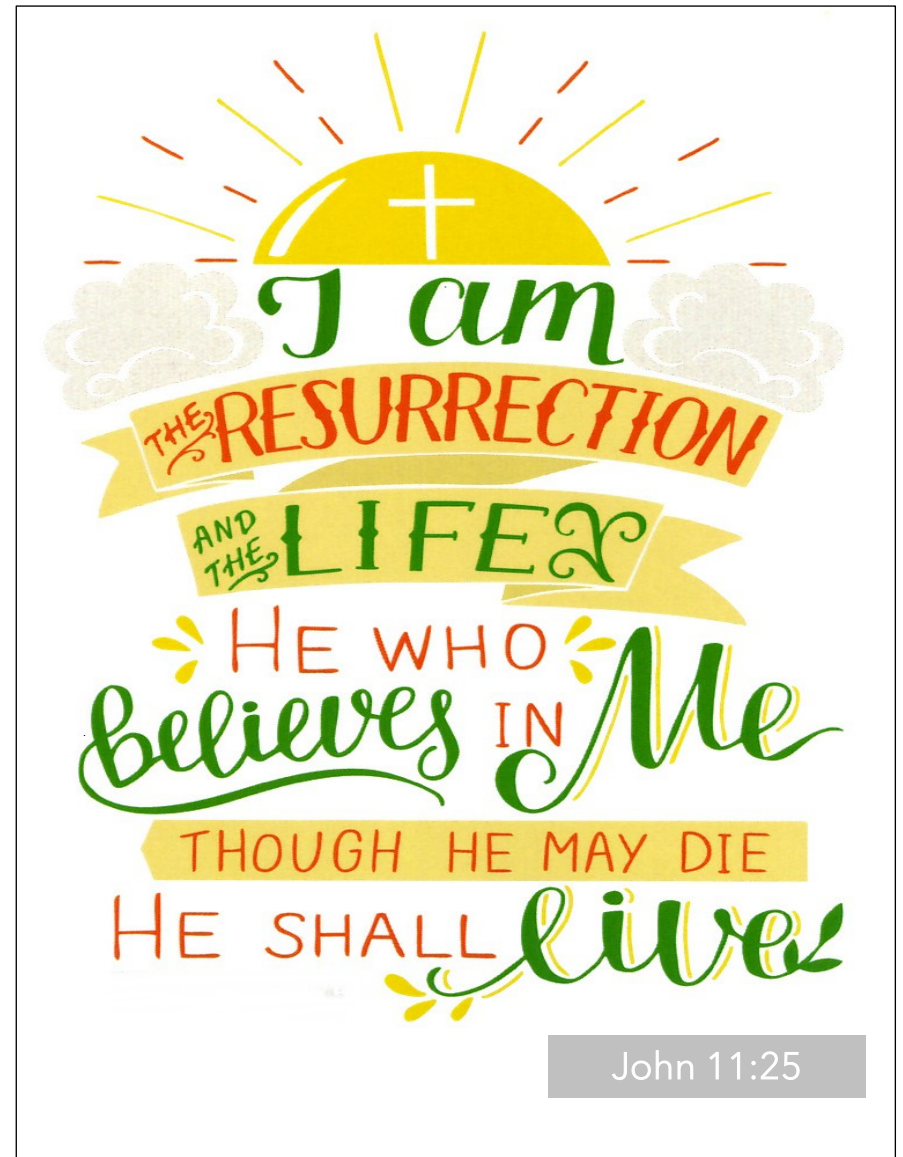


# THE MESSENGER

SPRING/EASTER 2022



THE MAGAZINE OF  
**WHITSTABLE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
MIDDLE WALL

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# Minister's Letter

*Spring/Easter 2022*

Dear Friends,

'Yes, my soul, find rest in God;  
my hope comes from Him.  
Truly He is my Rock and my salvation;  
He is my fortress,  
I shall not be shaken.'  
*Psalm 62 vs 5&6.*

Since early in the new year we've been working through Hebrews on Sundays, drawing great comfort and inspiration from this wonderful book which contains such solid grounds for trusting in Christ's finished work on our behalf and which gives us unrivalled hope for the future. Just recently, as I write in early February, we've been focussing in Hebrews chapter 4 on the rest God promises His people – rest that is ultimately found in Him and in our heavenly home. We are also given incentives and opportunities to enter into and enjoy the Sabbath-rest God offers us now. In the midst of our busy lives and often frantic agendas, I believe Hebrews invites us to pause from our strivings, to unwind and to seek the composure that is discovered in spending quality time with our loving heavenly Father.

We each need to pursue ways of cultivating peace and allowing our souls to find rest in God. Walking, for example, may be our way of reducing stress and nurturing a sense of calm. Personally, I find walks along the seashore assist me in switching off and help prepare my heart to hear God speak. Walking through the Whitstable castle grounds on my day off this week, I was delighted to see lots of snowdrops as well as some crocuses and daffodils in bloom. Their welcome appearance and vivid colours lifted my spirits, relieved my tiredness and assured me that we are beginning to emerge from deep winter. As these beautiful, yet quite humble, flowers burst up from the cold earth they remind us of the Creator's sustaining and regenerating power. He is constantly caring for and replenishing His creation. He is longing to do new things in our lives too.

As you know, I greatly enjoy kayaking and against the backcloth of the glistening sea and gently rolling waves I have often found my heart stirred to seek fresh strength in God. Paddling in the setting of the quiet and tranquil rivers, far away from the bustle of everyday life, also provides wonderful therapy helping me to relax and to turn to God for renewed vision.

Though, above all, it is time spent delving into the Bible that inspires my trust, my confidence and my rest in God. Equally, I know many of you derive the peace, the comfort and the encouragement you need to keep going from soaking your mind on a daily basis in God's Word and from taking the opportunity to study the Bible with others.

As early spring eventually gives way to another Easter, we take great strength from the New Testament assurance that Christ conquered everything that stands against us and everything that would threaten our peace. Through His sacrificial death He reconciles us to God and through His rising from the grave He guarantees our eternal security in God's presence.

We rest in these unshakeable realities!

Yours in Christ's service,

Paul



## Cover Picture

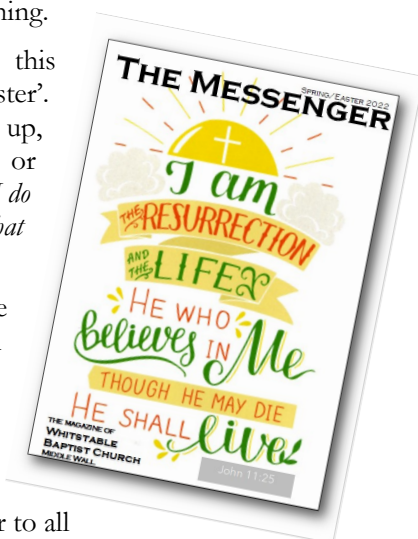
I think the Internet can be a wonderful place although I know there are some who would disagree with me and would cite all sorts of unpleasant things that one might come across whilst innocently searching.

When I searched for a suitable image for this edition's cover picture, I entered 'Easter poster'. Of the 200 or so images that initially came up, 90% of them featured rabbits, chicks, or chocolate – sometimes all three together! *(I do like rabbits, chicks, and chocolate, but that was not what I was looking for!)*

However, as with any form of searching, one has to persevere. With some such perseverance, I was able to find a number of images with a more suitable Christian message and I hope that you like the one I have used.

Happy Easter to all

our readers.



## Thank You

I would like to express my delight in receiving so many cards and greetings from you all on the occasion of my 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.



I never thought I would reach this age – especially with all its aches and pains!

My sincere thanks and love to you all.

June Bennett

## The BMS Birthday Scheme

I am pleased to report that the BMS Birthday Scheme is once again up and running within our Fellowship.

Managed for many years by our dear friend June Gluning, who sadly died a few months ago, it has now been very kindly taken on by Pam Tyler.

In case you are not aware of the Birthday Scheme, let me explain – it is a simple way for each of us to support the Baptist Missionary Society, as follows:

- ◆ let Pam know your birthday (*just day and month – the year is not required!*)
- ◆ on your special day each year you will receive a birthday card from BMS, via Pam, containing an envelope.
- ◆ place your contribution to BMS in the envelope and return it to Pam.
- ◆ enjoy your day!

**Birthdays occurring during this issue are –**

Margaret Frame	16 <sup>th</sup> March
Fred Goodger	24 <sup>th</sup> March
Jean Rothery	23 <sup>rd</sup> April
Christine Pacey	5 <sup>th</sup> May
Alison Oliver	30 <sup>th</sup> May



**Happy Birthday to each of you and thank you for your support.**

Contact Pam on 01227 277624 or by email on [birthdays@middlewall.co.uk](mailto:birthdays@middlewall.co.uk)

## Churches Prepare For Platinum Jubilee

*It is not every Queen who reigns for 70 years! But that is just what Queen Elizabeth II has achieved this year, and the UK churches will be joining in the celebrations. The following article provides a wide range of background information, and also offers ideas of how your church may wish to be involved. You may wish to discuss this with your minister, to decide which aspects of this story may be most relevant to your own church's plans.*

The UK and Commonwealth will celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee over the four-day Bank Holiday from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June and churches, Christian charities and youth organisations are working together to join in. A new website has been created (*see below*) to provide ideas and resources for communities to celebrate the Queen's 70 years of faith and service.

HOPE Together is working with a wide range of partners to help churches around the Commonwealth to mark this special occasion and, in particular, to celebrate the Queen's 70 years of faith and service. As with the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations, HOPE Together and partners will provide a range of ideas and resources for communities, schools, churches and youth organisations.

Dr Rachel Jordan-Wolf, HOPE's executive director, says, "Churches are in an ideal place to bring communities together for these national celebrations."

*HOPE's Platinum Jubilee Highlights will include:*

*Our Faithful Queen* – a gift book using rarely-seen prayers the Queen prayed as she prepared for the Coronation, published by HOPE Together and Biblica in January 2022, to buy and give away.

*A Happylands animation and book 'The Girl Who Grew Up To Be Queen'* for under-5s is to be published by HOPE Together in partnership with The Entertainer and Hope for Every Home.

*A new anthem 'Rise Up and Serve'* has been commissioned by HOPE Together and written by contemporary hymn writers Graham Kendrick, Mal Pope and Rend Collective for choirs to sing as part of the celebrations.

*70 Acts of Service* – an invitation to communities to celebrate by serving others with 70 community service ideas drawing on Stewardship's 40 Acts.

*On Her Majesty's Service* for 11-14s – youth organisations, schools and uniformed organisations are involved (Pais, CofE, Youth For Christ, YouthScape, The Message, Prayer Spaces In Schools. Girls Brigade and Boys Brigade). Resources include ideas for action and videos to use.



Also – the following websites may be of use to you!

[www.theplatinumjubilee.com](http://www.theplatinumjubilee.com) – a dedicated website with all the ideas and resources you'll need to bring your community together to celebrate.

Banners, posters and other Platinum Jubilee branded resources will be available from CPO – [www.cpo.org.uk/queen-platinum-jubilee](http://www.cpo.org.uk/queen-platinum-jubilee).

The Platinum Jubilee – Celebration of Faith and Service logos can be downloaded from [www.theplatinumjubilee.com](http://www.theplatinumjubilee.com).

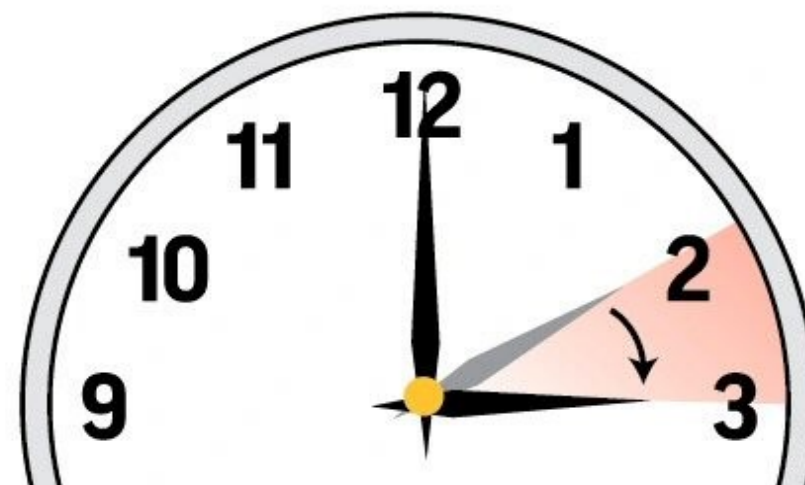
As the four-day Bank Holiday ends at Pentecost our partners 'Thy Kingdom Come' are also providing a 'Cheeky Pandas' film, song and book for primary school children – with resource packs for home/church/school and community events.

*from the Parish Pump*



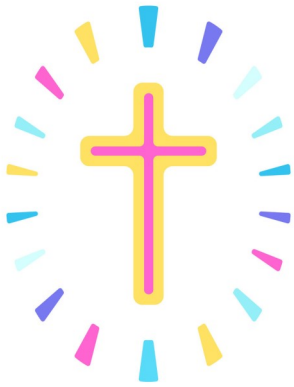
## Spring Ahead

British Summer Time, otherwise known as Daylight Saving Time, starts on **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March** at 2am, although it's probably best to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday night!





## Two Poems for Easter



### Easter Morn

Anon

May the glad dawn  
Of Easter morn  
Bring joy to thee.  
  
May the calm eve  
Of Easter leave  
A peace divine with thee.  
  
May Easter night  
On thine heart write,  
O Christ, I live for thee!

### On Easter Day

June Masters Bacher

On Easter Day the lilies bloom,  
Triumphant, risen from their tomb;  
Their bulbs have undergone rebirth,  
Born from the silence of the earth  
Symbolically, to tell all men  
That Christ, the Saviour, lives again.

The angels, pure and white as they  
Have come and rolled the stone away.  
And with the lifting of the stone,  
The shadow of the cross is gone!

*both poems submitted by Mrs Indecisive!  
(aka Alison Oliver)*



## Is social media ‘killing the apostrophe’? Defo!

After conducting the biggest ever study of written and spoken English, researchers have said, “Sloppy grammar on social media is killing the apostrophe”.

A team from Lancaster University built a database of 100 million words to analyse trends from the early Nineties to the present. They found that people ignore apostrophes, particularly when writing on Twitter in order to keep to the 280-character limit.

Dr Vaclav Brezina, who led the study, said the most striking change is how informal vocabulary and grammar has become.

He said: “We can see the emergence of dropping apostrophes on social media, but the question is how much more time will it take for this to extend elsewhere?” The decline of the apostrophe is especially noticeable after a plural noun – such as birds’ beaks – falling from 308.47 uses per million words 30 years ago to 282.88 uses per million words today.

Social-media users are also increasingly omitting the apostrophe where it replaces a letter, such as ‘couldn’t’ and ‘shouldn’t’. As well as looser punctuation, social media is responsible for what the researchers call ‘progressive spelling’, such as ‘gonna’ for ‘going to’, and abbreviations like ‘defo’ for ‘definitely’, ‘ciao’ for ‘goodbye’ and ‘tomoz’ for ‘tomorrow’.

“You have a selection of words that are strikingly different when we compare the old and new datasets,” said Dr Brezina. “These come from social media in particular, where the medium itself forces the language.”

*from Computer Active Magazine*



## Just a Thought!

The fact that there is a ‘Highway to Hell’ but only a ‘Stairway to Heaven’ says a lot about expected traffic numbers!

*Submitted by Tricia Price*

## Lord, I Believe in You and You Believe in Me

Greetings with love and virtual hugs for my many Christian friends at Whitstable Baptist Church. You are all frequently in my thoughts and prayers and I certainly miss the days when I worshipped with you at your Sunday evening services. Covid 19 has sadly meant our paths have rarely crossed, either at any church gathering in Whitstable or any of the local shops or supermarkets.

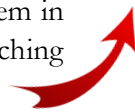
I am very grateful to Tony for sending me a copy of 'The Messenger' each time it is published and thought it was time I showed my appreciation for that by contributing to it as I am doing right here.

For over 30 years the 'Every Day with Jesus' Bible Notes have provided a portion of my daily spiritual food. For most of those years the now late Selwyn Hughes was the compiler of those Notes. That ministry is now in the hands of Micha Jazz. Each day, besides the main Bible passage and the commentary linked to it, there are 'Scriptures to Consider', an 'Action to Take' and 'A Prayer to Make'.

Recently, that prayer for the day began, "LORD, YOU BELIEVE IN ME". WOW!! What a start to a prayer, what a thought but, most importantly, what a truth – one probably most of us have never seriously considered.

In our church services we hear and speak about our believing in God and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We affirm that we love Him, have faith in Him and trust Him – and many other things. For example, thinking and speaking about who He is, what He has done for us, continues to do for us and promised us. That's all mind-blowing enough but then to come to the realisation that the same God believes in me... well, I am still coming to terms with that fact.

It means God not only loves me, He trusts me and has faith in me – yes, and in you. Perhaps the clearest example of this is to be found in 'The Great Commission' that comes right at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel, when Jesus says "...go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you".



Elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus says things like "Seek first God's Kingdom", "Love your neighbour as yourself", "Feed my sheep", "Let your light shine before men", "Take up your cross and follow me" and many, many more things. Then in the Acts of the Apostles we read of people like Peter, Paul, Stephen, Philip and others doing just those things in the Name of Jesus because of His belief in them to continue the work He started, and even giving them help and encouragement by filling them with the Holy Spirit because He knew these things couldn't be done in their own physical and spiritual strength.

"Build Forward with Confidence". Those words came up on my computer screen recently. They were, I discovered, meant for people in the business world but equally they are words of encouragement to us as the Lord's people. Our Confidence is in Him but, as the words "LORD YOU BELIEVE IN ME" indicate, He has confidence in us, trusts us, has faith in us to be "The Church" doing the work He has called us to do. He has given us the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts to grow His Church right here in Whitstable. He has given us the 'Gifts of the Spirit' to enable, in partnership with Him, to produce the Fruit of the Spirit.

St. Paul, who played such a vital part in the growth of the early church, wrote in his letter to the Philippians, "I can do everything through Him (Jesus) who gives me strength." The same is true for each one of us who is 'Born Again' and empowered by the Holy Spirit, because "LORD YOU BELIEVE IN ME."

HALLELUJAH!!

Rev Donald Lugg



## Wilder Blean steps up a gear

As spring turns to summer, after the frost thaws and the buds burst open on the trees, four European bison will be arriving at Blean Woods.

To prepare for their arrival, Kent Wildlife Trust and Wildwood Trust have been hard at work. The bison will soon be travelling to Kent from across Europe.



Their initial steps into Blean Woods will be the first semi-wild bison hoofprints to mark British soil for thousands of years.

Thanks to funds raised by supporters, Kent Wildlife Trust and Wildwood Trust have partnered up to show how European bison can provide a sustainable solution to woodland management in South East England.

Similar projects across Europe have proved that bison, known as ‘ecosystem engineers’, can restore the natural biodiversity of a landscape. Natural bison behaviours – grazing, dust bathing, eating bark and felling trees enable other species to thrive. The presence of bison at the Blean, alongside Exmoor ponies and Iron-Age pigs, will transform the woods into a lush, thriving, biodiverse environment once more and allow us to step back from hands-on management.

Now that we are leaving the winter season, preparations have really started to pick up pace at Blean Woods. We’ve created new ponds for the animals to drink from and we’re rapidly putting up fences which will keep the animals safe. Our Bison Rangers, Tom Gibbs and Donovan Wright, recently travelled to Holland to learn from rangers working on similar projects and have brought this precious expertise back to the UK.

If you’re visiting the Blean over the next few months, please be aware that it is a busy place with all this work going on, but you’ll find new maps to help you navigate this beautiful reserve.

We can’t wait for the animals to arrive, the machinery to leave and the Blean to start becoming a much wilder place.

Stan Smith  
from ‘Wilder Kent’  
*The magazine of Kent Wildlife Trust*

## The Grocery List

A poorly dressed lady with a look of defeat on her face walked into a grocery store. She approached the owner of the store in a most humble manner and asked if she could have credit for a few groceries. She softly explained that her husband was very ill and unable to work they had seven children and they needed food.

The grocer laughed at her and told her to leave his store at once.

The lady pleaded with him. “Please, sir! I will bring you the money just as soon as I can.”

But the grocer said he could not give her credit since she did not have an account at his store.

Standing beside the counter was a customer who overheard the conversation between the two. He stepped forward and told the grocer that he would pay for whatever she needed for her family. The grocer reluctantly asked the lady, “Do you have a grocery list?” She nodded.

“Ok” he said, “put your grocery list on the scales and whatever your grocery list weighs I will give you that amount in groceries.”

She hesitated a moment with a bowed head, then she reached into her purse and took out a piece of paper and scribbled something on it. She then laid the piece of paper on the scales carefully with her head still bowed.

The grocer and the other customer were amazed when the scales went down, right down – and stayed down!

The grocer, staring at the scales, turned slowly to the customer and said, begrudgingly, “I can’t believe it.”

The customer smiled and the grocer started putting the groceries on the other side of the scales. The scale did not balance so he continued to put more and more groceries on them until the scales would hold no more.

The grocer stood there in utter disgust. Finally, he grabbed the piece of paper from the scales and looked at it with greater amazement.

It was not a grocery list, it was a prayer which said: “Dear Lord, you know my needs and I am leaving this in your hands.”

The grocer gave her the groceries that he had gathered and stood back in stunned silence.

The lady thanked him and left the store. The other customer handed a fifty-pound note to the grocer and said, “It was worth every penny of it. Only God knows how much a prayer weighs.”

## Why does Easter move around?

You've probably noticed that the date of Easter moves around quite a bit. Sometimes it comes at the end of March; other years it happens in late April. This year, Easter is on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April. For it to come any later than it was in 2019 (21<sup>st</sup> April) you'll have to wait until 2038. So why does it move about so much? Let's find out.

### Why it can be late

Easter is always on the first Sunday after the first full moon that follows the spring equinox. But this full moon is an ecclesiastical full moon, and so wasn't calculated in quite the same way modern astronomers would. On top of that, *for the purpose of calculating Easter*, the spring equinox is always on 21<sup>st</sup> March.

So, there you go – this year the first full moon after the 21<sup>st</sup> March is Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April, hence why Easter is on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April. These rules also mean that the earliest possible date that Easter Sunday can fall is the 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The last time that happened was in 1818. So how did all this come about? And why do we use the Moon to calculate the date of Easter? Let us explain.

### Computing Computus

The method to calculate the date of Easter is called 'computus', from the Latin word that means, 'calculation'. It was a big thing in the Middle Ages – and still is today.

Easter marks the date of Jesus's death and resurrection, which, according to the Bible, happened around the Jewish Passover. Like the date of Passover, the date to mark the Resurrection was calculated using the lunar calendar, which is based on the cycles of the Moon. This threw a spanner in the works as lunar cycles were calculated in various ways back then.

Moreover, different Christian groups disagreed on the date to celebrate the Resurrection. Some celebrated it on Passover itself, some the following Sunday. This made things quite complicated.

### Let's get this sorted

In 325 AD, Emperor Constantine called the Council of Nicea, the first council of the Christian Church. As well as discussing other key beliefs, the Council wanted to settle the issue of the date of Easter. It was decided that all Christians should celebrate Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the spring equinox. That should have put the issue to bed once and for all. But different traditions kept calculating it in different ways, backing up their choice with different Gospels.

### The saintliest saint

In England, for example, Irish monks forcefully argued that their way of doing it had started with John the Evangelist. But Roman monks claimed their calculations had begun with St Peter himself.



One year, Northumbrian King Oswy – who followed the Irish tradition – celebrated Easter at different times from his Kentish wife, who followed the Roman tradition, which was awkward! So, in 664, a meeting of the clergy was organised in Whitby Abbey to sort the matter out. King Oswy had the final say and decided the Roman tradition should be adopted in the whole of England.

Apart from wanting to celebrate at the same time as his wife (and wanting to be more politically aligned with Europe), his decision came down to the fact that St. Peter is the gatekeeper of heaven, and the King wanted to get there. So the Roman tradition was adopted in England. Bishop Coleman of the Irish monks was furious, resigned, and went back to Ireland with a group of like-minded monks, never to return.

### The Pope gets involved

At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, things changed again. Christians had, up to this point, followed the Julian calendar. In this system there is a repeating pattern of three years of 365 days followed by a leap year of 366 days. However, this calendar overestimated the length of the tropical year, the time from one equinox to the next, which also affected – you guessed it – the date of Easter.

To solve this, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII suggested knocking off a few days from the calendar and adjusting the frequency of leap years. That year, in all countries who went with the Pope's plan, 4<sup>th</sup> October was to be followed by 15<sup>th</sup> October. But, by that point, England was largely a Protestant country. The change suggested by the Catholic Pope proved to be quite controversial and wasn't implemented.

### Order!

In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Parliament declared that enough was enough. It was decided that Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September would be followed immediately by Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>, and from then on England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland would follow the same calendar as most of Europe.

Today, although the Gregorian calendar is the international civil calendar, it's still not used by all churches. The Orthodox Church follows the Julian calendar, so the Orthodox Easter normally falls a bit later – this year it will be marked on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> April. In 2025, both Churches will celebrate Easter on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April.

There have been talks of fixing the date of Easter but, for the foreseeable future, it will remain a movable feast. So, if you always want to know when Easter is from the top of your head, you need to learn computus! Or search it online!

*from BBC Bitesize*

**Happ**  
**Easter**



# MISSION

## CAP

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) provides free debt help and local community groups across the UK. Our free services, run with local churches, provide practical and emotional support and show people that there is always hope.

Dear friend,

My debt free journey began and ended around Easter, which is just one reason why it feels such a special time. Easter has also come to mean salvation to me. Jesus dying on the cross, his suffering is what has saved me. He has wiped my sins away and given me a new life.

CAP and its supporters are helping to do God's work and I want to thank you for being there when I really needed you. Johnny and Vicki have been such good friends to me and have helped me to make a fresh start. I don't have a family of my own but I have my church family now.

Your support makes such a difference, no matter how little or how much you give. You can change people's lives. When someone makes that call to CAP they will probably



# MATTERS

be feeling anxious and ashamed, but hearing a friendly voice on the other end of the phone puts you at your ease. It's so hard to take that first step, but I'm glad I did.

Losing my daughter, Riley, has also given me purpose. She's given me a reason to better my life and going to university is not just for me, it's for her too. Once I graduate, I know I'll have a job because nurses are always needed! I'd like to travel the world too, to look at it through God's eyes and see what he has made. I'd especially like to go to Israel so I can walk the same road Jesus walked up to the cross.

Thank you again for supporting CAP. You've helped me to transform my life forever.

Happy Easter!

From Rebekka

christians  
against  
poverty

**CAP**

# Is Jesus God?

## Top 10 Reasons why Christians believe Jesus is God

The question about whether Jesus is God has been discussed over and over for years, among Christians and non-Christians alike. Thankfully, the scriptures point towards the fact that He is truly God, putting to rest the question, "Is Jesus God?" Below are 10 reasons why Christians believe Jesus is God:

### 1. Jesus refers to Himself as divine

In the Bible, Jesus refers to Himself as "I Am", meaning that He was there before the world began, He is here now, and He will be there in the future. Only a person of divine nature can pull that off. Some of the verses that refer to this include John 8:58 (before Abraham was, I am), Isaiah 41:4 (I am He), Isaiah 46:4 (I am He who will sustain you). These statements indicate that Jesus is not of this world, but He is from God.

### 2. His resurrection from the dead confirms that He is God

The fact that Jesus rose from the dead confirms that He is God because only God has power over sin and death. Romans 1:3-4 states that though Jesus was born in the flesh, and was crucified, He conquered death through His resurrection.

### 3. Jesus possesses titles that are unique to God

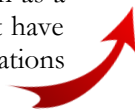
Some of the titles that refer to Jesus and that are unique to God include the Lord (Isaiah 43:11), Saviour of all the world (John 4:42), Saviour from sins (Matthew 1:21), and the First and the Last (Isaiah 40:12). These titles point to the unique character and works of Jesus and God.

### 4. The Bible calls Jesus God

Is Jesus God? The Bible refers to Him as God several times. In Isaiah 9:6, Jesus is referred to as a mighty God. In John 1:1, Jesus (*The Word*) was with God, and was God. In Colossians 1:15, the Bible refers to Jesus as the image of the invisible God.

### 5. Jesus Himself claimed to be God

In the Bible, Jesus refers to Himself as God. One example is in John 5:18, where He was accused of referring to God as His father, thus making Him one with God. Another example is in John 10:33, where the Jews were ready to stone Jesus because He had declared He was God yet the Jews knew Him as a man. For Jesus to have been accused of calling Himself God, there must have been truth in what He said! Nobody would have bothered if the accusations were false!



## 6. Jesus performs unique works similar to what God performs

Everyone knows that God created the universe, right? Well, in John 1:3, note that without the Word (*Jesus*), nothing was created that has been created. Also, in Hebrews 1:3, the Bible states that, just like God, Jesus sustains all things. Lastly, Jesus, like God the Father, also forgives sin. In Colossians 3:13, Christians are encouraged to forgive one another just as the Lord Jesus Christ forgave them.

## 7. Jesus possesses attributes that are unique to God

One of the attributes that Jesus possesses that are similar to those that God has includes omnipresence. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus says that He will be with His people always, until the end of the age. Another attribute is that of being all-knowing. In Job 37:16, Job declares that God has perfect knowledge, and in Colossians 2:3, the Apostle Paul declares that all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ. Other attributes include being eternal and all-powerful.

## 8. Jesus existed before the world was made

Is Jesus God? Yes, He is, because He was in existence before the world was created. In John 1:1, the Bible states that Jesus (*The Word*) was there in the beginning, He was with God, and He was God! In John 17: 5, Jesus prays and asks God the Father to glorify Him in His presence with the same glory that He had with God before the world began.

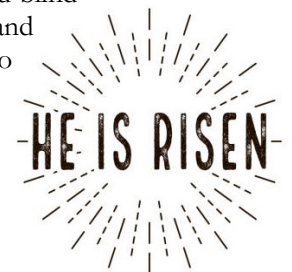
## 9. Jesus made claims that no human could make

Jesus made several claims that could only have been fulfilled if He was God. In Matthew 11:28, for instance, He promises all who are weary and burdened that He will give them rest. Also, in Matthew 28:18, He declares that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to Him. Only someone who is God could make such claims, and cause them to come to pass.

## 10. Jesus performed miracles that had never been seen before

The miracles that Jesus performed are extraordinary evidence of the fact that He is God. For example, he healed lepers, as well as deaf and blind individuals. He also fed 5000 people using five loaves and two fish. Jesus also spoke to a storm and commanded it to be still. He would not have had the power to perform miracles if He was not God. John 10: 37-38 alludes to this fact.

*from life.harbourfellowship.com*



## Don't Find Fault

Anon

Pray don't find fault with the man who limps  
or stumbles along the road,  
unless you have the shoes he wears  
or struggle beneath his load.

There may be tacks in his shoes that hurt  
though hidden from view.  
Or the burden he bears, placed on your back  
might cause you to stumble too.

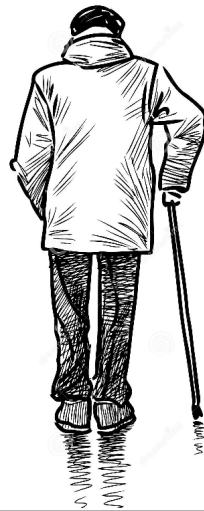
Don't be harsh with the man who sins  
or pelt him with words or stones  
unless you are sure, yea doubly sure  
that you have no sins of your own.

For you know, perhaps, if the tempter's voice  
should whisper as soft to you  
as it did to him when he went astray,  
it would cause you to stagger too.

Don't sneer at the man who's down today,  
unless you have felt the blow  
that caused the fall or felt the blow  
that only the fallen know.

You may be strong but still the blows  
that were his, if dealt to you  
in the self-same way, at the same time,  
might cause you to stagger too.

*Submitted by Elisabeth Newman*



## Messenger Deadline

Contributions for the next (*Summer*) edition of The Messenger should be handed  
(or preferably emailed) to Beryl or Tony by –

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

A big thank you to all those who have contributed articles for **The Messenger**,  
and to our loyal proof-reader, Jane.

## Creativity

By Gabrielle Ayerst

What has this time  
Of lockdown taught me?

The power of kindness  
And creativity;  
Unique to each,  
But joy to teach  
That we are in reach  
Of being transformed  
Through all kind of gifts.

The gift of silence and contemplation,  
The gift to be in every relation  
And in all of creation.

The gift of poetry  
And of art,  
The gift of service  
To play our part.  
The gift of music  
And of song,  
And of knowing that we all belong.

The gift of dreaming  
And star gazing,  
The gift of seeing  
Fire blazing like the sun  
And rivers flowing into one  
To know without doubt  
That God is there  
However much we might despair.

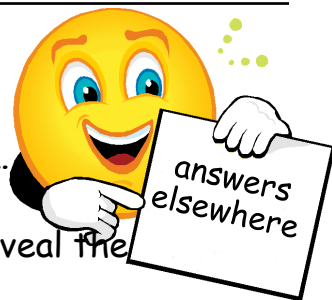
Oh joy to be!  
Oh joy of creativity!

*Submitted by Rev Dr Julie Hopkins*





# Just For Fun!



Two different puzzles for you this time...

## Dingbats

Can you decipher these dingbats and reveal the well-known phrase or saying?

1 P NO A NO Y	2 L R U C B I B L E	3 S P R I N G S U M M E R A U T U M N W I N T E R
4 N I M B U S C U M U L U S	5 <u>COLLAR</u> 102°	6 HOT PERFUME
7 <u>WORKED</u> PAID	8 YGGIPRIDE	9 CHINA ABLE SHOP
10 TIT TATTATTATTAT	11 CCCCCCCCCC	12 P MINNOW ND
13 <u>GROUND</u> LONDON	14 GGES EGSG GEGS SEGG	15 C O D LO HL MON

or...

## Changing Places

Like people, countries sometimes change their names or even disappear altogether.

What are these places called now?

1. Abyssinia, an ancient African kingdom.
2. Angora, the home of angora goats.
3. Bohemia was a European kingdom.
4. Burma, a country in Asia.
5. Ceylon.
6. Constantinople (*named after the Roman emperor Constantine*)
7. Kampuchea.
8. Mesopotamia, the fertile plain between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.
9. Peking, China.
10. The kingdom of Persia.
11. Prussia.
12. Rhodesia in Africa (*named after Cecil Rhodes, an Englishman who encouraged European whites to settle in Africa*)
13. Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam.
14. St. Petersburg, Russia (*built by the Russian czar, Peter the Great*)
15. Siam.
16. Tanganyika.
17. Zaire.



## The Curious Incident of the Cat in the Night

That could be the title of an Agatha Christie novel (*like 'The Mysterious Affair at Styles'*) but this incident was stranger than fiction! One night, a little while ago, I couldn't sleep as I had a bit of a cold (... *pause for sympathy*) and was coughing a lot which was keeping Beryl awake too (... *longer pause for more sympathy*).

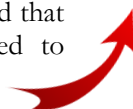
For the sake of domestic harmony and bliss, I went downstairs to sleep in an armchair. At about 1:00am I awoke and, as I had stopped making a lot of noise by then, I decided to go back upstairs to bed. However, walking through the hall (*in the dark*) I noticed, through the frosted glass of our front door, a strange orange light in the night sky, flashing on and off. My first thought was aliens but then I realised that it was unlikely that aliens would pick on Blean to start their invasion of Planet Earth. Even so, I didn't feel much like finding out by opening the door in my pyjamas. (*I only put that bit in so you could say "what a strange place to have a door!"*)

Looking out from the safety of an upstairs window I saw that the alien spacecraft was actually a bright red Citroen C1 with its hazard lights on. It was not 'parked' – just stopped, half a yard or so (*about 0.5 metres if you've been metricated*) from the kerb. Stopping on Blean Common Road is not a good idea, even in the middle of the night, and certainly not like that!

As I watched, a figure holding a mobile phone suddenly popped up from the far side of the car. Quick as a flash (*well, actually, it slowly dawned on me – it was the middle of the night!*) I guessed "I expect they've got a puncture". I then noticed that it was a young lady and realised that here was a damsel in distress and I immediately woke Beryl and sent her out to the rescue while I stayed back in the hall – not through fear, you understand, but I thought that if I suddenly appeared at her side in my pyjamas and dressing gown, DD (*DD = Damsel in Distress*) might think *she* had been visited by aliens!

After a discrete interval, I followed Beryl through the wet grass to the roadside where we discovered that the reason DD had stopped where she had was because there was a cat lying in the middle of the road. Although apparently undamaged, the cat was unfortunately, and sadly, quite deceased. DD was extremely upset, in fact she was crying and shaking and quite distraught – certainly in no fit state to drive.

What could we do? Remembering the words of Matthew 25:35, we invited DD in and gave her a cup of tea and listened as her story unfolded: It appeared that DD had previously lived in Canterbury and had just recently moved to Whitstable, taking her pet cat with her. After a few days, the cat had left



home and had not been seen since. DD had searched locally high and low, to no avail and thought, perhaps, that the cat might have decided to go back to Canterbury.

With this thought in mind, DD had, this night, driven slowly from Whitstable to Canterbury, looking out all along the way and was now doing the same on the way back. Already upset by the loss of her beloved pet, what could be worse than coming across the body of DC (*Deceased Cat*) lying in the road outside our house. DC was black, DD's cat was black, DD's cat was missing, ergo (*that's Latin!*) surely, this must be DD's cat?

At this point I decided that DC could not be left in the middle of the road any longer – amazingly, not a single car had passed in either direction during this time but such luck could not hold. I gathered together my 'cat rescue outfit' – gardening gloves and black sack – and brought DC indoors and laid it gently on the door mat where DD and I proceeded, with much hesitation, to examine it.

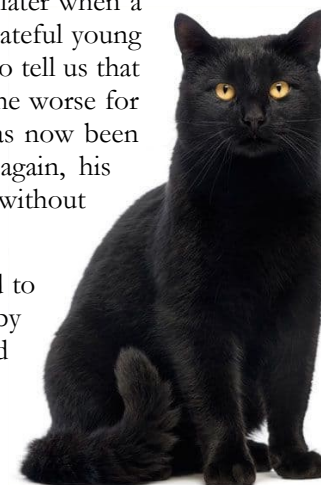
But how does one tell the difference between one totally black cat and another? By now, DD had calmed down enough to be able to drive home so we thought up a plan: I would place DC in the boot of DD's car, and DD would take it to the vet in the morning to see if it was micro-chipped, which would prove its identity conclusively.

The next day we heard from a relieved DD that DC was not her cat. DD's cat was male and the vet had been able to detect quite quickly that DC was female. (*I suppose I should have spotted that but vets have years of training and qualifications and ologys and letters after their names and my only veterinary experience was watching 'All Creatures Great and Small' !*)

The epilogue to this story followed a day or two later when a much more presentable, elegant, confident and grateful young lady, no longer a DD, appeared on our doorstep to tell us that her cat had come back of his own accord, none the worse for his adventure, whatever that had entailed. He has now been micro-chipped so that if he ever goes missing again, his finder will be able to re-unite him with his owner without a lot of bother.

**Postscript:** we later discovered that DC belonged to a nearby Blean resident who, although saddened by their loss was, at least, relieved to know what had happened to their dear pet.

Tony Harris



## The Real Easter Egg

The Real Easter Egg celebrates its 12<sup>th</sup> year with an invitation to 'Let's Celebrate'!

For the first time since the pandemic began, churches and communities across the UK will be coming together to celebrate Easter as restrictions are relaxed. So, no wonder that the theme for the Real Easter Egg this year is 'Let's Celebrate'!

The Real Easter Egg was created in 2010 as a way for churches, groups and individuals to share the Easter story while supporting Fairtrade. 12 years on, it has a network of thousands of churches and supporters. More than three million people have read the Easter Stories we produce and it has raised more than £320,000 for good causes.

This year, you can also reach out to UK families facing hardship by donating to food banks through the new foodbank scheme.

All Real Easter Eggs are made of Fairtrade chocolate, and come with an Easter story in the box. The stories range from simple guides to 24-page activity book versions with a prize competition worth £200. They are palm oil free and plastic free.

Because of the continued effects of the pandemic, it is more important than ever that we find ways to share the Easter story in 2022 and support producers. The Real Easter Egg is a proven way to do this. More details at [www.realeasteregg.co.uk](http://www.realeasteregg.co.uk)

*from the Parish Pump*



## Just a Thought!

Be who you is, because if you ain't who you is, you is who you ain't.

*Submitted by Elisabeth Newman*

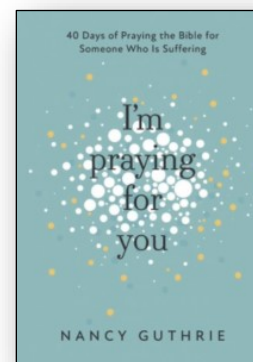
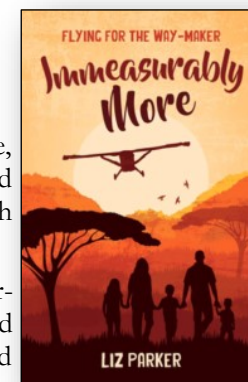
## Book Reviews

### Immeasurably More: Flying for the Way-Maker

By Liz Parker, 10Publishing, £9.99

When Liz Parker was growing up in a Liverpool vicarage, she never in her wildest dreams imagined that she would one day marry a missionary pilot and eventually serve with him in Uganda.

This is the story of their family's travels from their four-year preparation in South Africa, to sun-drenched Tanzania, to the unexpected conflict of South Sudan and to the fast-moving busyness of Kenya.



### I'm Praying for You – 40 Days of praying the Bible for someone who is suffering

By Nancy Guthrie, 10Publishing, £6.99

Through 40 carefully chosen scripture passages, Nancy Guthrie opens the wealth of Scripture that teaches us how to pray for those who are hurting.

She shows us how the Bible provides us with a vocabulary for prayer that enables us to ask God to achieve what He intends in and through suffering.

### The Easter Story 10 Pack By Juliet David and Elina Ellis, Lion Children's Books, £25

This beautiful retelling of the first Easter will be ideal for children. You can give them out to young readers at home, school, or Sunday school. Share with them the tremendous story of how Jesus came to die, and how He came to be resurrected.



[www.10ofthose.com](http://www.10ofthose.com)

## A Thought for a Day

### Psalm 27 verse 1

**The Lord is my light and my salvation — so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble?**

If you've ever looked through a list of phobias you will have been amazed by the variety. I've only recently come across Nomophobia, which is the fear of not having mobile access; Ephebiphobia, which is the fear of teenagers(!); and Syngenesophobia which is the fear of relatives(!). We might laugh for a moment, but only for a moment, because all fears are serious. If you are afraid then your life is distorted and restricted by the fear.

David had every reason to be fearful. His life as a shepherd would have introduced him to a wide range of potential fears, and his relationship with Saul must have been reasonably scary even on the calmest days. All of those experiences would have done little to prepare him for the extraordinary threats and challenges of life as a King. Skilful and successful as he was as a military commander there must have been many days when fears came knocking at the door.

But David concluded that he had no need to fear because the Lord was his light and the one who saved him. The Lord was the strength of his life and gave him such complete security that fears evaporated in the light of His presence. David's relationship with God defined his life and time and again he spoke of God as his rock, his fortress and his strong tower. Every day will present us with opportunities to be fearful. Those fears need to be taken very seriously. Brushing them under the carpet won't work! But as we face our fears and offer them to God we can be sure that He will help us to find where our true security lies.

#### QUESTION:

What makes you fearful? Are you willing to hand over your fears to God?

#### PRAYER:

Thank you Lord that when our lives are firmly placed in your hands, we have nothing to fear. Help us to know that you are our fortress today. Amen

*from the 'Voice of Hope'  
the magazine of Premier.org.uk*

DAY  
3

## I don't believe it!

I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacty uesdnatnrd waht I was rdganieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mind, aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttair in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the only iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit plcae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe!

*(Submitted by Ray Jones)*

#### Answers to DingBats (page 20)

1 Pay through the nose; 2 Curl up with a good book; 3 A man for all seasons; 4 A break in the clouds; 5 Hot under the collar; 6 Hot on the scent; 7 Over worked and under paid; 8 Piggy back ride; 9 A bull in a China shop; 10 Tit for tat; 11 High seas; 12 Small fish in a big pond; 13 London Underground; 14 Scrambled eggs; 15 Fish out of water.

#### Answers to Changing Places (page 21)

1 Ethiopia; 2 Ankara, the capital of Turkey; 3 Czechoslovakia (*Later Czech Republic and Slovakia*); 4 Myanmar; 5 Sri Lanka, (*which means 'splendid thing'*); 6 Istanbul; 7 Cambodia; 8 Iraq; 9 Beijing; 10 Iran; 11 Now part of Poland, Germany, and the USSR; 12 Zimbabwe and Zambia; 13 Ho Chi Minh City (*named after the communist leader*); 14 St. Petersburg (*It became Petrograd, then Leningrad and, in 1991, it was renamed St. Petersburg!*); 15 Thailand; 16 Tanganyika, (*together with Zanzibar, became Tanzania*); 17 Democratic Republic of Congo.

## The Last Laugh

On a beautiful summer's day, two English motorcyclists were driving through Wales.

They stopped at Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch for lunch, and one of the riders asked the waitress, "Before we order, I wonder if you could settle an argument for us. Can you pronounce where we are, very slowly?"

The girl leaned over and said, "Burr ... gurr ... King."





# Beryl's Back! (page)

## Moon And Stars Together

What an uplifting and exciting time of year this is. Spring – the season of new life. Easter – the time of forgiveness and promise. A feeling of hope and joy as daylight hours get longer.

**Astronomically speaking,** Spring starts on the 20<sup>th</sup> March but apparently it is also quite acceptable to recognise the three months of March, April and May as the 'season of spring'. Easter dates change each year, of course, (see page 12) guided by the moon. Absolutely amazing: a star at Christmas, the moon at Easter.

Each season has its own noticeable characteristics but Spring is not just when the daffodils arrive because I noticed them pushing through the earth just before Christmas. "What on earth is going on?" I asked myself, but only because, just at that moment, there was no-one else to ask.

Each year we look forward to watching the emergence of the beautiful Marie Curie "Garden of Hope" in Canterbury. A wonderful array of daffodils to herald the season of hope – a reliable reminder that God's love is constant.

So as again, this Easter, we remember His sacrifice for us we know we can depend on Him and continue to give Him our thanks for being the same yesterday, today and forever. Praise God for the New Life He gave us through His sacrifice and the freedom with which we are blessed to worship Him, not just on a Sunday, not just at Easter time, but every moment of our lives.

*You went to Calvary,  
there You died for me,  
Thank you, Lord, for loving me.  
You rose up from the grave,  
to me new life You gave,  
Thank you, Lord, for loving me.  
You're coming back again,  
and we with You shall reign,  
Thank you, Lord, for loving me.*

Beryl Harris



Garden of Hope

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*If the person or organisation you want is not listed please contact the Secretary.  
(Unless otherwise given, the dialling code for all telephone numbers is 01227)*





use your smartphone to visit our website!

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