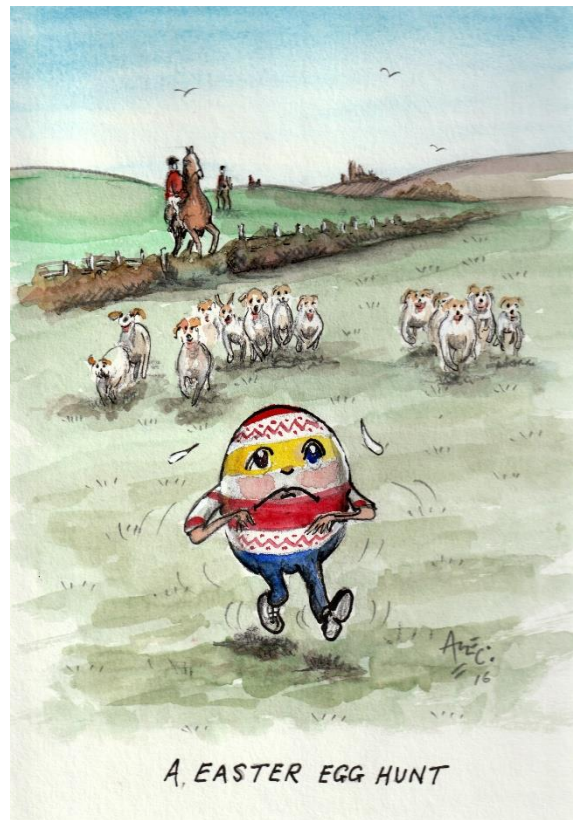
Also, you can listen to a series of podcasts called 'Diving Deeper' where Ken discusses some of the bible study questions with guests from our Bible study groups. You can hear these by going to our YouTube channel. Just search for 'Longfleet Baptist Church' to find them.

Finally, both Passover and Easter celebrate God liberating his people from bondage. Passover commemorates the freedom of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt, as recounted in the Book of Exodus. The story revolves around the 10 plagues sent by Yahweh to persuade Pharaoh to release the Israelites — culminating in the Passover event itself, where the Israelites were spared from the final plague, the death of the firstborn, by marking their doorposts with the blood of a sacrificial lamb.

Similarly, Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ; we Christians believe that through Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection, we are freed from the power of sin and granted eternal life. Jesus' resurrection means victory over sin and death, offering hope and liberation to all humanity.

I always think that it's no coincidence that Jesus was crucified and resurrected during the Passover feast; whilst theologians may speak of 'propitiation', 'atonement', 'penal substitution' and so on, ultimately our sins are 'passed over', our guilt is 'passed over', our punishment is 'passed over' – and in the same way the blood of a lamb saved the ancient Israelites from the angel of death, so the blood of Jesus the Lamb, saves us from the death that sin would demand.

Rev Ken Adolphe



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