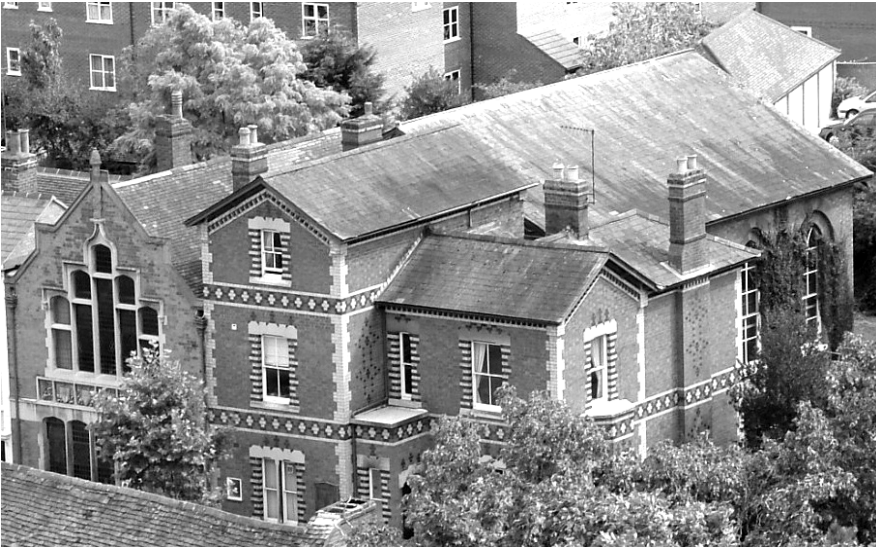


Pershore Baptist Church



Messenger

Broad Street, Pershore, Worcestershire

March 2008

www.pershorebaptist.org

Church Secretary Ann P. Taylor
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Dear Friends

What Difference Does Easter Make?

So what if the Easter bunny wins the hearts of children everywhere? So why not strike "Easter vacation" from the vocabulary of our schools and substitute "Spring break"? What difference does Easter make anyway?

It makes a lot of difference to those who are in touch enough with reality to take life and death seriously. It made a lot of difference to a very real woman named Mary. Let me tell you her story.

Mary had the heart-wrenching honour of washing the dried blood from Jesus' lifeless body as two other followers prepared the tomb cut into Jerusalem's cold limestone. Mary wept as she washed; wept and remembered....

She had been born to luxury, heiress to a textile fortune, a native of Magdala, a town along the coast of Galilee. "Little good it did me," she mused. Money had brought the opposite of happiness. She looked back at her teen years as a blur of painful, compulsive acting out. Her parents had thrown up their hands in despair, she recalled. She recollected the gnawing fear, the self-loathing that ate at her very core. And she could remember the caring boldness in Jesus' penetrating eyes as he had confronted the demons that tormented her and commanded them

to be gone forever. That had been the last of the frantic, distraught Mary. A gentle, peace-filled Mary had taken her place. Until today. Today she had seen her Lord die an excruciating death, his body weight hanging limp from the nails driven through his hands and feet, suspended from a cross like a common criminal.

Her heart caught in her throat as she remembered and wept and washed away the caked blood with her tears. She wept too, as she watched the men lift Jesus' corpse onto the tomb's carved ledge, and roll a massive stone across the doorway.

Was all her hope for nothing? What of all the thousands of diseased bodies he had healed? The broken lives he had restored? The promises of the Kingdom of God?

But early Sunday morning she was back at the tomb to finish anointing his body. When she arrived the tomb stood open, stone pushed to the side, ashes of the Roman guards' watch-fire still smouldering. "How can they be so cruel?" she cried as she ran to tell the apostles. So cruel. But it wasn't cruelty that rolled away the stone that Easter morning. It was the powerful hand of God as Jesus Christ stepped forth brimming with Life.

Mary saw him, mistaking him for the gardener. But there was no mistaking his familiar voice—"Mary." She fell at his feet, tears of grief

melting into tears of joy. "Rabboni," she said as she looked into his face. "Teacher."

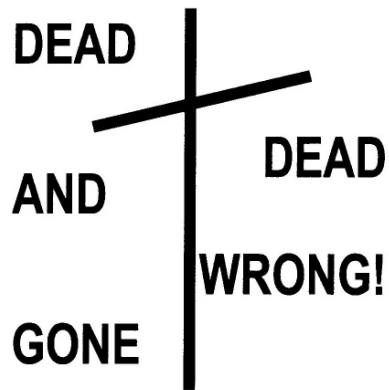
Yes, Easter bunnies still capture the hearts of children and schools talk about Spring break, but you and I know what really happened on Easter.

In an instant history changed forever, because where once the human mortality rate had held steady at 100%, now it skipped a beat as Jesus, Saviour of all mankind, stepped out of dead statistics into life. Death is the last word no longer for Jesus' followers, life is.

"Believe in Bhudda," some still insist amid the marketplace of the world religions. "Confucius," say the Chinese. "Mohammed," cry the Muslims. "Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh," shout his followers, and on it goes.

"Jesus," Mary would tell us, "He changed my life." And millions around the globe would echo, "Mine, too. He touched my life, too."

DEAD
AND
GONE



DEAD
WRONG!

For while religious leaders have come and gone, the fact remains: only One stepped forth from the tomb. Only One has risen from the dead. Only One has conquered death. Only One offers the promise of eternal life to those who follow him.

"I am the resurrection and the life," Jesus said. "He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."

So why do Jesus' followers gather in churches on Easter morning? To show off their Easter finery? God forbid. Rather

- To celebrate the victory of Life over death,
- To help their children and grandchildren share their faith that Jesus is alive, and
- To declare that Jesus Christ is Lord indeed!

We hope you'll join us and millions of Christians around the world this Easter Sunday.

*Dr Ralph F. Wilson
Stormont Stepping Stone*

Seen on a Wayside Pulpit

COMING SOON – READY OR NOT

JESUS

The crosses we bear are not supposed to be heavy enough to crush us, ...but they are heavy enough to bend our knees.

News of the Family

A letter from America (Feb 6th)

Mother (**Marjorie Barber**) is doing well, she has some problems with mobility, but we still manage to go out several times a week. I have a wheelchair for her and she loves going "just for the ride".

We have some lovely countryside around us, and the weather is usually mild. It reached 72°F this afternoon.

Mother is also looking forward to the end of May, when she is expecting her first great grand child. It is a girl, and my son and his wife only live about 10 miles from us, so we will be able to see her often. She has told my daughter-in-law to hold on till June 11th!! so that the baby can be born on Mothers 91st birthday. Cara is not keen on that!

Mother sends her love to all her friends in the church, and we wish you, and your family a happy and healthy 2008.

Best Wishes,

Arlene Taylor

Les Brookes and Megan Turver are both ill and need our prayers.

A big thank you to all those who have served on rotas, compiled rotas and those who have carried out all the extra jobs in the church over the past year. The AGM is the time when we have reports from the various groups within the church and also gives us an opportunity to update the rotas etc. If you would like to be added to any of the rotas please let me know and I will make sure that you are included for the coming year. Similarly, if you would like to come off a rota or stand down from compiling a rota please let me know.

Ann P Taylor

St Patrick's Day moved to 15 March

The Roman Catholic Church has moved St Patrick's Day this year, after discovering it clashes with a key day in the Church's calendar. The Irish patron saint's feast, normally on March 17, this year would clash with the second day of Holy Week.

RC Church rules decree the saint's feast day does not rank as highly as the Monday before Easter and therefore it had to be moved two days back to March 15, which falls on a Saturday. Senior Irish clerics wanted to keep the date as close to international civic celebrations as possible, as they are planned years in advance.

The last time St Patrick's Day had to be moved was in 1940 when it coincided with Palm Sunday, the first day of Holy Week. The next date it will have to be moved again is 2160.

Graffito on a city notice board:

"Smart people speak from experience. Smarter people, from experience, do not speak".

Ruth Tisdall's letters and updates are being put on the notice

board in the church. Please continue to pray for her.

Social Events 2008

The social events team has worked hard to finalise the details for this year's forthcoming events and we hope many of you, and your friends, will be able to join us. If you would like to receive information about the events by email our social events board in the vestibule has a sheet for you to leave your details or you can email me directly at tracy.wheeler@talk21.com. Once you have joined our list you will be sent details of each event and have the opportunity to register your interest early, rather than wait for 'that clipboard'!

So the excitement so far.....

Games Evening, Saturday March 1st

– a very popular evening for young and old alike playing lots of games and winning prizes!

Mothering Sunday Lunch, Sunday March 2nd

– a 3-course lunch following our morning worship to treat all the Mums.

Skittles Evening, Saturday April 19th

– another very popular evening to be held at The New Inn, Cropthorne.

Car Treasure Hunt, Saturday May 17th

- a jaunt around the countryside followed by tea and cakes.

Church Walk, Saturday June 16th

– another trip in the countryside but this time on foot.

Barn Dance, Saturday September 13th

– we are delighted that Eve Evans and her husband have agreed to return and lead us in another evening of fun and dance.

Mime Artist, October 4th and 5th

– we are privileged to invite Steve Murray back to our church for a weekend of mime ministry. If you didn't see Steve a few years back when he came, then ask anyone who did and I'm sure they will tell you this is definitely one event you shouldn't miss!

Quiz 'n' Chips – of course our calendar would not be complete without our annual quiz evening.

Please think about all these events and who you might like to invite. It really is a wonderful opportunity to share the fellowship that we have with others.

Tracy Wheeler

The deadline for the April Messenger is **March 9th**.

Could I please remind you that the deadline is the **ABSOLUTE LATEST** time (and **NOT THE** time) for articles to be submitted?

If the contribution is long (over 250 words or more than one column) then it needs to be submitted **much** earlier otherwise there may not be space for it to be put in the next edition.

Mike Taylor

More Badminton dates

Meeting details were in February Messenger, or ask Anne Sadler (tel: 01386-860491)

March – 7th

April – 4th and 18th

May – 2nd and 16th

June – 6th and 20th

July – 4th and 18th

August – 1st and 15th

September – 5th and 19th

October – 3rd and 17th

November – 7th and 21st

December – 5th and 19th

Find death and resurrection in our own churchyard

There aren't many things alive today that were alive when Jesus was born, but some of them are yew trees. Because of their long life and their ability to send out new growth from their ancient, gnarled trunk and branches, yew trees have long been seen as symbols of resurrection and of new life.

The oldest yew tree in the world is in the churchyard at Fortingall, close to Loch Tay. It has the appearance of two separate trees, a split in the trunk having begun to widen in the 18th century. The larger portion measures over 20 feet in girth, and has considerable recent growth. The tree, say scientists, is about 5,000 years old.

Fortingall is roughly in the middle of Scotland, and there is an ancient legend that says that Pontius Pilate was born, son of a Roman army officer, at a Roman camp here, and played under the tree as a child, scratching his initials on it!

An Easter Egg with a difference

Tired of chocolate Easter eggs? Why not tinkle a goose egg this year instead?

A goose lays just 20 eggs a year, and so a goose egg is a gourmet treat. Known in France as des oeufs d'oie, a goose egg is also a seasonal treat: geese only lay between spring and early summer.

If you intend to go to work on a goose egg this Easter - better leave yourself plenty of time. A goose egg can be three times as big, roughly the size of a tennis ball, and can take between nine and 11 minutes to boil. It requires a regiment of toast soldiers to mop up the yolk.

But food gourmets say a goose egg is well worth the trouble - and the extra expense - (last year at Waitrose they cost about £2.50 each). Goose eggs are richer, creamier, and tastier - and big enough to share with a loved one. If you don't fancy one boiled, try serving it scrambled with truffles or smoked salmon.

Lecturing her six-year old son, the mother concluded, "Always remember that we are in this world to help others."

The youngster mulled this over for a minute and then asked, "What are the others here for?"

Reader's Digest

A crowd is not an achievement, only an opportunity.

W E Sangster

The Oxford and Cambridge 2008 Boat Race

The big race this year falls on Saturday March 29th at 17.15. The first one took place in 1829, and since then it has been rowed every year except during the two World Wars.

The course covers four and a quarter miles of the Thames from Putney to Mortlake, which makes it three times the length of an Olympic course.

There has only ever been one dead heat - when in 1877 the finish line judge fell asleep under a bush as the crews raced past. When he woke up and was asked the result he said: "Dead heat to Oxford by four feet."

Another famous gaffe was made in 1949 by BBC commentator John Snagge, who said; "I can't see who's in the lead, but it's either Oxford or Cambridge."

When as a child I played

and wept... Time crept
When as a youth I dreamed and
talked... Time walked
And then I became a man...

Time ran
As in years I older grow... Time
flew

Soon I shall find while traveling
on...

Time gone
Will Christ have saved my soul by
then?
AMEN

Old Clock in Chester Cathedral

In December 2007 several members of Pershore church decided to forgo their warm beds, comfortable sofas, and the convenience of the fridge for the pavement outside the church.

I spent 40 hours on the pavement before Christmas, with the company of Peter Everitt, Josh and Dan Hart and David Tisdell during the day, and Andy Jones, Keith and Theresa Hart and Steve John during the evenings and over night.

To sleep, we curled up, insulated by cardboard and bubble wrap and braved the minus 2 degrees cold (about 32°F I think) and freezing fog. Protected from thieves and murderers by Keith's incredible snoring, we remained safe until morning! Then began the long stint of the Saturday shift, where we opened up the church for soup and tea, helped out by Allan and Rose Hitchman. Saturday evening saw a soup kitchen lead by Claudine and Allan Mee, and Peter, one of the homeless in Pershore, dropped by for soup and to encourage us.

This adventure on the streets of Pershore was to raise awareness of homelessness, and people who are lonely at Christmas. We raised £956 for St. Paul's hostel in Worcester and learned an awful lot about ourselves in the process. It was an amazing opportunity to witness to people, and to show the church giving out a message of practical Christian love, reminding us where Jesus would have been at Christmas...surrounded by family and friends, in a warm house or out on the street with the lost and lonely? *Hannah Cheung*

March 16 – 23

Palm Sunday and Holy Week

This year, Easter Day falls on 23 March. The week leading up to it, which begins with Palm Sunday on 16 March, is very special in the church year, and is known as Holy Week.

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, the day when the Church remembers the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The gospels tell us that he had gone up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, and that when he entered the city, the crowds gave him a rapturous welcome, throwing palm fronds into his path. On this day churches worldwide will distribute little crosses made from palm fronds in memory of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem.

The next highlight of Holy Week falls on Maundy Thursday. Maundy Thursday focuses on one of the final acts concerning Jesus to be related in John's Gospel - the washing of the disciples' feet by Jesus. The ceremony of the 'washing of the feet' of members of the congregation came to be an important part of the liturgy (regular worship) of the medieval church, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

'Maundy' is an unusual word, and relates to this medieval practice of foot-washing. In the Middle Ages, church services were held in Latin. The opening words of a typical service on this day are based on the words of Jesus recorded in

John 13: 'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.' In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is 'mandatum novum do vobis' The word 'mundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (or command).

In England, in by-gone years, as an affirmation of humility, the monarch would wash the feet of a small number of his or her subjects. This has now been replaced by the ceremony of the 'Maundy money', in which the Queen distributes specially minted coins to the elderly at cathedrals throughout England.

Good Friday is the day on which Jesus died on the cross. It is the most solemn day in the Christian year, and is widely marked by the removal of all decorations from churches. In Lutheran churches, the day was marked by the reading of the passion narrative in a gospel, a practice which lies behind the 'passions' composed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750). Both the St Matthew Passion and the St John Passion have their origins in this observance of Good Friday.

The custom of observing a period of three hours' devotion from 12 midday to 3 pm on Good Friday goes back to the 18th century. The 'Three Hours of the Cross' often take the form of an extended meditation on the 'Seven Last Words from the Cross', with periods of silence, prayer, or hymn-singing.

Lent ends with Holy Saturday. The Eastern Orthodox churches hold

the 'Paschal Vigil' - a late evening service which leads directly into the following Easter Day.

Easter, of course, is the day of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Why does the date move around so much? Because the date of Passover moves around, and according to the biblical account, Easter is tied to the Passover. Passover celebrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt and it lasts for seven days, from the middle of the Hebrew month of Nisan, which equates to late March or early April.

Sir Isaac Newton was one of the first to use the Hebrew lunar calendar to come up with firm dates for Good Friday: Friday 7 April 30 AD or Friday 3 April, 33 AD, with Easter Day falling two days later. Modern scholars continue to think these the most likely.

Most people will tell you that Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, which is broadly true. But the precise calculations are unbelievably complicated and involve something called an 'ecclesiastical full moon', which is not the same as the moon in the sky. The earliest possible date for

Easter in the West is 22 March, which last fell in 1818 and won't fall again until 2285. The latest is 25 April, which last happened in 1943 and is next due in 2038.

Why the name, 'Easter'? In almost every European language, the festival's name comes from 'Pesach', the Hebrew word for Passover. The Germanic word 'Easter', however, seems to come from Eostre, a Saxon fertility goddess mentioned by the Venerable Bede. He thought that the Saxons worshipped her in 'Eostur month', but may have confused her with the classical dawn goddesses like Eos and Aurora, whose names mean 'shining in the east'. So Easter might have meant simply 'beginning month' - a good time for starting up again after a long winter.

Finally, why Easter eggs? On one hand, they are an ancient symbol of birth in most European cultures. On the other hand, hens start laying regularly again each Spring. Since eggs were forbidden during Lent, it's easy to see how decorating and eating them became a practical way to celebrate Easter.

God must work in you before God can work on you.

I cannot recall, in any of my reading, a single instance of a prophet who applied for the job.

AW Tozer

I think there may be insanity in my family. They keep asking me for money.

The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail and not his tongue.

Weekly Church Events

Sundays	
10.30am	Family service with Sunday School Communion 3rd Sundays
5.00pm (6.00pm in summer)	Evening Worship Communion 1st Sundays
Mondays	
1.30pm	Little Fishes playgroup
7.30pm	House Group Middle Lane, Crothorne
7.45pm	Prayer meeting at Church
Wednesdays	
2.30pm	Women's Own – Lower Room
7.45pm	Prayer and Bible Study 21 Ganderton Court
8.00pm	Bible Study 48 Mayfield Road
Thursdays	
10.15am	House Group 20 Abbeycroft
10.30am	Baby talk
7.45pm	Deacon's Meeting 1st and 3rd Thursdays

There is a **Monthly Communion service** on a Wednesday at 2.30pm

Impact- A generation Youth Event on 4th Sunday at 7.00pm

The **Thursday Club** meets in the Lower Room at 7.30pm on the 4th Thursday of each month.

Church Badminton is between 8-9pm on 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month in Pershore High School. Details from Anne Sadler.

The **Multiple Sclerosis Group** meet on Monday mornings in the Worship area.

The **St John's Ambulance** use the Upper and Lower Rooms on Tuesday evening.

U3A Choir uses the Upper Room on alternate Wednesdays at 2.15pm

Thursday Club

On 27th March Angela Hugman will give a talk entitled "Working as a Physiotherapist in the Middle East". The meeting will begin at 7.30pm. It will be held in the lower schoolroom. All are welcome.

Woman's Own

5 Brian Bremer - *Exotic Holiday Slides - Plus AGM*
19 Communion Service *with an Easter Theme - Diane McBride*

Churches together in Pershore

Good Friday

In the past on Good Friday we have had a **March of Witness**, leaving Broad Street and walking up the High Street for a short service in Chapman Court.

The work at present being carried out in the High Street is a bit of a problem this year. The thought is that we shall witness with a short service in Chapman Court, probably at 10.30am. It would be great if there was a good turnout from all three churches.

Finally, but by no means least, there will be the usual **service on Bredon Hill** on Good Friday afternoon.

If you have any questions please ask me

John Gosney

Would anyone

who would like to join the
Readers' Rota
please speak to Pam Rayner

The clocks go forward

on 29th/30th March.
The evening services will be
at 6pm for the summer.

News item from House of Commons (18 Jan 2008)

A group of MPs have tabled a motion for the Disestablishment of the Church of England.

The allocated number of the Common's Order Paper is 666



MOTHERING SUNDAY 2nd March

The old Gospel reading for this Sunday was about the feeding of the five thousand so it was called Refreshment Sunday. Over time this Sunday became associated with family reunions and gatherings and became Mothering Sunday.

Mother's Day, which in this country is on the same day as Mothering Sunday, is an American invention which was started in 1906. Mother's Day is about the mother of a family but Mothering Sunday is more connected with Mother Church, the family meaning has been added on.



Whatever we think about commercial inventions, it is still good to thank those who care for us, no matter how old we are.

MOTHER'S DAY CARD

Nice cards for Mother's Day can be rather expensive so why don't you make your own? You don't have to be artistic to make this simple lacy card. You will need some coloured card, glue and a paper lace doily.

Cut a piece of card twice as big as the card you want and fold it in half. Then cut up the doily to make the decoration – some have lovely patterns of hearts, flowers and leaves.



Put a very small amount of glue on the back of the 'lace' and press it onto the card. Finish off the card by writing a nice message inside.



THE OTHER MUMMY?

Why do mummies tell no secrets?

Because they keep everything under wraps.

How can you tell when a mummy is angry?

He flips his lid.



Christian Basics

Why the Cross?

The cross is the badge of the Christian. Yet it was the cruellest form of execution known in the ancient world until it was eventually banned in the 5th century AD. Paradoxically as a horrifying instrument of torture and death, it is also a symbol of love and peace. The cross is a picture of violence, yet the key to peace; a picture of suffering, yet the key to healing; a picture of death, yet the key to life; a picture of utter weakness, yet the key to power; a picture of capital punishment, yet the key to mercy and forgiveness; a picture of vicious hatred, yet the key to love; a picture of supreme shame, yet the Christian's supreme boast. The cross really is the key to everything!

Like a cut diamond the cross has many facets. On the cross the powers of death and evil were defeated; Jesus identified with our sufferings and set us an example of self-sacrificial love. However, above all Jesus died to deal with the problem of our sin.

Peter writes, 'He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that

we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed ... Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God' (1Peter 2:24, 3:18). Jesus has made the way into God's presence open to all, symbolised when the curtain in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom at the crucifixion. This veil representing the barrier between people and God was torn down by the death of Christ.

How did Jesus achieve this? He died in our place, bore our sins and took our guilt, so paying the full penalty for our sin. Again his final cry on the cross, *tetelesthai*, was a cry of triumph, 'It is finished'. It was the word stamped across bills to indicate that they had been paid. What was the purpose of the cross? Peter answers this question in five short words: 'to bring us to God'. Jesus is like the bridge that provides access between us and God. 'If Jesus Christ is to be our Saviour then he must be able to place a hand upon a pardoning God and another hand on a penitent sinner and draw them together in an act of reconciliation' Bishop Handley Moule.

Paul Hardingham

Easter eggs galore

The UK has the second highest consumption per person of chocolate in Europe, with a market value of £4 billion. And we love our Easter Eggs! An estimated 80 million festive eggs will be sold this year, worth about £220 million.

Last year the Sainsbury's Fair Trade Egg emerged as the top choice in a Daily Telegraph survey to find the ultimate Easter egg. Sainsbury also won approval by cutting the amount of packaging on its eggs - by up to 79%.

Prayer Calendar for March 2008

1	Barbara (Joan) Pritchard	
2	I don't think the way You think	<i>Isaiah 55:8</i>
3	Trevor & Elizabeth Pryce-Jones	
4	Mary Pugh	
5	John & Lee Rawson	
6	Pam & Paul Rayner	
7	Peter & Rosemary Read & family	
8	Andrew & Anne Sadler & family	
9	It is God who makes us able to do all that we do	<i>2 Corinthians 3:5</i>
10	Hasnah Sheriff	
11	Andy Smith	
12	Gerald & Alvina Smith	
13	Simon & Julie Smith & family	
14	Phyllis Smith	
15	Alan & Mary Taylor	
16	... My grace... all you need	<i>2 Corinthians 12:9</i>
17	Mike & Brenda Taylor	
18	Pete & Ann Taylor	
19	Elisabeth Taylor-Gowdy	
20	Margaret Thomson	
21	GOOD FRIDAY The truth will set you free	<i>John 8:32</i>
22	Richard & Alison Tisdall & family	
23	EASTER DAY ... Now is the ... day to be helped	<i>2 Corinthians 6:2</i>
24	Marina Townend & family	
25	Simon Townend	
26	Megan Turver	
27	Becky Valender	
28	Peter & Penny Wagner & family	
29	Gemma Watford	
30	Do not worry about anything	<i>Philippians 4:6</i>
31	Deidre Wellon	

Editorial

1. Messenger material for the April edition to be in by **noon on Sunday 9th March**. Please observe this **EARLY DEADLINE**.
2. If there are any serious errors/oversights, please tell me!
3. If you would prefer a larger print version of the Messenger, have a word with me.

Thanks

Mike Taylor