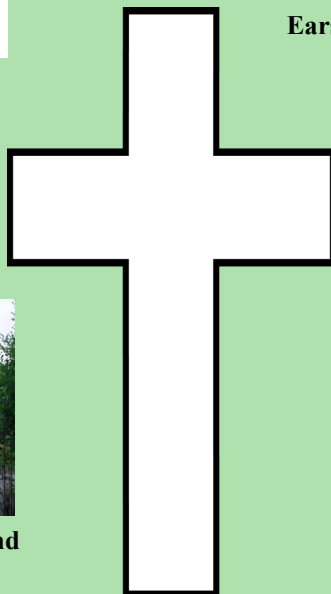




St. Alban's Earsdon



Earsdon Methodist



CHURCH VIEWS

April 2021

£1.00



Our Lady & St. Edmund



St. John's Backworth



Immaculate Heart of Mary

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

April 2021

A bookmark given to me ages ago depicting a seagull flying free, has the words:

If you love something let it go.

If it comes back, it's yours.

If it doesn't, it never was.

As we have travelled through Lent and Holy Week, we carry many treasured pictures with us of all that Jesus was involved with. High hopes of the disciples; the lows of anticipating what the next days would hold for Jesus; a series of many different emotions; of highs and lows; some things being realised for the first time; some expectations having to be let go. Then on the Sunday morning; disciples, men and women went to the tomb of Jesus to pay their last respects only to find the unexpected. Mark tells us that a young man dressed in a white robe said to the women, “Don’t be alarmed, you are looking for Jesus who was crucified, **“he is risen; he is not here.”**”

In a sense that was the first inkling they had that they were to let go of Jesus of Nazareth.

These people had been with him daily. They had not only heard him teach and speak publicly but had shared a private intimacy with him from which they must have learnt many things. True there were things that they did not fully understand, but you cannot see a man at prayer, a man offering healing ; a man talking to people ;– including women and the apparent low life of society – without appreciating that he was special; that he was of God. Then these last few days changed all of this. They had to let go of all that and see him torn apart on a cross; they had to let go when his body was put in the tomb; all in all they had to let go of the earthly body of Jesus of Nazareth in order to let something greater work.

Now is it right, or is it possible that we need to let go of limiting ourselves to the image of Jesus in a white cloak and a flowing beard? For he is greater than that – **“he is risen ; he is not there.”**

But if we do that what do we look to?

The Jewish scriptures – our Old Testament, are full of references to resurrection and a belief in a life after this one. So the disciples would have understood, known and believed in this. However, it was a very

different and dour event. For centuries it was seen as a shadowy and joyless existence in an underworld called Sheol, from where on the day of Judgement all the righteous would be released.

But the resurrection event of Jesus was totally different.

To be honest, the older I get, the more puzzled I get about this event.

The exact mechanics of it is never explained in the gospels, or elsewhere; the gospel accounts were written some 40 years or so after the events although the stories would have been told over and over.

Reading through all of the gospel accounts of Easter, none of them give a clear explanation of what resurrection is. I know that we all have our own ideas, but the more I read the accounts, the more of a mystery it seems to me.

The gospel accounts are all a bit different.

- * Matthew and Mark have the women going to the tomb and are met by a man dressed in white/an angel; then they are met by Jesus himself who tells them to go and tell the disciples.

- * Luke says 2 angels told the women, who then told Peter who went running to the tomb.

- * John says it was Mary Magdalene, who went to the tomb first, and she told Peter and John, and as Mary stood weeping she mistook Jesus for the gardener.

... all variations on a theme, but they had no understanding of what had happened; in fact they were mostly fearful, and later in chapter 19 of John we read that the disciples met in fear in a locked room.

It was only afterwards through the appearances and visions of Jesus that it gradually dawned that the body of Jesus was dead, but the new life of his was very much alive.

I cannot explain it, except to say that it transformed those men and women into a whole new link and relationship with God.

When you stand on the sands at Whitley Bay and look out to sea, the horizon is about 3 miles away. If you were to swim towards it, you could never reach it, for it would always be 3 miles away. You can see it; you can appreciate it but can never exactly reach it. Such is resurrection.

How did the resurrection happen? It beats me, but belief in the resurrection is a belief in a God who is beyond anything we can imagine, who not only gives love but IS love. Belief in the resurrection is without strict rational, logical proofs but is a completely sensible and reasonable

trust in death overcome and God's continuing love in this world and beyond.

As long ago as the 13th century a German theologian Meister Eckhart said words I paraphrase

The seed of God is in us
How does the seed of the pear tree grow into a pear tree
Or a hazel into a hazel tree
It's a marvellous mystery
The seed of God in us raises us into God.

He is risen; he is not here – in the tomb – but in the life of every believer and he joins us to God.

Happy Easter

Wes Blakey



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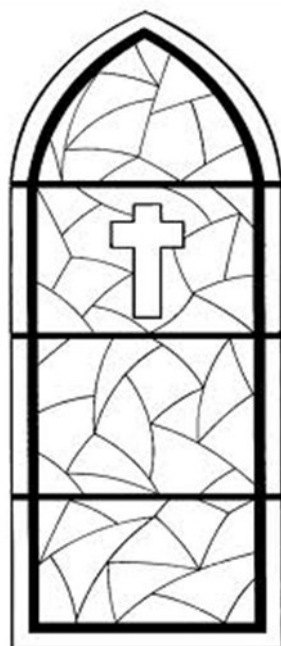
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Book Club Browsing..... *By Dianne Morgan*

We continue to meet on Zoom , once a month , but perhaps in the foreseeable future, we might manage a Garden Meeting, conversations flowing with a glass in hand !

Linda continues to safely collect our chosen books from Killingworth library and we collect and return them, enjoying socially distanced doorstep chats !

During the past months we have read a variety of books to a greater or lesser degree of enjoyment so here are our verdicts !!

"Bitter Fruits" *by Alice Clark-Platts.....* a crime thriller set within the academic colleges of Durham University. The "case" is investigated over a few days but you do have to concentrate on the somewhat fast flow of events ! It had shades of "Vera" ... if you know Durham you'll enjoy references to the locality and if you were a student, saying "it wasn't like that in my day"!! We mostly enjoyed it.

"I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" *by Maya Angelou.....* Set in 1960s, autobiographical, Black African -American struggles, family relationships which are dysfunctional, hopes and dreams ! It wasn't a fun read, but one that did make us discuss all those racial, social deprivation issues we know about but sometimes avoid. As you can imagine lots of chatting went on. In conclusion,the caged bird did sing and Angelou goes on to write many more books !

"Mercy" *by Jussi. Alder-Olsen.*

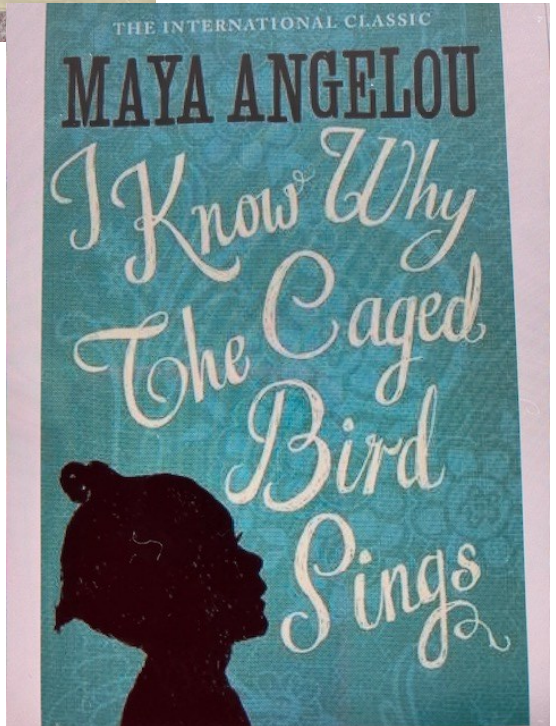
We all really enjoyed this book !! Hurray ! Scandi noir crime thriller ! (I hope that doesn't reflect on our group.) We heard nostalgic memories from Jo, about her life in Copenhagen; the book is set in Denmark. We recommend this one very much !

"The Thursday Murder Club" *by Richard Osman...* See Jill's great review in the March 2021 magazine, page 21. (With Marti's comments too... my dog Barney is illiterate Jo's family of hounds will be well read !)

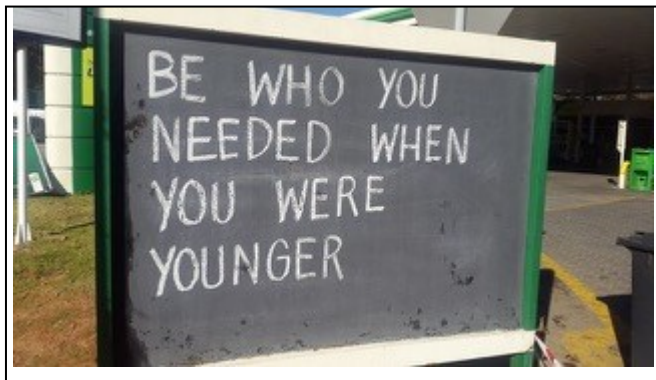
We are currently reading **"The Beautiful Truth"** *by Belinda Seaward* Thank goodness we have an agreement that at least 100 pages must be attempted !!! We meet next week.... looking forward to seeing the group.

Happy reading everyone and just keep thinking of sunny days, sitting in the garden chair enjoying a good book!

Cheers from all the girls in St Albans Book Club.









Early morning walk.
Spring is coming!

*Thank you Dianne, for
this lovely picture, and
the shot of the daffodils
on page 10 .*

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BITS 'N' PIECES

It was...

300 years ago, on 3rd April 1721 that Robert Walpole became the first British Prime Minister.

250 years ago, on 13th April 1771 that Richard Trevithick, British mining engineer and inventor of the first steam locomotive, was born.

125 years ago, from 6th to 15th April 1896 that the first modern Summer Olympic Games were held in Athens. The original Olympics were banned by the Roman Emperor Theodosius (I or II) in either 393 or 426 AD.

95 years ago, on 21st April 1926 that Queen Elizabeth II was born in Mayfair, London. Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor was the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York. Her father became King on the abdication of his brother

King Edward VIII in 1936, from which time Elizabeth was the heir presumptive.

90 years ago, on 14th April 1931 that the first edition of the Highway Code was published in the UK.

70 years ago, on 17th April 1951 that the Peak District National Park was established. It was Britain's first national park.

50 years ago, on 6th April 1971 that Igor Stravinsky, Russian composer, died. He was one of the most important and influential composers of the 20th century.

40 years ago, on 11th April 1981 that the Brixton riot took place in London. 5,000 youths rampaged through the streets, attacking police officers and damaging buildings, looting shops and setting cars alight.

20 years ago, on 7th April 2001 that NASA launched its Mars Odyssey spacecraft to search for evidence of life and volcanic activity on Mars. It went into orbit around Mars and remains operational (though it will run out of propellant in 2025). It is the longest surviving continually active spacecraft orbiting another planet. (It has successfully mapped the distribution of water below the surface and discovered a vast amount of ice below the equatorial regions.)

10 years ago, on 29th April 2011 that the wedding of Prince William and Catherine (Kate) Middleton took place at Westminster Abbey in London. They were given the titles the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.



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Welcome to “**The Secret Life of St Alban’s and St John’s Folk**”.
This month we have been talking with Pam Tomlinson, from
St. Alban’s church.

1) Where were you born?

I was born in The Gables Private Maternity Hospital which I always thought sounded quite posh, but recently I discovered it was on Scotswood Road so not quite so classy. I was born on December 13th and my Mother was given special dispensation to go home on the 24th in time for Christmas!

2) What do you do during the week, when you’re not at church?

‘Normally’, although I have been retired for 23 years, I have a busy life. I volunteer once a week in the shop at North Tyneside General Hospital as well as every three months I am part of St Alban’s team of ‘wheelers’ taking patients to the Hospital Chapel for communion on Sunday morning. I am in two choirs and have been in the WI for 33 years and recently joined the Mothers’ Union. Until recently I ran Boots the Chemists Retirement Association, for whom I worked as a dispenser for 42 years. Now I spend a lot of time socialising with friends, either going to the theatre or eating out.

3) What are you most likely to be doing on a Saturday evening?

Watching TV – my clubbing days are over!

4) Surprise us with one of your hobbies, or something we may not know about you

It will be no surprise to those people who know me that I belong to two choirs, and as such I have had the privilege to sing in some exciting places: the Lady Taverners Garden Party in the grounds of Westminster Abbey, Salzburg Cathedral, St Peter’s Rome, on a boat sailing up the Seine singing music from The Hunchback of Notre Dame as we passed underneath Notre Dame, on a Cruise Liner in the Caribbean, on a plane flying into New York (not the best of experiences!), and singing in the Candlelight Processional at Epcot which was magical. I have also sung in many venues in New York, the most moving of which was performing the Hallelujah Chorus in St Paul’s Chapel – which was the centre for the relief workers when the Twin Towers collapsed.

5) What's your favourite film?

I don't often go to the pictures. I much prefer live theatre whether music or the spoken word, professional or amateur.

6) What's your least favourite food?

Seafood.

7) Tell us something you've learnt recently

I'm ashamed to say I had very good intentions at the beginning of lockdown of learning some new skill. Instead the only thing I have learned is to thank God even more for my blessed problem-free life.

8) Tell us about somewhere interesting you've visited or lived in

I have lived in Whitley Bay all my life but have been lucky to spend holidays in some exciting places, including flying round the world in 2016 starting in Bali, Christmas in Honolulu, New Year in Hawaii before flying across to Dallas from where we drove to Nashville, Memphis etc. finishing up in New Orleans, which must be my all-time favourite place. For the last 30 years I have enjoyed a lot of long-haul holidays but I think the most interesting was travelling the 'Silk Road to Samarkand' in Uzbekistan.

9) Tell us something you plan to do when lockdown is fully over

As I have been in a 'one-person bubble' with no physical contact for a year I am going to hug all my friends!

10) Do you have a favourite verse/book of the Bible?

I remember when I was at Sunday School having to read out loud 1 Corinthians 13 and it has remained with me ever since, especially the last verse 'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love'.

11) What's your favourite hymn and why?

Music means a lot to me and can quite often move me to tears. There are so many hymns I could call favourites but one piece of music which really does affect me is 'Let there be Peace on Earth'.

12) Tell us about someone who has had a big influence on your life

Probably my Father who introduced me at an early age to the love of music, especially classical music, and gardening, both of which I still enjoy today.

CHURCH VIEWS FOR APRIL 2021 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has lost one of its longest serving priests with the death of Fr Tom Cunningham. Our own Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea feels his loss most keenly.

Fr Tom trained for the priesthood at the College of St Cuthbert at Ushaw and was ordained in July 1957. He celebrated his first Mass at Our Lady and St Edmund Church in Backworth where his uncle, also Fr Tom Cunningham, was parish priest. His first appointment was as curate at St Teresa's in Heaton.



In 1962 he was commissioned as a Flt Lieutenant Chaplain in the RAF, and served in that role for sixteen years, in the UK and abroad, including in Cyprus when Turkish forces invaded the island in July 1974. Later, in the UK he was posted as Chaplain to the RAF College, Cranwell, at the request of its Commandant.

In 1978 he returned to the Diocese as parish priest of St Robert of Newminster in Morpeth before being appointed to the parish of St Patrick in Hartlepool. He served for many years on the Diocesan Schools Commission. On retirement he returned to his roots, residing in the presbytery at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in West Monkseaton. For a priest like Fr Tom, of course, 'retirement' would always be a relative term. He continued to celebrate weekday Masses at Immaculate Heart and acted as a locum throughout North Tyneside. He greatly enjoyed the social life of the parish, particularly the monthly Luncheon Club.

His Diamond Jubilee Mass at Our Lady and St Edmund's in Backworth in 2017, was filled not only with our parishioners, but many from Morpeth and Hartlepool. The celebratory meal which followed was an enthusiastic 'thank you' for his lifetime of service.



Fr Tom Cunningham died in Newcastle, on 24 February 2021 aged 89. His Requiem Mass was celebrated by Bishop Robert Byrne at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, in Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish on 17 March. The service was streamed for the many unable to attend in the current restrictions. Fittingly, it was on St Patrick's Day, this year the 60th anniversary of the consecration of St Patrick's, Hartlepool, his final parish.

Holy Week 2021

This year Holy Week in the parish will be celebrated in St Edward's; the other two churches will remain closed. Covid-19 restrictions will remain in place including the capacity of St Edward's at 60, the wearing of face coverings, social distancing, stewarding, hand cleansing and a one-way system for entry and exit. The following timetable has been approved for this Holy Week. Palm Sunday: 10.00am Mass with the Blessing and Distribution of Palms. Maundy Thursday: 7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper. Good Friday: 10.00am Stations of the Cross and 3.00pm Commemoration of the Lord's Passion. Holy Saturday: 7.30pm Easter Vigil. Easter Sunday: 10.00am Mass of Easter Day. It is still necessary to book a place for attendance at any of the services.

Open aspect closing



This view of St Edward's in a weather phenomenon across an open green space is no longer available as work has begun on the new building development. We were very lucky to enjoy this aspect of our fine church for so long.

Easter joy

Church doors may be closed, but the grounds are alive with colour. The bright daffodil trail, so beloved of toddlers, is still winding, and the blooming heather is always bonnie.



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The Virus *by Lesley-Jane Blackett*

They said it came from China
Wuhan to be precise.
A virus like no other
They said “It’s not too nice”.
It swept across the continents
Causing chaos in its path.
“Don’t worry - reach UK?” they said,
“No way -you’re having a laugh.”
But reach our shores it certainly did
And Bo-Jo wasn’t ready.
Races and football spread the virus
Now considered deadly.
“Lockdown! Lockdown!” the cry went up
The country came to a stop.
We all had to stay indoors alone
With our new friends Zoom and Tik Tok.
A long journey full of stops and starts
With plenty of trouble and strife
Will release us soon and bring us back
To a semblance of “normal life”.
But we’ll get there one day and once again
We’ll hug like we all used to do.
We’ll drink in the pubs and dance in the fields
And gather in masses, not just a few.
But we’ll never forget the sadness and sacrifice
The virus has brought to our world
And I hope we’ll all learn to be kind and appreciative,
Not spreading virus
 - just love. -

Thank you for sending this in, Joyce Whitehouse.

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“The sin of humanity makes the beauty of creation groan. God has meant the earth and all it contains for the use of the whole human race. Created wealth should reach all under the aegis of justice and charity.” *(Archbishop Oscar Romero)*



Thank you, Joyce Whitehouse.

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Earsdon Methodist Church

April 2021

Some may remember a Bing Crosby song that contains the words:~

We're busy doing nothing
Workin' the whole day through
Tryin' to find lots of things not to do
We're busy goin' nowhere
Isn't it just a crime
We'd like to be unhappy, but
We never do have the time

I have to wake the Sun up
He's liable to sleep all day
And then inspect the rainbows
So they'll be bright and gay
I must rehearse the songbirds
To see that they sing in key
Hustle, bustle
And never a moment free

Then I have to shine the dewdrops
You know they're looking rather dim
I told my friend, the robin
I'd buy him a brand new vest
Hustle, bustle
We never do have
Never do, never do, never do have the time
Never do have the time.

It just seems to sum up some of the time in this lockdown. However, I can report that amongst Earsdon folk other things have been happening.

Telephone directory delivering
Zoom musical concerts

Of course at least one of us has had to go back to work
Telephone calls pinging between members

Cake baking for family

Everyone is doing what they can to remain positive – not always easy – but that is our Lenten activity, as well as prayers for ourselves, our loved ones, our sister Churches .

GOOD NEWS

Rev John Mason is now home from hospital and progressing slowly but steadily. We wish him well and send our love and prayers to him, wife Sue and his family.

I badly need a haircut. My last visit to the barber was a fortnight before Christmas, and although my wife has had me in the garden with the kitchen scissors and trimmed some of the hair hanging over my collar, still I feel like the man at the Town Moor sideshow I remember from my childhood, who had hair streaming down his back which was transported in a wheelbarrow.

However, my local barber in my youth was a man everyone knew as Geordie, who operated from a grubby corner shop, sandwiched between the Shoulder of Mutton and the Oddfellow's Arms in Shiney Row, County Durham. The shop was pulled down long ago, but I can still distinctly remember it.

In those distant days Geordie would cut my hair for a shilling – and the ash which he blew from a permanent succession of cigarettes held firmly in his mouth – came down your neck free of charge.

He had no finesse– he used the pudding basin method, ~unless you described in great detail how much hair you wanted to be left on your head – and where it should be.

Geordie's one gift to tonsorial elegance ~ and biggest money spinner ~was his 'Hair Restorative Elixir' which he sold at half a crown a bottle, claiming that two dabs of this per day would keep your hair healthy. Because he called it a *restorative elixir*, many believed that it would cure baldness, and Geordie never denied this – even though the hairs on his head could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

He was pleased with the income as his balding customers sought happiness in the optimism that one day they would be able to have an Elvis Presley style rather than a Yul Brynner. Personally I never saw any evidence of this, as my Grandfather would testify if he had lived to this day.

Geordie worked on the principal that it was what went on inside the head / inside the person, that made people happy and not what you put on it.

Although a scoundrel, Geordie was right. To be happy and content is worth more than money, which is not always easy with current restrictions.

The best Geordie's cream did was to shine the head; but the best I can do is to keep, as it were, a shine inside –and not even ash down the neck can ruin that.

Wes Blakey

St. Alban's and St. John's

Diary Page for April 2021



Thursday	1st		<u>Maundy Thursday</u>	
		7.30pm	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Friday	2nd		<u>Good Friday</u>	
		2.00pm	At the foot of the Cross	St Alban's
Sunday	4th		<u>Easter Day</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wed/Thurs	7th/8th			
Sunday	11th			
		8.30am		
		10.00am		
Wed/Thu	14th/15th			
Sunday	18th			
		8.30am		
		10.00am		
Wed/Thur	21st/22nd			
Sunday	25th			
		8.30am		
		10.00am		
Wed/Thurs	28th/29th			

Services to be advised.

Here is the hyperlink to our newspaper "THE LINK"

[linkapril2021finalv.pdf \(d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net\)](http://linkapril2021finalv.pdf(d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net))

St. Alban's and St. John's

Sunday Gospel Readings for April 2021 :

4th

11th

18th

Readings to be advised.

25th





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It's time to plant!

Our Garden shop is OPEN as usual and starting to fill up with beautiful Spring colour . At present, sadly our coffee shop is still temporarily closed due to Covid guidelines but will reopen as soon as it is safe.

SUDOKU

Complete the 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 blocks contains all of the digits from 1 to 9.

				5	7		3	
3			2					
	8	5						
1				6	2	3		7
		3				5		
6		7	5	3				4
						7	4	
					8			3
	4		6	1				

Please note - all material for next month's magazine (May 2021) will need to be in before Wednesday, 21st April 2021. Thank you, *Jean*.

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Marti's Musings 85

Happy Easter everyone! I'm so excited to be getting back to church and can't wait to see the Garden of Gethsemane in the porch. I know quite a few people are lending plants to adorn the spectacle. I find it not without irony that mum's plants contain our bunny family remains. I am absolutely sure that Zeus and Eros will enjoy the change of scenery; I won't tell you which pots they are in, you will have to guess! Mum always chooses an appropriate plant for their final resting place, the Passion flower that Adonis is under flowers profusely every year. I'm really looking forward to seeing everyone again, but I will miss our zoom services. I loved seeing all the faces with candles and all the various props including daffodils!

I'm off to help mum shift some plant pots.

Lots of foliage

Marti xx



WORDSEARCH

Wordsearch Clues and Answers April 2021

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! April brings us to Easter – the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ - the triumphant highlight of the Christian year. As St Paul pointed out, unless Jesus really did rise again, our faith is useless, and we may as well forget any hope of heaven or eternal life.

- passover
- bread
- wine
- body
- blood
- betrayal

- Jerusalem
- Pilate
- Judas
- Gethsemane
- trial
- crucifixion

- soldiers
- cross
- nails
- vinegar
- temple
- curtain

- tomb
- angel
- stone
- risen
- gardener
- Mary



* If you have any suggestions, comments or requests *
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