



Under the Downs

3 Country Churches Nestling Under the Downs

View From the Rectory

When you get together with family or friends, how often do you tell stories, about the past, about times that you shared together? The older we get, the more memories we have of course, but sometimes it's hard to remember the detail even of the really special events. We remember good times and bad, but I think generally the stories that we share are either to do with happiness, or because sharing a sadness helps to lessen its impact.

First century Israel was a place where no stories were written down, rather those which made the greatest impact would be told and retold so that they would not be forgotten, and during that first Easter and the days leading up to it there were many stories, both happy and sad, to be told.

If someone asked you which part of the Easter story you remembered best, I wonder which it would be? Would it be the day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, and all the people waved

palms in celebration? Perhaps it was the time when the disciples gathered together with Jesus for a special meal together. It might be the day of sorrow when Jesus hung upon the cross, or the day of quiet hope and then rejoicing as the disciples discovered that Jesus Christ was risen indeed.

All of those occasions reflect the times that we remember and share. Times of public rejoicing, memorable meals with family and friends, varying degrees of sadness, but also of hope.

Very few stories of the resurrected Jesus before he ascended to heaven remain, but it is the message of hope that endures. The gift of God through the cross to us is one of hope and promise: and that, as an old film title reminds us, really is the greatest story ever told.

Every Blessing

Linda

Holy Week and Easter in the Benefice

This is the most special time in the church's year, so in the week leading up to Easter Day, there are a number of extra events:

Mundy Thursday (29 March) - the day of the Last Supper

10.00 am Benefice Holy Communion in St James Heyshott

6.30 pm Passover Supper in Cocking Village Hall - please let Linda or Glynis know if you are planning to come.

Good Friday (30 March) - Jesus dies on the cross

10 am Service in St Mary Bepton - readings and hymns telling the story of Jesus' journey to the cross.

3 pm Making the Easter Garden at St Catherine, Cocking

Holy Saturday (31 March) - Jesus lies in the tomb

7.30 pm A service of light to celebrate the rising of Jesus from the tomb and the first Holy Communion of Easter

Easter Day (1 April) - He is Risen! Alleluia! Services in all our churches:

9.30 am St Catherine Cocking

11.15 am St James Heyshott

11.15 am St Mary Bepton

March 2018

Brown Hares March Madness

By Michael Blencowe Sussex Wildlife Trust

While the fields are still bare, March is the best time to observe hares. On paper a hare could easily be dismissed as a big rabbit but they're



different beasts altogether; it's all in the way they move. A hare possesses powerful hind legs; a pair of pistons that can send them rocketing towards the horizon at over 40mph.

Hares are mostly nocturnal. They don't burrow underground like rabbits but instead spend their days hidden in a shallow scrape (a form). Young hares (leverets) are born in separate forms and attentive mother hares return to secretly suckle them under cover of dusk.

In spring amorous male hares approach females in the hope of finding a mate but chatting up a hare is a risky business. Potential sexual partners can suddenly transform into sparring partners when uninterested female hares rise up and strike a blow for equality by punching the males in the face. The frenzied 'boxing matches' that ensue are such a striking spectacle that they have given us the phrase 'as mad as a March hare'.

Sadly, their prominence in the English countryside has also diminished. Numbers have declined due to changes in farming practices, especially the removal of hedgerows. It's been a long, cold winter. As spring returns the Sussex countryside will be exploding in a crazy celebration of life. Get out there, find yourself a hare and experience the madness.



Bishop Martin's Letter

There are two major Christian festivals in March. They celebrate people whose response to God was tentative, but consistent.

The first commemorates Joseph of Nazareth, the husband of Mary. The second festival celebrates Mary's experience of the annunciation of the birth of Jesus.

Christians of earlier generations found benefit in presenting the story of Easter as the culmination of Christmas when Joseph and Mary were so prominent.

They did this through a cycle of mystery plays, the most famous of which are still performed in York, telling the Christian story from creation to judgement at the end of time. These plays were a bridge between ordinary daily life and the drama of heaven come to earth in the Church's liturgical worship.

This year, an early Easter places Holy Week between the festivals of Joseph and of the annunciation. It is one of those periodic occurrences when dates and timing become symbolic.

Mary and Joseph are two ordinary people, from the same working town, who fall in love and get married. In the middle of all that something incredible happens, that transforms their lives. They become players in the divine drama of salvation.

Their festivals stand on either side of Holy Week and they, as it were, invite us to connect with that drama through our experience today of God's call and God's power.

In this Year of Prayer, my hope is that the drama of Holy Week will assume greater importance in your Christian life, and in your diary.

I hope that you, like Joseph and Mary, will allow the call of God to draw you into the drama of salvation: not as a spectator, but as a player, or agent, who will attract others to its reality, as you renew your commitment to know, love, follow Jesus.

+Martin

Church Service Times

This is the usual pattern, but occasionally there are changes - please check the church noticeboards. This is especially important at festival times such as Christmas and Easter

St Mary Bepton

11.15am 1st Sunday of the month Matins BCP
2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays Matins with Holy Communion BCP

St Catherine of Siena Cocking

9.30am Every Sunday
1st Sunday of the month Family Communion CW
2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays Holy Communion CW

Family Activities @Chichester Cathedral

Spring has Sprung!

Friday 13th April 2018

10.00am – 3pm

(Last entry 2.30pm)



A fun filled family day to be held in Chichester Cathedral

Join us to make your own 'Grow Head' or design and make all kinds of spring flowers, birds or animals.

Search for things that grow and see how many you can track down with the aid of a colourful Cathedral trail before collecting a prize on completion from the shop. There is no need to book just drop in. The cost is **£2.50 per child**.

Suitable for children aged 3 – 12 years, who must be accompanied by an adult. There will also be a carpeted area available with soft toys for children under 3 years, who come along with their older brothers and sisters.

Why not take advantage of the Cloisters café offer of Kids Meals for £1.50 when an accompanying adult buys a lunch item, with a valid voucher?

Come along and join in all the fun! For further details contact Sue on 01243 812497 or email sue.poil@chichestercathedral.org.uk

Midhurst Garden Club

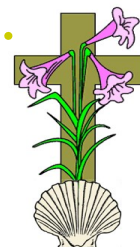
Monday 12 March 7pm for 7:30pm

Our talk this month is titled "Costa Rica – The Garden of Eden". Alan Martin will show slides and speak from experience. He will describe the rich and varied wildlife and exotic and beautiful flora of the Country.

Please note that this meeting will be held at the Methodist Church, North Street and not the Memorial Hall.

Visitors will be very welcome.

For more information about the Club please contact Denise Skinner 01730 814194, askinner3@sky.com or check our website - midhurstgardenclub.co.uk



St James Heyshott

11.15am 1st Sunday of the month Family Communion CW
9.30am 2nd Sunday of the month Holy Communion BCP
9.30am 3rd Sunday of the month Matins BCP
11.15am 4th Sunday of the month Holy Communion CW
6.00pm 1st 2nd and 4th Sundays Evensong BCP
3rd Sunday Compline

On a 5th Sunday of the month, there is a joint service at 10.00 am at one of our churches - please check the notice boards or our magazine.
CW - Common Worship is the modern language service
BCP - Book of Common Prayer is the traditional service