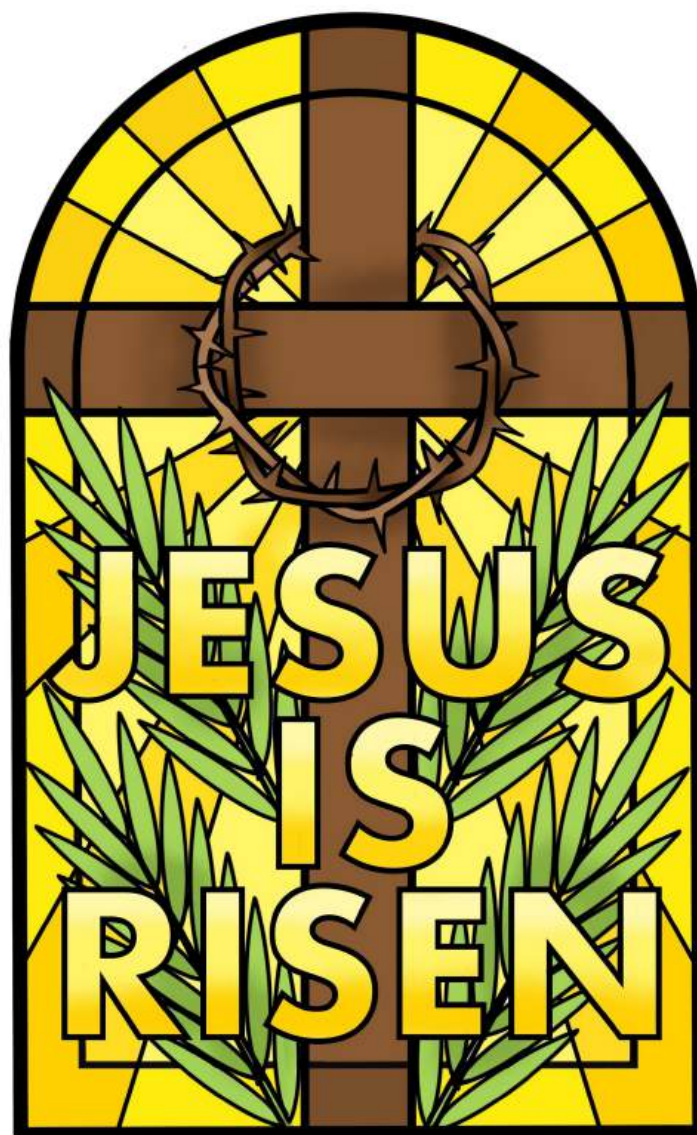




**St Andrew's Church
Handsworth Birmingham
Church of England**



THE MESSENGER

Parish Magazine

EASTER 2025

75p



From the Editor

Hi Everyone,

I hope you enjoy the Easter edition of the magazine. Articles this month include the Quiet Day, Mothering Sunday, Diversity in St Andrew's, and What Does St Andrew's Mean To Me, as well as an update on the heating in church. Thank you for your contributions. Articles are always welcome, please email to parishmagazine949@gmail.com.

Happy Easter!



Please note that the magazine is also online on St Andrew's website and is accessible to the general public.

Who is Who

Vicar – Father Paskal Clement

Mobile: 07727286905. Phone: 0121 218 1988.

Email: revpaskal@gmail.com

Asst Priest: Father John Austen: 0121 554 8882

Email: johnausten151@hotmail.co.uk

Church Warden: Shebina Gill: 07488 366662

Email: spiritofshe@outlook.com

Lay Readers

Carole Sami: 07447 889657

Alison Thorne: 07736414307

St Andrew's PCC

Chair: Father Paskal Clement

Church Warden: Shebina Gill

PCC Secretary: Leonora Dore

Treasurer: Richard Sahonta

PCC members:

Mary Bairstow, Chris Baker, Harrison Daniel, Rekha Daniel, Eileen Lawrence (Deanery Synod), Sheila Mpofu, Susan Musyoka, Alison Thorne

Social Committee:

Chris Baker, Rose Blair, Harrison Daniel, Rekha Daniel, Leonora Dore, Sonia Hyman, Eileen Lawrence, Sheila Mpofu, Carole Sami.

Director of Music—Steven Ely: 07926110422

Church Halls Administration – John Emmins

Telephone: 0121 554 2437, Mobile: 07486 377719,

Email - enquiriesstandrewsacc@gmail.com

Magazine Editor – Eileen Lawrence parishmagazine949@gmail.com

Church Website: <https://www.standrews-handsworth.org.uk>

St Andrew's WhatsApp Group:

if you wish to join, please contact Carole Sami 07447 889657

FROM THE VICAR

Easter – the Triumph of Jesus

Life at the church has been incredibly hectic, especially with issues surrounding the heating system and coordinating visits from the DAC Team and with so many other matters related to the church building. After a long wait, we have finally completed phase one of the heating system by upgrading the fuse boards. Although it will take some time before the entire heating system is fully operational, we are making progress. Finally, the damaged window and window glass in the Good Shepherd Hall have been fixed.

There is an 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. During WWII, millions of British servicemen and women were given a Bible, specifically John's gospel, to carry into conflict. This gave them hope and encouraged them to turn to God for strength, courage, and guidance in difficult times. This message remains highly relevant today, just as it was 80 years ago.

In these moments of remembrance, we honour those who sacrificed their lives during the war and express our gratitude for the end of WWII. We also continue to pray for peace for all those worldwide whose lives are destroyed and affected by ongoing conflicts, particularly in the Middle East and the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.

Lent reaches its climax during Holy Week, a time when we recall the different stages of Jesus' journey—his loneliness, betrayal, injustice, brutal suffering, and even his cruel death on the cross. Yet, this is not the end of everything. Rather, it marks the beginning of a new era—one of hope and triumph over sin and death.

Easter is a time for celebration and companionship on the Emmaus Road, where the Risen Jesus dispelled doubt and brought reassurance to all we meet along the way. On Easter Day, the Risen Jesus announces the joyous news that evil has ultimately been overcome by good.

As we remember the bereaved families who lost loved ones during the first COVID lockdown five years ago, we bring them to Risen Jesus, who conquered death. May they find peace and comfort in the presence of the Risen Christ.

Hallelujah!

Happy Easter to all of you!

Fr Paskal (Vicar)

Update on the Heating System at St Andrew's Church

Introduction:

We have been without heating in the church for more than 15 months. Initially, attempts were made to repair the existing boiler system. The company that had installed the system was contacted, but they regrettably informed us that the system is too old and no spare parts are available. The church needs to look for an alternative.

Nature of the Building

St Andrew's Church, Grade A listed building, faces certain obstacles. The Diocese must be involved at every stage, particularly the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee). The DAC offers guidance on applications for faculties and List B works. To receive initial advice, churches should engage with the DAC early when planning projects. *For every phase, the church applies for faculty.*

Inspection Report

The EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Report) indicates that the wiring in the church dates back approximately 60 years and requires upgrading and rewiring to meet current standards and achieve a satisfactory condition report. It does not comply with the health and safety standards. Doing this job involves money and different phases.

Phase One: Upgrading the fuse boards

In this phase, the outdated fuse boards are replaced, totalling £4668.00.

Phase Two: Rewiring

A recent visit (27/02/25) from the DAC team – Elizabeth Thomson (Places of Worship Support Officer) & Andrew Schofield (Church Surveyor) said, "In order for the next phase of the electrical works to move forward, a full set of drawings will need to be done of the church to include internal elevations, external elevations and a floor plan. Without the survey, it will not be possible to make any progress with phase 2 because without drawings, the electrical engineers will not be able to plan their work, and the DAC will not be able to determine the faculty application without plans which show existing and proposed schemes." AS & ET stressed the need for a full set of drawings to be completed and agreed to get costs for the work.

What next

Elizabeth is happy to help support the church in applying for a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to help fund a feasibility report which considers how the church could become a sustainable and valued building by the congregation and wider population while conserving and enhancing its heritage.

The church community needs to think, imagine and create a plan for how to make this place available and resourceful for the wider community. Elizabeth and Andrew are willing to attend a workshop with the PCC /congregation to explore how the building could become a building used daily by the local community. The PCC agreed to invite them both to facilitate a workshop.

Phase Three: LED lights

LED lights will be installed. We can apply for funding from the Quick Wins.

Phase four: Electrical heaters

Among the items are electrical heaters, which support a Church of England initiative that started in 2022 to help churches lower carbon emissions by 2030 and reach Net Zero Carbon.

Conclusion

The process depends on available funds. Organizations/charities want to see our contributions when applying for funding.

St Andrew's Church received £8,000 from the Harlow Trust in 2023.

St Andrew's raised all together £7139.11

The project depends on the amount we raise.

Please continue praying for this project and contributing generously.

Fr Paskal
(Vicar)

Rev'd Barbara writes

Rev'd Barbara has recently joined the clergy team at St Andrew's. She is based at St James, and has written an article about herself.

My name is Rev'd Barbara Hamilton. Here is a little bit of information about me.

I was born in England, and my parents are both from Jamaica. I am married to Reverend Wayne Hamilton, and we have four children. The two older boys have left home and have children of their own; so we have grandchildren also. Our two daughters are still at home.

I am a paediatric nurse by profession and was in this vocation for 22 years. For the last few years, I have been a Carer.

I am a self-supporting Minister. I enjoy walking, writing poetry, listening to music, making greeting cards and quiet time.

Rev'd Barbara Hamilton

A Prayer by Margaret Wiwczaryk

*Lord, in your mercy
Sow your seeds of love
In all our hearts.
Amen!*

JOIN IN WITH OUR CHURCH SERVICES AT ST ANDREW'S

Our Sunday Services are as follows:-

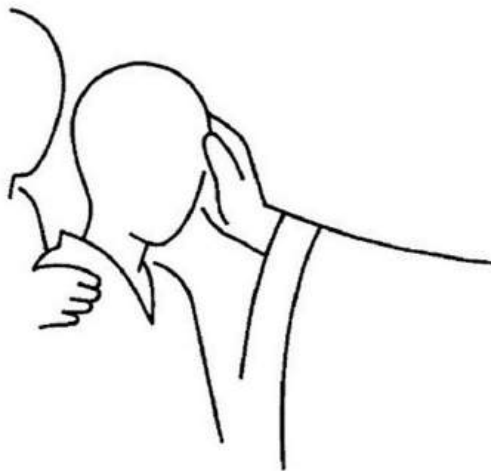
Sunday - 10.00 am service with Holy Communion

These Services include

Every second Sunday 10.00 am: Family Mass



Third Sunday 10.00 AM: Healing Service



Thursday Holy Communion Service

10.00 am at Good Shepherd Chapel

Mother's Day

In preparation for writing this article I discovered that the UK custom of celebrating Mothering Sunday on the fourth Sunday of Lent began in the Middle Ages. People who had moved away from their place of birth would visit their mothers and their home or 'mother' churches on this day as part of the season



of Lent. It seems to have its roots in God's call for community, family, and togetherness.

Mothering Sunday is celebrated on different days and in different ways all over the world. For example, in America, it takes place on the second Sunday of May each year in a custom started by Anna Jarvis who, on 12 May 1907 held a small memorial service for her own mother. Here the roots seem to be in God's call for remembrance and it reminds me that Mothering Sunday is a mixed bag of emotions. Presently, for my family it's a joyful celebration, a time to pause and make my mom feel special and loved; but in the future this will shift and become a painful time when we'll mourn her; then as more time passes it will shift again as we remember her with joy and fondness. A time and season for everything.

Illustration from 1908 showing three children about to surprise their mother for Mother's Day (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/17343360>).

When I explore motherhood in the Bible, I'm similarly struck by the array of emotions that are present. Love, joy, courage, sacrifice, expectation, loss – it's all there, but I guess that's the nature of human relationships. It would be remis not to mention Mary, the Blessed Mother of Jesus. It's hard to think of her as a "conventional" mother birthing and raising her son. Ironically, I think we get the best glimpse of the humanness in their relationship during Jesus' first miracle, when at Mary's gentle prodding, Jesus turns water into wine (John 2:1-11). She didn't need to ask, and He didn't need to answer; there was an implicit understanding, an unspoken language between them which I find beautiful.

In other parts of the Bible mothers' requests to Jesus are more explicit, the most obvious being, the "mother's request" where the mother of disciples James and John, seeks honour for her children at Jesus' side (Matthew 20:20-28). It might seem cheeky, but it shows her desire for good things for her children. Personally, I'm more moved by the pleas of the Syrophoenician/Canaanite woman who did not care about custom or expectation, she simply wanted her child – daughter to be healed (Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24). There are many parallels with father's too (e.g. John 4:43, Jesus Heals the Official's Son). They let nothing stand in the way of getting to Jesus, not for themselves but for their children. This verges on sacrificial love, which during Lent is a powerful and poignant reflection. I find themes of mothers' sacrifices all through the Bible, of course with Mary, and also Jochebed, the mother of Moses, whose name appears in one of those genealogies I always struggle to read (Exodus 6:20). She's like the mother who went before King Solomon seeking his wisdom in something akin to a modern custodial battle, desperate to prove that her child was her own (1 Kings 3:16).

In both cases the mother was willing to let the child go into the care of another to save its life. As a recovering alcoholic, I've witnessed the pain of parents, good but deeply unwell people, choose to let their child go, motivated by love for that child.

These reflections make me think of all those people who care for children who are orphaned, alone, or unsafe - the wonderful foster and adoptive parents, grandparents too, who answer God's great call to care for the "fatherless"; and those role models in our own lives who are like mothers to us. I think of Paul when he says, "*Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too*" (Romans 1:13).

I also think about those women without children, those who have experienced the loss of a child, those who desperately want children, and those women who don't want children but can be hurt by expectations of others and ideas that motherhood is a woman's purpose. I think of the wives of Elkanah, the father of Samuel. His first wife was Hannah; the second was Peninnah. Peninnah had children; Hannah did not. Peninnah "*taunted her cruelly, rubbing it in and never letting her forget that God had not given her children*" thus Hannah called out to the Lord "*if you'll take a good, hard look at my pain, if you'll quit neglecting me and go into action for me by giving me a son, I'll give him completely, unreservedly to you*" (1 Samuel 1: 9-11). I admire how she fights here, demanding that God act, and He does! God used Hannah's son for great and remarkable things, just as He did with Jochebed's son, Moses, yet in both cases a response was required by the mother, one that shows trust and faith in God.

My last reflection is about the women in the life of Abraham. I've read quite a bit about Sarah's prayers to God and the subsequent birth of Isaac, alongside the message of persistent prayer and patience waiting, but I also want to reflect on Hagar, Sarah's maidservant. Forced to bear Abraham a child and heir, then outcast once Sarah's prayers for a child were answered. This story seems to pull together things I said at the start about the complexities of human emotion and relationship, I cried when I first read Hagar's discourse with God, "*I cannot watch the boy die*" (Genesis 21:17), I imagined what that would be like, and was thankful when God did not let this happen, instead He intervened and kept His promise by making Abraham the father of many nations. Heartbreakingly, some parents do have to watch their child die, that is exactly what Mary had to do, and what many parents must do today – children who are sick, living in poverty, or affected by war.

I'd like to close by sharing this picture of my friend Motuma and his mother from Ethiopia. I know them through a charity called Compassion UK, and I'm always grateful to hear stories about their love, their faith, and their lives.

As I offer prayers this Mothering Sunday, I'll try to think of mothers everywhere, all through time, and I'll be thankful for the many ways motherly love manifests in the complexities of human lives; especially God's motherly love for you, for me, and for us all.

Becky.



EASTER BIBLICAL CHARACTER

Simon of Cyrene

The Gospel of Matthew, Mark and Luke tell the story of Simon of Cyrene. Jesus was on the journey to Golgotha where he was to be crucified. He had been tortured, beaten and was weak and struggled to carry the cross. The streets were lined with crowds, shouting, jeering, humiliating Jesus. Some were weeping at the suffering of Jesus. Simon was travelling from his home town of Cyrene, a city in Libya on the northern tip of Africa. He was a passerby when he was forced by the soldiers to help Jesus carry the cross. Simon is only mentioned three times in the Bible. Yet I consider his story to be quite powerful. He was carrying the cross behind Jesus and he would have witnessed at close hand, the pain that Jesus was suffering and seen his wounds. He would have felt the anger and abuse coming from the crowd. His physical act of carrying the cross may have compelled many today to take up their own cross and follow Jesus.

Simon's act of carrying the cross is seen to represent compassion and solidarity with Christ's suffering. The Via Dolorosa (Sorrowful Way) is the route to the crucifixion where Jesus was forced to carry his cross. The route is now marked by 14 Stations Of The Cross. At the 5th Station there is a Catholic Chapel, The Chapel of Simon of Cyrene, which refers to the stage where Simon carried the cross for Jesus. Many pilgrims have walked this route for many years, including Rekha Daniel who wrote about her own pilgrimage last year.

Eileen Lawrence



This Photo by Unknown Author

*As they went out, they came
upon a man from Cyrene
named Simon; they
compelled this man to
carry his cross.
Matthew 27:32.*

If you would like to write about a Biblical Character we would love to hear from you.



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St Andrew's Sports & Community Centre



St Andrew's Sports & Community Centre is located on the corner of College Road. It is owned and managed by St Andrew's Church and is used for public activities and other church groups. The Centre is probably best known for the outdoor service that takes place on Good Friday every year.

If you wish to hire a room in the Centre for a private function, please contact John Emmins, Church Halls Administration.

Tel number - 07486 377719 or

Email - enquiriesstandrewsacc@gmail.com

These are the public activities that currently take place at the Centre.

Tuesday 10:00 - 13:00 Saheli Hub Crafts – keep fit / indoor tennis / knitting & health and wellbeing

Tuesday 10:00 - 12:00 Home Start Family Support Group

Wednesday Wellbeing group – Tai Chi 10.00 -11.00

Wednesday 17:30 - 20:30 & Saturday 13:30 - 14:30 - Temple Martial Arts

Thursday - Move for life 11:30 - 12:30 Exercise Class

Thursday PJ body work 18:30 – 19:30 Exercise Class

Saturday 09:00 - 13:00 - Little Kickers

Please note that none of these groups/activities are run by the church.

Quiet Day at St Mary's Convent

I wasn't really sure what to expect at the Quiet Day, but I had visited St Mary's Convent before, and I was keen to visit again. The Quiet Day was led by Fr John. There were people attending from other churches in Handsworth, and I discovered a school friend from Primary School! We started the day listening to John's Gospel: 1: 35-39 and then Psalm 23 The Lord is My Shepherd. We took it in turns to say one word which stood out from Psalm 23. Some of the words mentioned were 'refresh', 'anointed' and 'dwell'. Fr John explained that if we were to repeat the exercise at different times, we would likely choose a different word that connected to us.

We were then invited to explore any part of the Convent and find a space to be quiet, to pray, to reflect, or perhaps to just sit and read a book. The Convent is quite large and there are two gardens. As I walked out into the outside garden and around the building the sun was shining, the flowers were lovely, and people found chairs to sit on and reflect. Some people were writing, others were just taking in the beauty of the Convent. It was so peaceful. As I walked around the grounds the peace was briefly broken by a noise above me. I looked up and realised it was a drone which puzzled me but as I looked up, it was a beautiful blue sky, and I soon forgot about the sound of the drone.

I returned inside and explored the building. I visited The Chapel which was beautiful and peaceful, and I sat in there for quite some time. The peace was so welcoming. I then moved to the Oratory for a while, again the peaceful atmosphere was so lovely. I walked along the Stepped Cloisters which has pictures and historical information about the heritage of the Sisters of Mercy. As I turned around to return back up the steps; I looked up and was quite struck by the beautiful gold colours along the ceiling of the archway. I later discovered the ceiling was painted during a refurbishment by the Sisters of Mercy to acknowledge the work of the architect, Augustus Pugin.

We had a lovely lunch prepared by the Sisters, home-made soup and sandwiches followed by some lovely home-made cakes. In the afternoon we met up again as a group and after choosing a stone from a box, reflected on the stones that were chosen. We were invited to walk around the convent again and find a quiet space. This time I discovered the Prayer Peace Garden where there was a small flowing fountain. The sound of the water against the silence was very calming. We then went to the Chapel for Holy Communion led by Fr John. It was a privilege to spend a whole day in prayer and reflection and not having to worry about daily routine and stresses. If you have the opportunity to attend a Quiet Day, I highly recommend it, as well as a visit to the Sisters of Mercy at St Mary's Convent. These are some photos taken by Joan Wild.

Eileen Lawrence.



ST ANDREW'S



All are welcome!

Coffee Morning is 10am till 12pm every Thursday in The Good Shepherd Hall. We offer tea and coffee for 60p a mug and toast 20p a slice. We have biscuits each week and sometimes cakes if people bring them in for their birthday. Carole Sami has a table selling her cards and Val Ryder has her table selling various items. It is a friendly occasion where people enjoy having a chat over a cup of tea / coffee.

All are welcome. You don't have to be a regular church member. St Andrew's Coffee Morning is open to the whole community.

Chris Baker

THANK YOU

Jan Fleming would like to thank people for praying for her when she recently had an eye operation. It has been very successful and she is very grateful for everyone's support.

What St. Andrew's Means to Me.

I have to start this article by saying there are actually two St. Andrew's that have been important to me for most of my life.

Firstly St. Andrew's my church where I was baptised as a baby so many years ago. I went to Sunday School there and was married to Les my husband of almost 53 years. What does it mean to me ? St. Andrew's means memories. It has given me so many happy memories over the years and so many wonderful friends. It means welcome. When I first went back to St. Andrew's in 1977 after an absence of many years I was made welcome as soon as I walked through the door which meant so much to me and I feel we as a church now are still as welcoming to new members and old which is such a positive way to be.

St. Andrew's means a place where I can find help and support, there has always been someone to talk to or help me and to pray for me when I have needed it. It means a place of peace and tranquillity. I love the beautiful window in the Good Shepherd Chapel especially when the sun is shining through or in the candle light on Maundy Thursday. It is such a peaceful place to reflect and pray about things that are happening in the world around me.

St. Andrew's means a place where I know I can light a candle to pray for situations or people I am concerned about, or other people may ask me to light a candle for them or someone they know and it is good to be able to do that. And most importantly St. Andrew's means the place where I receive the Lord in the bread and wine each week.

St. Andrew's is not just a church building it is like a family home filled with love.

Secondly St. Andrew's the home of my beloved Birmingham City Football Club. The team I have supported since I was 11 years old. St. Andrew's Two is also a place where I have made many friends over the years. It also means memories some good some not so good but as the song we sing to show our support says, "as we go through life it's a long, long road with joys and sorrows too" and I can honestly say I have certainly experienced both of those over the years I have been going there. At the moment we are having the good times but many times we have not been doing so well and I have come home feeling so down but good or bad I will continue to support them as long as I am able to.

Chris Baker

Diversity in St Andrew's

St Andrew's Church is very diverse. I have discovered that in the congregation, we have 11 different nationalities (including the UK). There are also a further 7 countries where people have spent a period of their lives. I explored the history of some of these countries and found a common factor in most of the countries – a long history of conflict. When looking at the different mottos of each country they mainly speak of unity, perhaps an acknowledgement of the sadness of conflict and a look of hope to the future.

People come with different histories and journeys and it is important to acknowledge a person's heritage. The Chart below reflects the diversity of the congregation in St Andrew's. We should celebrate the richness of diversity.

COUNTRIES THAT PEOPLE WERE BORN AND GREW UP IN

COUNTRY	MOTTO	ANTHEM	NATIONAL FOOD
CONGO DR 4,348 miles	Justice – Peace -Work"	("Arise, Congolese")	Poulet a la moambe (savory chicken with spices).
INDIA 4,761 miles	"Truth Alone Triumphs"	"Thou Art the Ruler of the Minds of All People"	Biryani (mixed rice dish with meat).
IRAN 3,139 miles	"Independence, freedom, the Islamic Republic"	"National Anthem of the <u>Islamic</u> Republic of Iran"	Abgoosht (meat broth, a hearty mutton Persian soup with chickpeas).
JAMAICA 4,563 miles	"Out of Many, One People"	"Jamaica, Land We Love"	Ackee and saltfish. (ackee fruit cooked with salted codfish).
KENYA 4,575 miles	"Let us all pull together"	"O God of All Creation"	Ugali (a type of cornmeal made from maize or cornflour).

NIGERIA 3,266 miles	"Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress.	Nigeria, We Hail Thee	Tuwon Shinkafa (a thick pudding prepared from rice).
PAKISTAN 3,859 miles	"Faith, Unity, Discipline	The National Anthem	Biryani (mixed rice dish with meat).
PAPUA NEW GUINEA 8,600 miles	"Unity in Diversity"	"O Arise, All You Sons"	Mumu (steamed sweet potatoes, meat and greens in banana
SOUTH AFRICA 6,139 miles	"Unity in Diversity"	"National anthem of South Africa"	Bobotie (mince meat baked with egg-based topping).
ZIMBABWE 8,825 miles	"Unity, Freedom, Work"	"Blessed be the land of Zimbabwe"	Sadza (a type of cornmeal made from maize or cornflour).

COUNTRIES THAT PEOPLE SPENT A PERIOD OF THEIR LIVES

AUSTRALIA	CYPRUS	GERMANY	ITALY	KOSOVA	OMAN	ZAMBIA
9,449 miles	2,231 miles	641 miles	1,179 miles	1,451 miles	4,800 miles	5,070 miles

If you would like to write about your country of origin, your journey, or your faith please feel welcome to write something for the magazine or if you prefer, share your story with a fellow church member.

Eileen Lawrence

7 Verses of Peace

1. In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

(Psalm 4.8)

2. You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

(Isaiah 26.3)

3. In me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

(John 16.33)

4. Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Romans 5.1)

5. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.

(Colossians 3.15)

6. May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way.

(2 Thessalonians 3.16)

7. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

(1 Peter 5.7)

WORDSEARCH

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. But because He does live, we have a sure and certain hope for our future. **c/o Parish Pump**

Passover

bread

wine

body

blood

betrayal

Jerusalem

pilate

judas

gethsemane

trial

crucifixion

soldiers

cross

nails

vinegar

temple

curtain

tomb

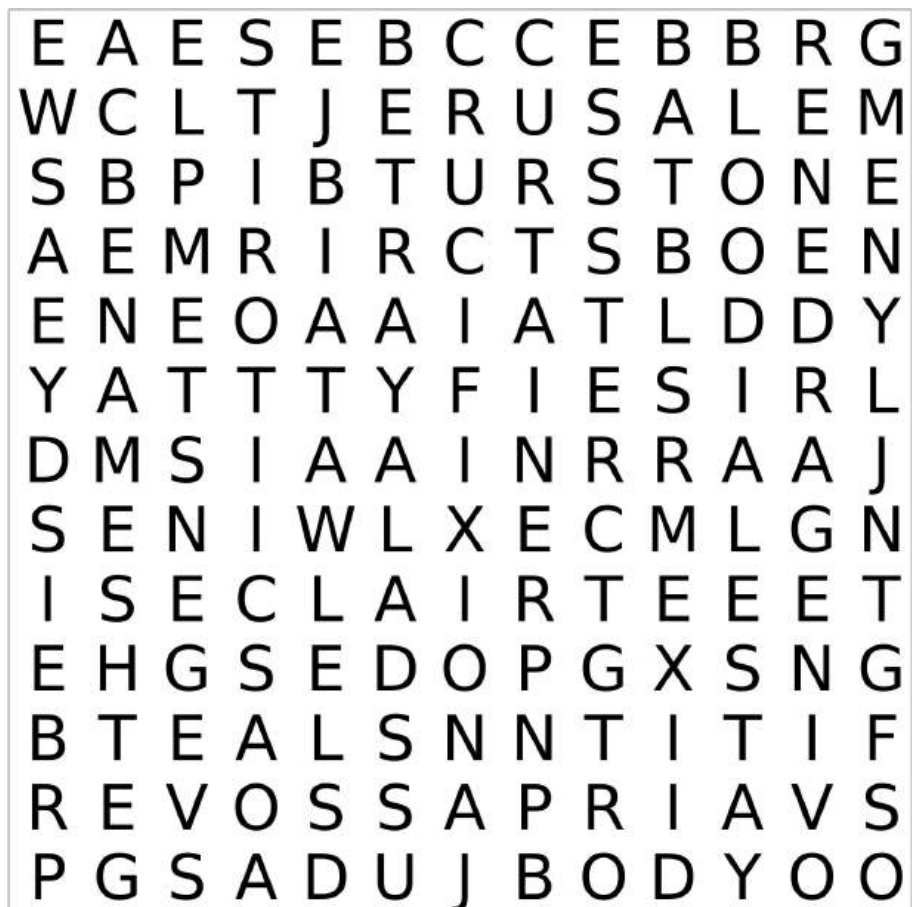
angel

stone

risen

gardener

Mary





*“Welcoming all,
sharing our gifts to proclaim the gospel
and grow in faith
and God’s love.”*



St Andrew’s Church

*“We aspire to be a church
reaching out
to all people
through love
and growing together
as a community.”*