

# ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

APRIL 2015

PRICE 50P



# RACHEL'S APRIL LETTER

Most of us have met one or two remarkable people. Sometimes those remarkable people will be counted among what the modern world calls 'celebrity culture'. More often the people who are remarkable are self-effacing, ordinary folk who have found themselves caught up in extraordinary situations. They have not sought out celebrity, but have become high profile because of their insight or talent or courage.

One does not need to be a Christian to recognize that Jesus was remarkable. I've met many atheists, agnostics and adherents of non-Christian faith traditions who consider Jesus great, as a wise and original thinker and a singular holy person. Before I came to faith I very much believed that Jesus was an amazing figure who challenged many of the orthodoxies of his day and remained a critical ethical voice in ours.

The Easter story invites us to consider Jesus as something more than a wise person or great ethical teacher. As I've said before, there is something offensive about the 'Easter Event' – the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus. For, on the one hand, if we suppose that Jesus is God the idea that he might die is offensive. How could God die and die a criminal's death at that? Jesus is honoured as a prophet in Islam and – in virtue of his status as a prophet – they insist that he could not die on a cross. Given that we say he is the Son of God, how much more offensive is it to say he died on a cross? Yet, at the same time, if we believe, as Christians, that Jesus actually dies on the cross, the notion of his resurrection is an offense to reason. Don't we all know that no one dies and lives again?

Yet, the Jesus we are invited to meet and be loved by is no mere teacher or prophet. He is the Christ, the Son of God, as St Peter has it. And I think the significance of Easter lies not simply in some act of redemption undertaken two thousand years ago, but in our ongoing participation in redemption now. Easter symbolizes an invitation to each of us to meet Christ afresh as if for the first time.

What do I mean? Well, while I return again and again to the powerful image of the Cross, for me the most powerful moment in the Gospels is found in the Garden on that first Easter. It is when the risen Christ meets Mary Magdalene. This is the Christ who comes with love, reconciliation and hope to the ones who betrayed him and failed to stand by him in his hour of need. It is the Christ who stuns his witnesses into awe.

Perhaps it's just me, but I constantly want to meet again the Christ who reconciles and invites us into a way of peace, generosity and new beginnings. I suspect that this is because I'm conscious of the inadequacy of my faith and my need for forgiveness. But it's also predicated on my desire to participate in God's good news here and now. As we celebrate Easter, let's not just see it as an historical event, as something from long ago, but as part of God's living creation now. Let's seek to live on the promises of God and be people of grace and peace today.

Rachel x

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## **CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS**

Church Hall and Glass Room are available for Hire.

Details are on our website:

[www.St-Nicholas-church.org.uk](http://www.St-Nicholas-church.org.uk)

For bookings please contact:

Mrs Caroline Abiodon (0161 431 6535)

## CHURCH ROTA - APRIL 2015

	Warden 8.30am	Warden 10.30am	Altar Server	Lay Assistants	Sidespeople
April 5th	Fred	Jane	Louise	Louise Margaret	Anne T. Anne H. Elaine
April 12th	Fred	Alison M.	Jane	Jane Jill	Sybil Caroline
April 19th	Fred	Grace	Caroline	Anne H. Anne T.	Margaret Michael Muriel C.
April 26th	Fred	Julie	Brenda	Brenda Cliff	Muriel N. Amy Val



## PARISH REGISTERS - FROM FEBRUARY 2015

Date	Attendance	Cash	Envelopes
1st	43	£9.00	£274.90
8th	38	£12.00	£286.60
15th	40	£8.00	£405.00
22nd	55	£18.50	£291.85
Total			£1258.35

St.Nicholas Club  
 1st Prize: 53 Anne Holmes  
 2nd Prize: 39 Rainbows

## APRIL CALENDAR

Wednesday, April 1st	7pm	Evening Prayer
Thursday, April 2nd	7pm	Maundy Thursday Eucharist and Vigil
Friday, April 3rd	2pm	Good Friday - An Hour at the Foot of the Cross
Sunday, April 5th	8.30am 10.30am	Easter - all age  Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion & Young People's Church
Tuesday, April 7th	7.30pm	Taize
Wednesday, April 8th	10am	Eucharist
Sunday, April 12th	8.30am 10.30am	Easter 2  Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion & Young People's Church
Wednesday, April 15th	10am	Eucharist
Sunday, April 19th	8.30am 10.30am	Easter 3  Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion & Young People's Church
Wednesday, April 22nd	10am	Eucharist
Sunday, April 26th	8.30am 10.30am	Easter 4  Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion & Young People's Church
Wednesday, April 29th	10am	Eucharist

## BOOK LAUNCH

The northern launch of the new Inclusive Church resource on Gender (published by DLT) will be launched on Wednesday 13th May, 12pm - 2pm, at St Denys' Bookshop, Manchester Cathedral Visitor's Centre.

It is edited by Rosemary Lain-Priestley, who anticipates being present at the launch. Rachel Mann has contributed, as well as others including Ronni Lamont, Natalie Collins, and David Monteith.

The book is part of a series of books on topics including sexuality, ethnicity and disability. Books will be on sale at the event.

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## FOR THE LOVE OF CHOCOLATE

Are you going to indulge in Easter chocolate this year? Ever wonder where it first came from? We have the Aztecs of equatorial Central America to thank: it was they who discovered that a certain tree, later named Theobroma Cacao, was well worth cultivating. The Aztecs considered chocolate the 'drink of the gods' (Theo means God, broma means drink; hence the name). The Aztecs credited chocolate for everything from spiritual wisdom to sexual prowess; Emperor Montezuma is reported to have drunk more than fifty flagons of the stuff each day.

The Spanish explorer Cortes also called it 'the divine drink', and the conquistadors brought chocolate back to Spain. From there it travelled north, and reached England about 1849.

It was first served as a drink, until during the Industrial Revolution it caught the attention of several leading Quaker families, including the Cadburys, the Frys, the Rowntress and the Terrys. It was the Fry family who created the first 'eating' chocolate... and the rest, as they say, is history. Today the world eats about 600,000 tons a year. Enjoy your Easter egg!

## **ST PETER'S HARROGATE**

On 22nd February Colin and I went to St. Peter's, Harrogate for the 11 am Sung Matins. It took me back 50 years to my old church, St Mary's, Droylsden. The music was just the same. We were made very welcome.

St Peter's has 8.30 am Holy Communion, 9.30 am Family service, 4.30 pm Afternoon Church and 6.30 pm Choral Evensong.

In the service we went to, instead of the sermon they talked about the Parish Share. This year it will be £190,000. After the service we were asked if we would like to join them for a cup of tea.

The Assistant Priest, Revd. Sue Pearce, showed Colin and I around the church/ sue explained the excellent work which had been done. You could tell the old church from the new.

We bought a booklet on a short history of St. Peter's. Here is an extract from the booklet. The church was in a school in the mid 1860's. As more funds came available the new St. Peter's began to take shape. The nave was built in 1871 so people could start to worship in the church; it took another five years to collect sufficient funds to complete the church. The church was dedicated on 3rd October 1876.

There is a lot to say about the church. The glass doors which replaced the padlocked iron grills and heavy wooden doors made the church look more welcoming.

Each day St. Peter's prepares breakfast for the homeless and give food parcels in the evening to all who come for them. The church is open all day.

St. Peter's is well worth a visit if you should ever be in Harrogate.

Brenda



## **'HE GAVE US EYES TO SEE THEM': POUSSIN'S 'THE FUNERAL OF PHOCION.'**

by Michael Burgess

In the 17th century the name Arcadia evoked an earthly paradise that was celebrated in art and literature as an idyllic place of peace and harmony where humanity and nature were at one. To live in such beautiful surroundings was to find heaven on earth. We often have that feeling when we are out in the countryside amid the hills and woods, the valleys and lakes. The sun shines benevolently down on the scene, and we feel nothing can destroy that happiness and sense of unity we have with creation around us.

That is the mood shown to us when we first look at this month's painting, 'The Funeral of Phocion.' It is by the Baroque artist, Nicholas Poussin, who was born in France but spent most of his working life in Rome, where he died in 1665. In the distance are friendly hills, and then closer at hand we see the trees and bushes, a winding river, the shepherd and his sheep, a couple walking and talking, and the farmer and his cart.

There are also signs of civilization – it is the city of Athens with its temple and buildings, a place where harmony and reason rule. Poussin presents us with a calm, ordered landscape. But in the foreground we see something that jolts us out of this reverie. Two slaves carry off a body for burial. It is Phocion, an Athenian general. He was known as ‘Phocion the good,’ admired for his honesty and integrity and for his simple way of life. In the 4th century BC Phocion argued for peace when the city around clamoured for war with Macedon. His enemies won the day and they intrigued to have him condemned. As a traitor, Phocion was denied a burial in Athens, and so his body is being taken outside the city.

The world of civilization and the world of nature seem oblivious to this tragedy of a moral life cut down by others. In this month of Eastertide we can think of a similar scene of nature and civilization. The garden of Joseph of Arimathea where a body is brought for burial – someone, who like Phocion, stood out for goodness and peace, but who fell victim to the forces of hatred and jealousy within the city walls of Jerusalem.

Poussin painted a second canvas where the ashes of Phocion are returned to his grieving widow – a sad end to a good life with no hint of hope for a better future. In this season we rejoice in a different end to the story of Jesus. On Good Friday His body is laid to rest in a tomb. Two days later the Lord of Easter walks again in that garden to tell a grieving Mary Magdalene that there is hope for her future. There is the promise of transformation – a new creation and a new world where eternal life is triumphant. In such a world, the human heart within, the dwelling places of people and the countryside around can never be the same again. The Easter Alleluia rings out to embrace them all.

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## THE TREE OF WAR

For the latest news on ‘The Tree of War’ production, visit [www.treeofwar.co.uk](http://www.treeofwar.co.uk).

## REMEMBERING ALBERT EINSTEIN, 60 YEARS ON

The most influential physicist of the 20th century, Albert Einstein died 60 years ago this month, on 18th April 1955.

He was born in Ulm, Germany, in 1879, but took American citizenship in 1940. His 1905 theory of special relativity and his formula  $E=mc^2$  radically changed scientists' views on space, time and matter.

He considered himself a "reluctant Zionist", and although he did support the state of Israel as a refuge for Jews, when the presidency was offered to him in 1952, he turned it down.

He did not believe in a personal God. He described himself as agnostic rather than atheist and believed in an ordered reality, revealed in one of his most famous quotes, "God does not play dice with the universe." This was also displayed his unease with quantum physics and its random nature, believing that the ultimate "theory of everything" could not be attained by studying it.

He was instrumental in persuading Churchill to bring Jewish scientists out of Germany and into British universities in the mid-1930s. He was also a pacifist, and regretted his role in persuading America to build an atomic bomb. He felt that the most important question facing humanity was "Is the universe a friendly place?"

## CHILDREN'S SOCIETY COFFEE MORNING

Thank you to everyone who helped and came to the Children's Society Coffee Morning in January. I was able to send £227.00 to the Children's Society.

Thank you to Jill, Fred, and Colin for opening the boxes. From the content of the boxes I was able to send an additional £256.05 to the Children's Society.

Without everyone's help and support I would not have been able to have this Coffee Morning.

Thank you, Brenda Maclese.

## **7TH APRIL, WORLD HEALTH DAY**

World Health Day, on 7th April, celebrates the founding of the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1948. The theme this year is food safety.

Unsafe food kills an estimated two million people annually – including many children. No wonder: food that contains harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemical substances is responsible for more than 200 diseases, ranging from diarrhoea to cancers.

New threats to food safety are constantly emerging. They emerge because of changes in food production, distribution and consumption; changes to the environment; new and emerging pathogens; and antimicrobial resistance. As our food supply becomes increasingly globalised, the need to strengthen food safety systems in and between all countries is becoming more and more evident. That is why the WHO is promoting efforts to improve food safety, from farm to plate (and everywhere in between) on World Health Day, 7th April.

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### **ORGANISATIONS**

#### **THE MAKER'S CLUB (SUNDAY SCHOOL)**

Mrs. Margaret Witty (0161 432 2933)

For all children aged 3 years upwards in the Vestry at 10.15 a.m.

#### **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

Chairman: Mrs Ann Holmes (0161 434 2245)

Second and Fourth Wednesdays at 2.30 p.m.

#### **CONFIRMATION CLASSES**

For young people and adults by arrangement with the Minister.

#### **RAINBOWS**

For girls aged 5 to 7 years.

Wednesday evening, 6 pm to 7 pm, in the church hall.

# THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST NICHOLAS BURNAGE

## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

8.30 a.m Eucharist (BCP)

10.30 a.m. Family Service and  
Eucharist

## **MINISTER**

Rev'd Rachel Mann  
(0161 432 7009)

## **ORGANISTS**

Vacancy

## **CHURCHWARDENS**

Mrs. Alison Mills  
(01625 540376)

(07932 071977)

Ms Jane Cawley  
(07745392374)

## **ASSISTANT WARDENS**

Mr. Fred Murphy

Mrs. Jill Lomas

Mrs Grace Manley

Mrs Julie Crossley

Mrs Louise Hollingsworth

## **HON. TREASURER.**

Mrs. Elaine Jess

## **MINUTES SECRETARY**

Mrs. Ann Ackerman

## **ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER**

Mrs Lyn Rimmer

## **DEANERY SYNOD**

Mrs. Grace Manley

Mrs Christine Price

## **ELECTED ON PC**

(in addition to the above officers)

Mrs. Alison Cullen

Mrs. Margaret Witty

Mr. Tony Witty.

Mr David Crossley (ex-officio)

## **MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTION**

Mrs. Brenda Maclese

## **MISSIONARY SECRETARY**

Mrs. Margaret Vessey