



**Kempston East  
Methodist  
Church  
Newsletter  
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# **Palm Sunday**



# Easter Thoughts in a Churchyard



It's a yearly paradox. You've brought some flowers to the churchyard (or the cemetery) to lay on the grave of a loved one. All around you are graves and headstones, reminders of the inevitable end of life's earthly journey. But it's Easter Day, and from within the church you can hear the singing: 'Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!' Perhaps then you notice a few other things. You're standing among the fresh daffodils and the grass that's suddenly green and growing again. For a moment you pause and reflect on the reverse of an old saying. In the midst of death - we are in life!

That essentially is what Easter is about - an annual reminder that death is not the end of the story. Cookham, in Berkshire, was once the home of the great 20<sup>th</sup> century painter, Stanley Spencer. Perhaps his most famous painting is 'Resurrection in Cookham Churchyard', which depicts local residents - many of them recognisable village characters - rising up out of their graves to be greeted by the risen Jesus, standing in the church porch. It's a glorious, vivid, shocking reminder of a great assertion. The graveyard is not a terminus, but a junction.

The resurrection of Jesus (and hence our resurrections, too) is the defining claim of Christianity. Christians don't follow the teaching of a prophet who died many centuries ago, or of a holy man whose life is an example to follow, excellent as that may be. They put their trust in a Saviour whom they believe is alive and with them now, and they also believe that through Him they too will move through the junction of death to the journey that lies beyond - a journey he talked about to His followers.

The annual paradox lies in the inescapable fact of death, indelibly represented by those graves and headstones, and in the equally inescapable fact that - in apparent defiance of all logic - human beings down the ages have clung to the belief that death is not the end.

Every culture has its story of the life beyond - the Elysian fields, Valhalla, Nirvana, Abraham's bosom. But only with the coming of Jesus, and the witnessed events of that first Easter morning, has our instinctive belief been given wings. The paradox is the heart of everything. Death is a fact, but life is greater than death. 'Because I live', said Jesus, 'you will also live'.

# Could older people hold the key to church growth?

New research is highlighting the wide range of activities that churches are offering to older people – and the growing opportunities to present the Christian gospel.

The survey, carried out in the UK and Ireland by Christian charity Faith in Later Life asked churches what they were doing to minister to seniors in their congregation and beyond. The results reflect a broad spectrum of events and activities.

These include lunch clubs, exercise sessions, singing classes, tea and coffee times, outings and a broad range of social activities open to the community. Some churches offered a ‘holiday at home’ with special events organised, and one provided a monthly chiropodist’s visit.

Many churches are visiting care homes and holding services in their lounges. One respondent recalled “It was so uplifting to see the joy on their faces. Many with severe dementia were recalling words long forgotten and joining in.”

Alexandra Drew, chief executive officer of Faith in Later Life, explained, “There is something very powerful about ministering to those who are very old, and the experience of journeying with someone to the very end of life.”

Community work goes hand in hand with reaching out with the gospel. The research showed that 83 per cent of those delivering social activities for older people are also running worship services, Bible study groups and groups to explore faith. A quarter of those who responded had seen people come to faith in the last year, and half had seen people grow in their interest in faith.

Faith in Later Life is a charity “dedicated to inspiring and equipping Christians to reach, serve and empower older people everywhere, through the local church.”

The research highlights the important role of ministry to older people at a time when many churches are focussing on ‘growing younger’ – and perhaps overlooking increasing numbers of older people in our communities. Many respondents felt that ministry with seniors was marginalised or neglected within their church.

Alexandra Drew said, “The impact on the wider church of mission to older people is significant. More than half of those responding said their work is leading to greater recognition of older people, more age-inclusivity and greater awareness of older people’s spiritual needs.”



# Easter at Kempston East

## **‘Palm Saturday’ Coffee Morning**

There will be a Coffee morning this Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April from 10am until 12 noon. We will be serving tea, coffee and hot cross buns and there will be the usual stalls including a cake stall and Chris J would be grateful for contributions for this. The Coffee morning will be to raise money for our Church charity which this year is Grange School. We shall not be charging for refreshments but are asking instead for donations. Please come and support us and enjoy a chat with friends.

Ann and Michael S

## **Maundy Thursday Communion**

There will be a Communion service led by Rev Michael Giles on Maundy Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm. Please come to this contemplative service to remember the Last Supper that Jesus had with his disciples.

## **Good Friday Reflection**

We continue to build up to our celebrations on Easter Sunday with a Good Friday service of songs, readings, meditations and reflections led by Geoff Talbot on Good Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm.

## **Preparations for Easter Sunday**

The church is to be decorated with flowers for Easter Sunday and if you would like to make a donation towards the cost of these there are boxes at the front and rear of the church. Once again you are asked to bring fresh eggs to church on Easter Sunday morning. A table will be set up at the front of the church on which you can place your gift. The eggs will then be taken to the Bedford Food Bank.

## **Easter Breakfast**

Following the 8.00am communion service on Easter Sunday we will be providing breakfast. If you would like to come please put your name on the list in the church or speak to Barbara Tipping. 01234 852101



**Good Friday**  
Celebrating the death of Jesus  
and the life it brings.

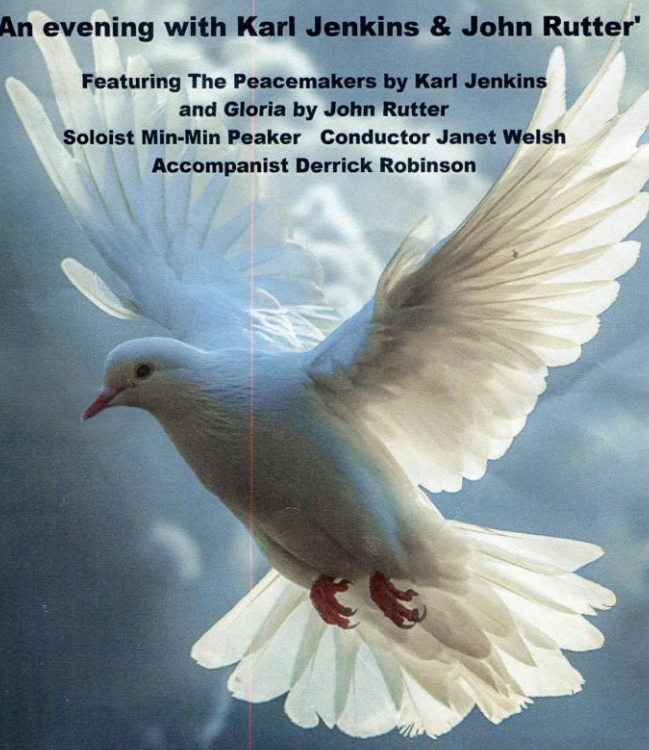
**18th April 2025 / 12pm**  
**Harpur Square**



**Kempston Musical Society**  
**Choir Concert**

**'An evening with Karl Jenkins & John Rutter'**

Featuring **The Peacemakers** by Karl Jenkins  
and **Gloria** by John Rutter  
Soloist **Min-Min Peaker** Conductor **Janet Welsh**  
Accompanist **Derrick Robinson**



**Priory Methodist Church - Saturday May 10th 7:30pm**  
Tickets on the door £10 includes refreshments  
In support of the Motor Neurone Disease Association



**Easter Holiday Activities**

At Bunyan Meeting in Mill Street, Bedford MK40 3EU  
**Tuesday 8th & Tuesday 15th April 2025**  
**11:00am-1:00pm**  
For Primary age children (accompanied by an adult)

Free Lunch for every child completing all activities

Museum Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Reflective Trail

Easter Crafts





Register in the church foyer coffee shop between 11:00am and 1:00pm at a time convenient to you.

In conjunction with 

**01234 213722**  
**bunyanmeeting@gmail.com**  
**www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk**

**A SPRING SERENADE**  
WITH BEDFORD CONCERT BRASS AND PECULI8



**SATURDAY 26TH APRIL 2025**  
**7:30PM**  
**PRIORY METHODIST CHURCH, BEDFORD**



**IN AID OF WILLEN HOSPICE**  
**TICKETS £10 INCLUDING REFRESHMENTS**

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/peculi8singers/t-norzned>





# Our Church Family



Please remember in your prayers the following people:

- Norma A in Anjulita Court
- Azim I
- Tina and Colin M - Colin is in hospital
- The family of Matthew (Grandson of Eric) as they come to terms with his death on Wednesday in Great Ormond St. Hospital

## This Week at Kempston East

Tuesday April 15 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Tuesday Bible Study Group continue their Lent Course in the Lounge
	2.00pm	Tibbs Dementia meets in the New School Hall
Wednesday April 16 <sup>th</sup>	11.30am-1.30pm	Open House meets in the Beginners Room
Thursday April 17 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	Maundy Thursday Communion in the Church
Friday April 18 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	Good Friday Reflection in the Church

## Christian Aid Fair

The fair will be held on Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup> in the Church garden. I am setting up a committee to organise the event. If you are interested in joining it please speak to me. Also, if you are interested in helping with a stall or have any contributions towards a stall, again please let me know. Do come along and support this worthwhile event.  
Julie Co

## Thanks

Rosemary H sends her thanks for the lovely flowers from the church and to Cath A for delivering them to her.

# WORSHIP AT EAST

Our morning Service at 10.30am this week will be a Jazz Praise led by musicians Ross and Mel Purves and worship leaders Stuart, Rosemary and Geoff. Our usual live-streaming will be in action this week. The normal audio recording of the service will also be produced.

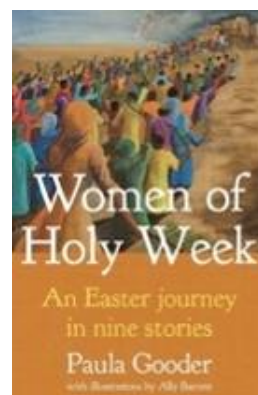
## Future Services at Kempston East

Sunday April 20 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Rev Michael Giles (Easter Communion)
	10.30am	Rev Michael Giles (Easter Celebration)
Sunday April 27 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Perllyn Thomas
Sunday May 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Rev Michael Giles (Holy Communion)

## Book of the Week

### Women of Holy Week – an Easter Journey in Nine Stories by Paula Gooder, CHP, £10.99

In the style of her bestselling Phoebe, Paula Gooder uses her extensive biblical expertise to retell the events of the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension through the eyes of nine female characters she imagines accompanying Jesus during these momentous days.



Accompanied by nine colour illustrations, each story brings to life the tension, drama and shock of the events of Holy Week, banishing any over-familiarity and helping readers enter into the Passion narrative in a deeper, more meaningful way.

Originally given as a series of addresses at Southwark Cathedral during Holy Week 2021, these nine stories are for all who long to encounter Jesus afresh through the Easter Story.

## Grange School Easter Craft Fayre.

Last Friday twelve members from Kempston East visited Grange School (who we, as a Church, are supporting this year). It was the last day of term and also their Easter Craft Fayre.

The children had made various items to buy, games to play; you could even hold one of the rabbits or guinea pigs if you wanted.

In the tea rooms were a variety of sweet things to eat and tea and coffee, after which we had a tour of the grounds to see the animals and the forest areas.

I think it is fair to say we all had a lovely time and credit to the children and staff who made our visit a treat.

# Join us this **EASTER**

Sunday 13th April @ 10:30am

## **Palm Sunday Celebration**

Thursday 17th April @7:30pm

## **Maundy Thursday Communion**

Friday 18th April @7:30pm

## **Good Friday reflection**

Easter Sunday - 20th April @ 10:30am

## **EASTER WORSHIP**

(Communion @ 8am)

Throughout Easter the Garden at Kempston East will be open

**COME AND EXPLORE - PAUSE - REFLECT - & WORSHIP**

**KEMPSTON METHODIST CHURCHES** 

If you have any prayer requests, thanks and, indeed, any other items and news that you would like to go into the weekly newsletter then please email these to Geoff Talbot ([geofftal1@outlook.com](mailto:geofftal1@outlook.com)) as soon as possible and ideally by the previous Wednesday. If you know of someone who would like to receive this emailed newsletter could you please send their email address to [richard.ward4@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.ward4@btinternet.com). Equally, if you would like to be removed from the distribution list, please also let Richard Ward know.