

## Dates for your diary

<b>March 7</b>	<b>Lent 3</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Holy Communion
5.30 pm	Evensong
7.00 pm	Reflective Service
<b>March 14</b>	<b>Mothering Sunday</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Family Service
5.30 pm	BCP Holy Communion
7.00 pm	Reflective Service
<b>March 21</b>	<b>Passion Sunday</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Holy Communion
5.30 pm	Special Service for Passion Sunday with readings and music

*There is no 7pm service today*

<b>March 28</b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Family Communion Service and blessing of Palm Crosses
<i>(there will be no 5.30pm service this evening)</i>	
7.00 pm	<b>Special service to mark the end of the Lent course and the beginning of Holy Week</b>

<b>April 1</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>
8.00 pm	Holy Communion followed by vigil in Lady Chapel until midnight

<b>April 2</b>	<b>Good Friday</b>
10.00 am - noon	Family Workshop
11.15 am	Ecumenical Service at the Quadrant
2.00 pm	The Good Friday Liturgy
8.00 pm	Compline

<b>April 3</b>	<b>Easter Eve</b>
8.00 pm	The Easter Vigil and Lighting of the Easter Fire

<b>April 4</b>	<b>Easter Day</b>
7.00 am	Ecumenical Service on Redhill Common
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Holy Communion
5.30 pm	BCP Holy Communion
<i>(there will be no 7.00pm service this evening)</i>	

**First Tuesday at St John's:** the sermon preached at 8am and 10.30am on 4 April will be discussed in the Elm Shades pub on Tuesday 6 April at 8pm. All are welcome. The sermon in question is posted on the parish website [www.stjohnsredhill.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsredhill.org.uk) beforehand.

### From the registers

**Baptisms**  
Amy Marcoolyn (7 February)  
Caitlin Clarke (28 February)

### ● Copy dates

The next magazine will be published on 4 April. Material can be left in the magazine pigeonhole in church, or emailed to [judith.calver@btinternet.com](mailto:judith.calver@btinternet.com) by 28 March.

## A deepening of discipleship

The season of Lent like spring is a time of new opportunities. In the Christian life it is a period when we should give time to reflection, study and prayer to deepen our spiritual lives in preparation for the joy of Palm Sunday the pain of Holy week and Good Friday so that we can truly celebrate the joys of Easter.



It is in sharing the discipline of Lent with our fellow Christians that we are prepared for the days between Palm Sunday and Easter Day.

In this, the last letter that I write as your Diocesan Bishop, I pray that we will all make full use of the Lenten season to share with our Lord in his trials and temptations and in so doing deepen our sense of discipleship.

The past eleven years have been a time that I have been able to share with you in the journey of faith that we share through our call to be faithful Christians. As I move into a new life in another part of the country I will take with me many memories of shared worship and other times together. They will sustain me in the deepening of my own spiritual life and practice.

The message that I leave with you is that we are called to love and support one another in our ministries to parish, community and the wider world. It is the message that Jesus gave to us and it remains the key task of all Christians. For me, in moving into retirement I realise that it is important to recognise that this will be a new way of living that will be different to being active within the diocese. My life and ministry will continue with new and possibly unexpected opportunities.

The hope and love that underpins the Christian message is for ever leading us on to new life and renewal. You will be very much in my prayers as I watch and take pleasure in the development of the diocese in the years to come.

† Tom

## Comfort my people

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I listened to a song called 'God of all Comfort', based on 2 Corinthians 1:3 where the Father is given this title. The Greek word for Comfort here is a variation of Paraclete.

As I've reflected on this, the words of the Prayer Book Communion Service came flooding back from my childhood: "Here what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith to all who truly turn to him". There follows a quotation from Jesus as well as one from Paul and two from John. The final quotation is from 1 John 2:1 - If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. The Greek word translated Advocate here is again Paraclete.

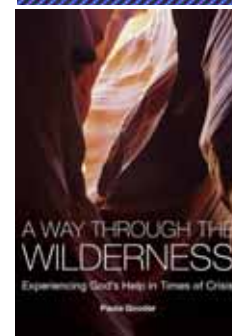
We often think primarily of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter – the one one called alongside to help, yet the Comfort of God is an activity of all three persons of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Peter Kefford

# St John the Evangelist, Redhill

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March 2010



## Comfort my people

This year's Lent course is under way. In the first session participants were asked to consider the meaning of the word 'comfort'. Here some of them share their thoughts

**What is comfort?** This is the first question asked by the author of the Lent course 'A Way through the Wilderness' which we are studying this year. The group agreed that we had associated the word with being soothed or feeling comfortable and if one was fortunate to be in that position then why change it. However, it seems from Isaiah Chapter 40 that God has other ideas and that his promise of comfort involves change on our part. As we considered the causes of stress and distress among people in our society today, it was suggested that we expect too much of ourselves and each other, particularly in the work place. The pressure we feel of keeping a job in order to pay ever increasing bills makes us afraid to express our concerns and leads to our becoming stuck in an uncomfortable rut. Therefore, in order to feel comfort one does need to change.

In her 'Revelations of Divine Love' Julian of Norwich writes the following 'And these words "You shall not be overcome" were said [by the Lord] very loudly and clearly for security and comfort against all the tribulations that may come.'

Frances Wood

Following the first session of the Lent course, I was left struck by what a very big word 'Comfort' is. Whilst feeling 'comfortable' seems to imply a physical comfort, to be comforted appears to apply to one's state of mind.

When I am comforted, I am reassured that how I am feeling is normal. Telling me that I don't need to feel that way is not comforting. How I feel needs to be understood and accepted.

I have discovered that when my distress is acknowledged and accepted, when someone understands how I feel and stands with me in my misery, then I am strengthened, reassured and feel I can go on. I no longer feel alone.

At the 7 o'clock service on the first Sunday of Lent it was surprising the

number of people who had felt truly comforted by the words of St Julian of Norwich:

All will be well

All will be well

All manner of things will be well

Her words accept and reassure. They give strength and hope for the future. I have learnt that to comfort someone else does not necessarily involve solving any problems. My presence and care are (hopefully) enough.

So for me 'comfort' embraces reassurance, acceptance and renewed strength. It is a word which has stayed with me since that first session and I believe that as members of one Christian family, we are all called to comfort one another, simply by showing that we care about each other.

Ginette Nye

**Comfort is an** assurance that come what may there is somewhere within us a God-given ability to cope. Easily recognised when all seems quiet and peaceful, it can get neglected and forgotten when life with us and around us is going haywire. To hang on to the assurance that comfort is there helps us to go on again, anxiety quieted.

Pam Dallman

**Comfort to me** means 'to feel safe in the knowledge that someone cares and is looking out for you, whether you realise it, or not. It's a kind of warmth that you feel, which whilst you can't necessarily touch, is very much there, beside you, when you need it most...'

Mark Osborn

**Comfort, or as** translated in the Jerusalem Bible, console, can mean so many things to every one of us. The greatest sense of comfort to me is being at peace with oneself knowing that all relationships are on an even keel – that there are no feelings of guilt. Physically comfort has a multiplicity of meaning and one can think of any number of mundane events which bring comfort.

John Dallman

**In our group** we thought about the Holy Spirit as the Comforter in John 14:16 and explored the other various translations of the Greek word 'Paraclete': Helper, Counsellor, Advocate, Friend. We

... Continued on back page

# Three wise men

## Margaret Bradshaw introduces some of the special people she and Phil met on a recent visit to the Holy Land

When Phil and I went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in February, amidst the visits to many holy sites we met some remarkable people. Part of our purpose was to meet Christian people there and to encourage them by our presence. A previous trip almost three years before made us painfully aware of the issues that challenge and oppress the people living there and we wanted to find out more. This trip, which included the Bishop of Croydon, Nick Baines, as one of the leaders promised an opportunity to build on our earlier experience.

For the first five days we stayed in a guesthouse in the heart of the old city of Jerusalem. This gave us easy access to many places, and so on day one we spent the day in Bethlehem, revisiting the Church of the Nativity and seeing again the special place commemorated as the birthplace of Jesus, then meeting up with our first 'wise man' called Zoughbi Zoughbi.

Mr Zoughbi heads up a centre for conflict resolution, called Wi'am, which is situated right next to the wall surrounding the town. He said they did that deliberately to be a sign of hope to the people of Bethlehem. They offer support to children who have been traumatised by events they have witnessed and give them recreational and educational opportunities. Women



**Above: ancient steps used by Jesus as a route into Jerusalem; below: the wall outside the Wi'am Center**

are offered training in various skills to empower them to be more equal members of society and to participate in work projects to provide income. They support local people by mediation, helping to resolve conflicts and seeking to build bridges between opposing parties. Building bridges is their major ministry in a place restricted by high walls and limited possibilities for travel. Funding is by donations.

The spirit of the man and those working with him is unquenchable. Anyone, Christian or Muslim, is

welcomed at the centre and embraced as a brother or sister in Christ. Mr Zoughbi said that praying for the wall to come down is not where it's at: building bridges by prayer and action is their task. We could see how they were achieving that by gentle determination and humility and holding others in the highest respect.

The sun shone that day, but the air was cold and became colder as the week wore on. The following day we ran through pelting rain to visit Princess Basma Center for Disabled Children on the Mount of Olives where an Arab lady, now in her 80s, has built up an outstanding work to provide respite care and training for parents of children with physical and learning disabilities. Disabled children in Palestine are treated as outcasts; there is no statutory provision for them. Mothers go to the centre with their child, learning how to do the exercises and encouraging the child with help of physio- and occupational therapists. The Israeli government is now part funding the centre, which is very encouraging as there is recognition that disability in Arab children needs to be addressed.

We visited the Basilica of Gethsemane, a building with dark blue windows creating the sense of Christ's agony in the Garden (which is beside it); Ecce Homo, an archeological discovery deep below a convent where

there is evidence of a place of flogging; the church of Dominus Flevit where Jesus wept over Jerusalem; Bethsaida Pool where Jesus healed the lame man and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Next day, we visited the church of St Peter in Gallicantu (cock crowing) where there is a prison, possibly where Peter and John may have been held. Alongside is an old road going down into the Kidron Valley, a route into Jerusalem which Jesus would almost certainly have used. Later we went to the Holocaust Museum (Yad Vashem) which is a huge exhibition, well set out with many human stories from the 1930s and 40s of Jewish oppression and memorial areas with trees planted to remember individual people.

Our second wise man was in a village north east of Jerusalem called Taybeh (pronounced 'tie-bay') or Ephraim. Because of the restrictions on travel and the impossibility of finding work many young people are leaving, so Father Raed, a Catholic priest, and two other ministers are providing work in the village. They have a large olive grove producing olive oil for which they have established a market in France, a brewery for the production of Taybeh Beer and a factory making dove peace lamps which they hope will be in every parish in the world to be lit and pray for peace in the Holy Land. We are hoping to have one in St John's. Other items such as skin care products and olive wood carvings are all on sale in their little shop.

Father Raed is a dynamic man who delighted in taking us across the street to an old building which would have been very similar to the style of house in the time of Jesus. A lady had lived there until the late 1990s and all six of her children were born there. The floors were uneven and dusty and the two levels on which it was built clearly demonstrated the area below where the animals were kept and the one above where the family ate, cooked and slept. He then said he would tell us 38 parables in ten minutes! At breakneck pace he proceeded to demonstrate how Jesus used the things around him to tell parables: the man who was annoyed by the night caller and didn't want to open the door, the woman who lost her coin, two women grinding at the mill...and so on. We were breathless just listening!

*The second part of Margaret's article, in which we meet the third wise man, will be in next month's magazine*

## Using your talents

Lizzie and Sarah Walters attended the Christians Aware Conference in January which was about 'Kingdom Economics'. The conference addressed the challenge to all people of faith to enable the sharing of the spiritual and material riches of the world and to enable us to bring the Kingdom of God a little nearer.

The key note speaker was the recent Bishop of Chelmsford, John Gladwin, who spoke of freedom for the materially rich. He challenged the members of the conference to look at their situation in the developed world and help the poor, not only in the developing world and in the material sense, but also those spiritually poor. So often, he said, people think it is enough just to share resources, but it is also important not to neglect those who are spiritually poor. It is not just a question of talking about Christ and sharing the Good News with all people, but getting alongside people and really getting to know their situation and befriending them so that the Holy Spirit acting through the people can be seen by them.

In the closing worship session a drama sketch of the parable of the talents was acted out. The members

of Christians Aware were then challenged and given a five talent note to represent £5 (see below) and commissioned to use their talents to generate money for Christians Aware to help with fundraising for the Charity. Sarah decided to use her cooking talents and make some marmalade as it was then the season for Seville oranges. She bought oranges, lemons and sugar with £5 and made several pots of marmalade. She is now intending to sell the pots of marmalade for £1.50 per jar and send



the money to Christians Aware. If you would like a jar, please speak to her at church or telephone 01737 217253. It is hoped that Christians Aware will raise money in this way and that at next conference in 2011 the ideas and ways that people used their talents will be shared and provide food for thought of the wonderful way in which God uses his people. Maybe St John's could use the idea of using talents to help a charity?

## 'Songs of Praise' at Southwark



**'Songs of Praise' on 7 February came from Southwark Cathedral. Members of the choir had taken part in the recording last year and a number of them, including those seen here, were spotted on screen!**

