

Contact Information:

The Partnership office is open:

Monday, Tuesday, Friday 9:00 – 1:00pm
Wednesday 1.00 – 4.00pm
Thursday Closed

There will always be an up to date message on the Partnership Office telephone giving any changes.

The office number is 01793 874221. The office e-mail is:
wspartnershipoffice@gmail.com

To publicise any News or Events in the next edition of In Partnership covering May, please send them to the office no later than 20 April.

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The editor's e-mail address is: wspartnershipoffice@gmail.com

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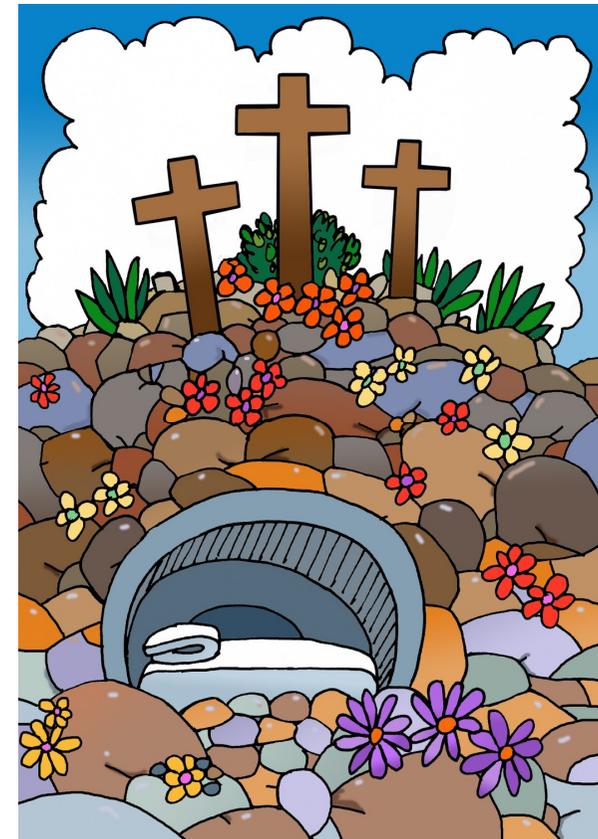
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In Partnership April 2018

Looking outwards and growing together



West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church Partnership
Baptist • Church of England • Methodist • United Reformed Church
Registered Charity: 1141341

April

Alleluia, alleluia,
Give thanks to the risen Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia,
Give praise to his name.

This is the chorus of an Easter hymn which may be sung in our churches on Easter Day, the first verse reads;
Jesus is Lord of all the earth; he is the King of creation, and the second verse tells us to spread the Good news over all the earth.

Part of our discipleship with Christ and one of the main themes of the URC 'Walking the Way' is to spread the *Good News* to everyone we meet. I am not advocating everyone should stand on street corners and tell the gospel however if you fell inclined to do so then OK. I have spoken in recent services about the spreading the good news by the way we act and behave.

We can show our Christianity and our love of the Lord in a variety of subtle ways which does not cause anyone to be upset and we are not forcing our faith on others.

Many people wear as a lapel badge or have the fish sign on their car so why not take it a step further. On your desk in the office have a Christian symbol, I kept a palm cross blue tacked on the office partition in a place where everyone who passed by could see and inside my car is a palm cross so people who get in my car know I'm making a statement.

When people I have never met before ask me what I do for a living I say I'm retired but am now a lay preacher, and that one phrase opens up many doors to discussion. The dog walkers in the park know I'm a lay preacher and yes I get friendly ribbing at times but when they feel down or in need they have a chat with me.

Each of us can find ways of outreach in our daily lives, but we have to admit to people who we are and what we do. I found in many areas of work there are people who hide their faith and are worried how their colleagues may respond. My answer is show your faith, in simple ways, be joyful.

I remember one Christmas I was softly singing to myself a Christmas carol while working on the computer and then a colleague started to join in, I never knew she went to church she kept her faith quiet, but after that she opened up and I found there were now two of us in this section, there may have been more but every so often the council have a big change round and my office changed buildings again so I never found out.

Recently when Mr White van man hit the back of our car, we had a replacement vehicle from a rental firm while ours was being repaired and in

From the Registers

Baptism

18 March 2018 Elsie Susan Seddon

Funerals

07 March 2018 William Ronald Taylor

27 March 2018 Anthony Ernest Heath

Weddings

03 March 2018 Adam Antony Webb and Natalie Marie Stevenson

PRAYERS

Please pray:

To lift up the 2.1 billion people around the world who lack safe drinking water, affecting their health, education and livelihoods.

For Schools in the Partnership

St Marys Roman Catholic Rodbourne Cheney	Week beginning 01.04.18
Swindon Community Church meeting at Bridlewood School	Week beginning 08.04.18
Kingdom House Ministries meeting at Red House Community Centre	Week beginning 15.04.18
St Andrews Anglican Blunston	Week beginning 22.04.18
United Apostolic Church meeting at Christ the servant Abbey Meads	Week beginning 29.04.18



Swindon Voter ID Pilot

We would like to inform you about the upcoming Voter ID election pilot which aims to reduce electoral fraud. As you may have heard, Swindon residents who vote at a polling station will be required to present a form of ID before voting in the local elections on 3 May. For Swindon residents voting at a polling station, the best and most convenient form of ID is the poll card which will be sent to all voters who are registered to vote at a Swindon polling station in April. Each poll card contains a barcode that is unique to the individual and will be scanned at the polling station before a vote is placed. Other forms of ID are also accepted, please see our website for further details about the pilot and a full list of accepted ID: www.swindon.gov.uk/VoterID.

We would like to make as many people aware of this as possible, particularly groups at risk of missing the message. As your organisation attracts such a wide congregation of Swindon residents, we would very much appreciate it if you could publicise Voter ID through your channels, such as through noticeboards, newsletters, digital channels or any means you can think of that would publicise the message that residents will need to bring their poll card to vote. To do this, we have a range of digital and physical materials (including posters and leaflets) that we can send to you. If you have any requests for specific materials, such as alternate languages please do not hesitate to let us know by contacting us at communications@swindon.gov.uk.

Many thanks,
Swindon Borough Council Communications Team

Some of Billy Graham's notable quotes

The American evangelist who died in late February

I've read the last page of the Bible, it's all going to turn out all right.

It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict, God's job to judge and my job to love.

My home is in Heaven. I'm just traveling through this world.

God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, 'I love you.'

Suppose you could gain everything in the whole world, and lost your soul. Was it worth it?

There is nothing wrong with men possessing riches. The wrong comes when riches possess men.

conversation with the lady filling out forms we found she was a Christian and went to her church regularly.

Ann Hall when in hospital soon finds out which nurses and doctors have a faith and gets in to discussion them.

It makes no difference where we are or what we do we should show and live out our faith at all times and in all places.

So let me close with the last line of this Easter hymn;

'Come let us praise the living God.

Joyfully sing to our saviour.'

Alleluia, alleluia,

Give thanks to the risen Lord,

Alleluia, alleluia,

Give praise to his name.

Wishing you God's blessings this Easter

David Hoar

The return of hope

This month starts with Easter, which is a lovely thought. Whatever else, Easter speaks of new life, of fresh starts and the return of hope.

The whole traditional story is about darkness defeated by a light which can never be extinguished. That's why, in our hemisphere, Easter seems to fit in well with the changing season. Fresh flowers in the graveyard match the Easter hymns inside the church: *The Lord of life is risen today/ Bring flowers of song to strew his way*'.

It's a strange fact that all through the long history of mankind, despite the evidence of our eyes, people have stubbornly refused to believe that death is the end. They buried their dead with food and implements they would need in the next life, whatever name they gave it – Valhalla, the Elysian Fields, Abraham's Bosom or Nirvana. Jesus called it 'the kingdom of heaven' or 'eternal life'. The very idea of heaven is beyond our comprehension, because we can't image a life not lived in our familiar dimensions of space, time and physicality. But God lives beyond time and space, and Jesus said He is 'Spirit'.

It's good that there are some things to believe in which we cannot possibly understand now. Although one day, St Paul said, we shall. Until then we trust, and Easter hymns and flowers are signs of the annual return of hope.

Canon David Winter

Regular activities

2nd Sunday each month	
Messy Church	08 April 4 - 5:30pm @ Shaw
Every Monday	
After School Youth Group Contact Claire Camm 07981951381	3:30 – 6:00pm @ Holy Trinity Shaw
Every Tuesday	
Bell Ringing	7-9pm St Mary's Bell Tower
2nd Wednesday of each month	
Mothers Union Contact Jean Brock 01793 539456	11 April 2pm @ St Mary's Stable Room
Every Thursday	
Toothill Tinies	10 -11:30am @ Toothill
Home Group	
HTS led by Sue Green Contact Sue on 01793 872056 for details	Thursday 7.30pm
TOOTHILL led by Rev Jan Partridge Contact Jan on 01793 534992 for details	3rd Monday of each month 2.30pm
WESTLEA led by Pete Gilder Contact Pete on 01793 878823 for details	Alternate Tuesdays 8pm

GERALDINE LATTY

IN CONCERT



SATURDAY 28TH APRIL
7 PM

Daytime workshop tickets
also available

For tickets and information, please contact
Adrian Foster - 07979 438700

The Beacon Centre
Sheldon Road Methodist Church
Chippenham
SN14 0DU

Harbour Project Quiz Night

Friday 13th April 2018

St Joseph's College, Ocotal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR

7pm for 7.30pm start

Team size a maximum of 8 – we can put you together with others if you're fewer than this.

Tickets £10 each – which includes a fish and chips supper or vegan alternative – must be booked in advance to enable us to get your order in!

All profits in aid of the Harbour Project.

Book online at eventbrite.co.uk (search 'The return of the Harbour quiz').

Swindon Eco Fest

22 April 2018

Savernake Hall, Savernake Street, Swindon, SN1 3LZ

11.00am – 5.00pm

Admission Free

Fireworks, Festivals & Outdoor Events

The event will be organised by Swindon Climate Action Network (SCAN) and Eastcott Community Organisation, and will be a day of inspiration and information. - all with an eco-theme to coincide with Earth Day!

For more information contact eastcottcommunity@yahoo.co.uk

Synergy

27 April 2018

7.15pm-9.30pm

Play Football Swindon, 29 Bramble Road

A town-wide activities and music event for young people in school years 7-13. Run by Good News for Swindon and Swindon Youth For Christ quarterly.

More details contact synergy.events@outlook.com and check out on facebook.com/SwindonSynergyevents.

West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze
Church Partnership

Partnership AGM 2018

will be held, during a service of worship
on **Sunday 29 April, 10:30am**
at **Holy Trinity Church, Shaw**
(Shaw Village Centre, Ramlease Drive, SN5 5PY)

During the service we will

- Review and approve our 2017 annual report
- Review our finances in 2017, select our auditor for 2018
- Examine progress on the things we decided last year
- Thank those who have served us

- Agree our priorities for 2018 and beyond
- Elect those who will serve us
- Deal with the legal CofE necessities too.

Paper copies of the annual report should be available in advance, or on the day, please ask your Partnership Council rep.

All the information you need
will also be published at
<http://WSwinLyd.org.uk/council/report/>.



Why Easter will never go away

How do you make sense of the Resurrection? Dead men don't rise, so why believe that this particular dead man did rise?

At the end of St Luke's Gospel we read that: "they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement" (Luke 24.4). This is highly significant. The Gospels do not show us a group of disciples who were in a receptive frame of mind. After the crucifixion, they were in hiding, frightened and scattered. Then suddenly, they came out of hiding and were totally different; excited, joyful. By Pentecost they were confident, with one firm message: "You crucified Jesus, but God raised him up!"

How did they know this? Because of direct personal experience. Some of them had visited the tomb of Jesus: it was empty. Others claimed to have seen and touched the risen Lord. Were they hallucinating? People can hallucinate in groups – when taking drugs, for example. But, of course each one will see a different hallucination. But the disciples all saw the same thing. Or rather, the same person. Jesus.

Were they lying? Jesus had died a humiliating death as a criminal. Perhaps they wanted to rescue His good name. So did they pretend they had seen Him?

This theory has a big problem. Their preaching led them into trouble with the authorities. They were beaten and imprisoned and some of them killed. People will die for ideas and causes which they believe in passionately. But not for things they have made up. We might suffer for our convictions; we will not suffer for our inventions.

What about the 'swoon' theory? That Jesus didn't die on the cross, despite terrible wounds. He recovered in the tomb, and then escaped. The disciples nursed Him back to health. But Roman soldiers knew when a man was dead; and there was the guard on the tomb. Also, the events which followed simply don't fit. If the disciples had been hiding Jesus, they would have kept very low-key, and out of the way, so that the authorities did not come after Him again.

Besides, to preach that God had raised Jesus from the dead – which is exactly what they did preach – would have been a lie. Beatings and threat of death would soon have loosened their tongues. Inventions crumble under pressure; convictions hold fast.

27 April Tertullian - the fierce firebrand of the Early Church

Tertullian was born in Carthage, North Africa, about 155 AD. He had pagan parents and his father may have been a centurion. Carthage was a prestigious Roman colony and Tertullian was given a good education in Greek, Latin, literature, history and philosophy. On arrival in Rome, Tertullian probably worked as a lawyer.

In Rome, he also enjoyed visits to the arena, to see gladiators kill each other and Christians devoured by lions. However, Tertullian grew impressed with the Christians; by their courage, and willingness to die for their belief in one God. He was also moved by their compassion for the poor, the orphans and widows, and how they prayed for their persecutors. In AD 185, he converted, and married a Christian woman.

On Tertullian's return to Carthage he became a vociferous, if not always orthodox, defender of Christianity. He wrote in Latin, instead of Greek, and used legal terms to persuade the Roman establishment to cease its relentless persecution of Christians. He argued they had a right to a fair trial, instead of just being condemned to death.

Tertullian advocated that Christianity should stand uncompromisingly against the surrounding culture. He addressed a whole range of issues, from appropriate dress and marriage, to idolatry, repentance and baptism. He also wrote essays on prayer and devotion. Tertullian used the Scriptures to refute heresies, especially Gnosticism, which was a major threat to the Church at the time.

His prolific works are full of memorable phrases, puns and wit. While he could be gentle, sensitive, self-critical and reflective, he could also be aggressive and sarcastic. He devised the term *New Testament*, and introduced the words *penitence* and *sacrament*. His most famous statement was: "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church".

Late in life, Tertullian sadly decided that Jesus and the Holy Spirit were not wholly equal with the Father. This was Montanism, one of the early Christian heresies. Although he coined the word *Trinity*, a word that does not appear anywhere in the Bible, sadly he did not mean a triune God, but a group of three. This was heresy, and so the Early Church was not able to recognise him as a saint. According to tradition, he died about AD 225.

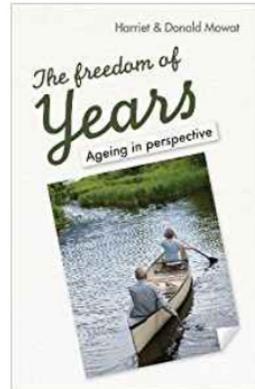
The Freedom of Years

Ageing in perspective

By Harriet and Donald Mowat, BRF, £8.99

Here is a Christian perspective on ageing, developed within the UK's health and social care services over the past 40 years.

Addressing profound and critical questions – What is ageing for? Is old age included in the purposes of God? What does 'successful' ageing look like? – the authors offer wise, informed suggestions. 'In accepting our own ageing,' they say, 'we start the journey towards ageing well, and can thus help others to age well.'



'We would argue that the successful ager, in every age, is he/she who manages to navigate a way through the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, both external and internal, and to find a balance that offers freedom and choice, rather than imprisonment and prescription. This is greatly aided by embarking consciously and purposefully on a journey of the soul or spirit, which at its core addresses meaning and purpose.'

Prayer for faith and freedom

Almighty God,

Lord of life, we thank you for the life and death of Jesus. Most of all we thank you for His resurrection which changed the world and made it possible for us to know you as our loving, gracious Father.

Lord, when we feel locked in, imprisoned by fears and circumstances, help us to remember that locked doors mean nothing to you. You can set us free. You can help us. You give strength for today and tomorrow. You give us new life as your children, through faith in Jesus.

May we open our hearts to your help today; to receive from you the peace and power that we need – and then to share it.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Another reason for believing in the Resurrection is this: Jesus' continuing impact. Thousands and soon millions of people in every generation since have shared an inescapable sense of being 'accompanied' through life. Though unseen, they identify this presence as the Risen Lord.

Sometimes this experience of meeting Jesus is gentle and fitful. Sometimes it is dramatic and life-changing. This reminds us that the resurrection of Jesus is not just an interesting historical puzzle. It is a vital, present day reality. It brings wonderful comfort, assuring us of the central Christian truths: death is dead; Jesus is alive; God is love.

This central notion was captured, most movingly, by the great Albert Schweitzer: 'He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: "Follow thou me", and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the suffering which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is.' Have a joyful – and a challenging – Easter.



...rumours that we would be giving out easter eggs are unfounded - er, there aren't any left!

23 April - St George of the Golden Legend

The Saint of an English Army before he was Patron Saint of England, St George may have been a soldier, but he was no Englishman. He was an officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror, and was martyred at Lydda in Palestine about the year 300 AD - supposedly 23 April. Over the years St George became the example of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful helper against evil powers affecting individual lives. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages, of whom remarkable deeds were reported.

In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine gave St George a handsome write-up. The story runs thus:

One day, St George rode up to the heathen city of Sylene in Lybia, where he found the citizens in great distress. A neighbouring dragon had forced them to surrender two sheep each day for its dinner, and when the sheep gave out, two of their children; and now they were about to sacrifice the King's daughter, dressed as if for her wedding. St George encountered the little party by a stagnant lake, where the dragon lived, and persuaded the sobbing Princess to tell him why she was so miserable. At that moment the dragon appeared, looking inexpressibly revolting. The Saint charged, and drove his spear into the gaping mouth. To everyone's amazement, he tumbled the monster over and over.

Then St George borrowed the Princess's girdle, tied it round the dragon's neck, and persuaded her to lead it back to Sylene herself. The sight of her approaching with the befuddled dragon on its makeshift lead emptied the town. When the inhabitants timidly crept back, St George promised to behead the dragon if they would all believe in Jesus Christ and be baptised.

It was a most effective form of evangelism, for everybody said 'yes' at once. So 15,000 people were baptised, and four carts were commissioned to remove the dragon's body.

St George thus became a symbol of the war against evil, and is usually portrayed trampling the dragon of sin under his horse's hoofs. The Crusaders had a vision of him helping them against the Saracens at Antioch, during the first Crusade, and so brought the story of St George back with them from Palestine. Presently England put herself under the protection of the Saint. His day was declared a holiday in 1222. A red cross on a white field is the flag of St George.

Public Meeting Inequality- The Enemy Between Us

VENUE: The Baptist Church, Gorse Hill
Swindon SN2 1AA

DATE: Thursday 12th April 2018

TIME: 7.00pm - 8.30pm

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Wanda Wyporska - Executive Director of The Equality Trust

Lee Rayfield - Bishop of Swindon

With discussion to follow - and unfortunately discussion is still needed because:

- The UK is one of the most unequal countries in the developed world
- Average pay is approximately £27k a year, but for top company directors it's around **£5 MILLION** a year
- This huge inequality damages you, your family and your community
- It means we suffer worse health and social problems than more equal countries
- There is increasing evidence that it harms our economy too

Swindon Equality Group is a group of local people who seek to address inequality in our local area. We are not affiliated to any political party. We are affiliated to The Equality Trust: a national, evidence-based, charity that aims to improve the quality of life in the UK by reducing inequality.

Swindon Equality Group website: swindonequality.ptck.co.uk

The Equality Trust: <http://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/support>

There will be no charge to attend this event. Contributions for refreshments will be welcome.

National Weekend of Invitation

Friday 15th to Sunday 17th June 2018

Christians challenged to step beyond 'fear barrier' during weekend of invitation

Question: *What scares most Christians?*

Easy: *The thought of inviting their friends and family to church with them.*

But suppose we all got together, and did it as a national initiative? And so it is that the UK's first National Weekend of Invitation was planned. It will take place Friday 15th to Sunday 17th June 2018).

It is hoped that tens of thousands of church members across the country will use the weekend to step beyond the 'fear barrier' and invite their friends and family to church events.

The Weekend is in response to what the organisers call 'The churches' greatest missed opportunity'. For research shows that up to three million people in the UK are actually open to an invitation – which never comes, because most Christians are too timid.

The date for the Weekend has been set to follow the Archbishops' Thy Kingdom Come prayer initiative.

Churches can decide for themselves what they will do on the weekend - big or small, for young or old, for a special group or for all. They may choose to invite people to something that's a regular activity, to a special guest event or guest service.'

The National Weekend of Invitation's website – weekendofinvitation.com – offers churches videos to use in their preparation and extensive resources to download.

Pursue Justice

Are you concerned about religious freedom – or the lack of it – worldwide? Then you may be interested in two events coming up soon, organised by Christian Solidarity Worldwide.

The 'Pursue Justice Live' events are going to take place in London in April, and in Birmingham in June. CSW is encouraging people to either come on their own, or else come as a church group, and learn what they can do to support Christians facing persecution in other countries. More details and booking at: www.csw.org.uk/pursuejustice.htm



Easter Holiday Activity Day

Friends Reunited!



Come along and join the fun.

Thursday
5th
April

A day of stories, crafts, singing, cooking and games for children in Reception – Year 9.

At Holy Trinity Church Shaw 10am-3pm

Registration: 9.45am-10am

Pickup: 3pm (Celebration and refreshments for parents and children)

For more information and to book places please phone the Partnership office on **874221** or email gayleschoolswork@gmail.com

Church Services in the Partnership St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze

Date	Time	Form
01 April	6:15am	Easter Day Sunrise Communion
01 April	10:00am	Communion
08 April	10:00am	Communion
15 April	10:00am	Family Service
22 April	10:00am	Communion
29 April	10:30am	Partnership AGM @ HTS

Holy Trinity Shaw

Date	Time	Form
01 April	10:30am	Morning Service
08 April	10:30am	All Age Service
08 April	4:00pm	Messy Church
15 April	10:30am	Morning Service
15 April	7:00pm	Encounter
22 April	10:30am	All Age Service with Communion
29 April	10:30am	Partnership AGM
8.45am Morning Prayer on Fridays during term time.		

Toothill

Date	Time	Form
01 April	10:30am	All Age Service with Communion
08 April	10:30am	Morning Service
15 April	10:30am	Morning Service
22 April	10:30am	Morning Service
29 April	10:30am	Partnership AGM @ HTS

Westlea

Date	Time	Form
01 April	10:00am	Communion
08 April	10:00am	All Age Service
15 April	10:00am	Communion
22 April	10:00am	All Age Service
29 April	10:30am	Partnership AGM @ HTS

Thy Kingdom Come

The events run 10 May - 20 May with various activities happening each day around the Partnership.

There will be a launch event 10th May, hopefully at Asda, or if we aren't able to host it there it will be at Holy Trinity Shaw.

On Saturday 12th May there will be a prayer safari walking between the four churches, stopping for prayer stations and refreshments at each.



Public Affirmation of Faith and Confirmation Sunday 17 June 2018 St Paul's Covingham

The service at will take place late afternoon/early evening.

If anyone wishes to be confirmed the first meeting will take place at **3.00pm** on **Sunday 15th of April** at the **Stable Room next to St Mary's**.

Further details please contact Clive.