

Totnes Ministry Team Newsletter

April 2024



And God raised the Lord
and will also raise us up by his power.

1 Corinthians 6:14

Sunday Services in our churches in April 2024

	April 7 Easter 2	April 14 Easter 3	April 21 Easter 4	April 28 Easter 5
St Mary's Totnes	8.00: Holy Communion 11.15: Morning Praise 18.30: Choral Evensong	8.00: Holy Communion 11.15: Sung Eucharist 17.00: Vespers 19.30: Taize	8.00: Holy Communion 11.15: Sung Eucharist 17.00: Vespers	8.00: Holy Communion 11.15: Sung Eucharist 17.00: Vespers
St. John's Bridgetown	10.00: Holy Communion	10.00: Morning Praise	10.00: Holy Communion	10.00: Holy Communion
Ashprington	11.15: Holy Communion	11.15: Village Worship	11.15: Holy Communion	
Berry Pomeroy	11.15: Morning Praise	11.15: Holy Communion	11.15: Holy Communion	11.15: Holy Communion
Brooking			9.15: Holy Communion	
Cornworthy		9.15: Village Worship	9.15: Holy Communion	9.15: Holy Communion
Dartington		10.30: Celtic Holy Communion		10.30: Morning Praise
Marldon	10.00: Holy Communion	10.00: Village Worship	10.00: Holy Communion	10.00: Holy Communion
Stoke Gabriel	8.15: Eucharist 11.00: Holy Communion	8.15 Eucharist 11.00: Holy Communion	8.15: Eucharist 11.00: Choral Mattins	8.15: Eucharist 11.00: Holy Communion 18.30: Evensong
Telephone	Midday	Midday	Midday	Midday
Zoom				10am St John's

For Wild Church/ Monastics contact Sam Wernham on livingspirit3@gmail.com

April 2024 Clergy Letter - Running the Race Canon Deborah Parsons



At the time of writing this article, it is 34 days, 18 hours, 23 minutes and 40 seconds until the London Marathon. For vicars, licensed lay ministers, churchwardens, flower arrangers and choirs, the lead up to Holy Week and Easter can seem rather like a marathon too.

Whilst for many people, the Easter celebration ends with the Easter egg hunt and the consumption of copious amounts of chocolate, for Christians the Easter season continues until Pentecost. But there is also a sense in which the joy and hope of Easter is something that Christians try to live out every day.

The apostle Paul spoke of the Christian faith as a race and the author of Hebrews (12:1) reaffirms this: “Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.”

The Christian journey is certainly not for the faint-hearted. It requires commitment, resilience, focus and teamwork, as the disciples and early Christian communities discovered. Just as athletes have to train to develop their physical muscles, so too we have to exercise our spiritual muscles. In the season after his Resurrection, Jesus appears to his disciples several times, encouraging them and equipping them, like a coach or trainer until the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Counsellor, is sent at Pentecost.

I recently watched the film *Nyad*. It tells the remarkable, true story of athlete, Diana Nyad, a marathon swimmer, who at the age of 60 and with the help of her best friend and coach, commits to achieving her life-long dream: a 110-mile open ocean swim from Cuba to Florida, a feat she’d tried and failed to achieve in her twenties. It’s a reminder that age is no barrier to achievement and a salutary reminder that there is no retirement in the Christian journey but the simple hope that at the end of our lives we will be able to say: “I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

May Christ be your companion in all your journeying. **Happy Easter!**



**Coffee Morning at St Mary's, Berry Pomeroy
a minibus for Ukraine**

Friday 5th April 2024 between 10am & 12 midday

Adrian and Linda Huxham have pleasure in inviting you to a fundraising coffee morning to raise funds for a minibus in Ukraine. This event will provide a wonderful opportunity for you to meet up again with old friends also make new ones.

In addition to coffee, a plentiful supply of homemade cakes & biccies will be available. There will be **no charge** for any of the refreshments but we are hoping you might feel able to make a donation to our Minibus fund. The cost of a used Minibus is likely to be £17.5k. We have already raised £11k from generous mainly local supporters. The following story explains why a Minibus is needed;

Nicolas Winton was a British stockbroker and humanitarian who selflessly rescued over 600 children who were at risk of being murdered by Nazi Germany when Czechoslovakia was invaded in 1938.

Ruslan Zuev was a Salvation Army officer in the Crimea when, in 2014, Russia forcibly annexed it. It was during these violent times Ruslan believed God was telling him to start taking very vulnerable people from places of danger to places of safety.

Here we are in 2024 and at considerable personal risk, Ruslan is still taking the elderly, vulnerable families and children from dangerously exposed parts of the Ukraine to places of safety including Poland and adjoining countries. At the moment he rents a Minibus but it is proving expensive.

Please RSVP as soon as possible to 01803 215254, 07828 552513 or awhuxham@btinternet.com

You might still like to make a donation. Cheques should be payable to The Huxham Charitable Trust and sent to No. 9 Richmond Close, Torquay TQ1 2PW with your name & address on the rear.

Alternatively, your donation can automatically be transferred to The Huxham Charitable Trust, Sort Code: 56 00 49, Account No: 32610580

Body and Soul Food

Tuesday Café, St Mary's Totnes
From March 5th, 10-12am

Wednesday Community Café
St John's, 10-12am

Stepping Stones Warm Cafe
St John's, Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri 12-2pm

Mindful Making, St John's
Tuesdays 13-15pm
& Wednesdays 10-12am

Hot Potato Café, St John's
April 5th 12-2pm

For Mindful Making contact
Claire 07503 474548

First Aid Training

Basic 3 hour long first aid course
on **Saturday 18th May** at Totnes United
Free, led by White Cross Training.

The cost would be £21.70 per head if we
have 11 attendees, and cheaper if we
have more.

Booking via Jean Guest
admin@totnesunitedfree.org.uk

Please let Juliet know if you'd like to attend
as we may be able to reduce costs if enough
people are interested.

Juliet Hancock -
juliet.c.hancock@gmail.com or
07768567548



**STALL HOLDERS WANTED FOR OUR
CHRISTMAS FAIR**
SATURDAY 23rd NOVEMBER
11am-2pm AT
ST JOHN'S CHURCH, BRIDGETOWN
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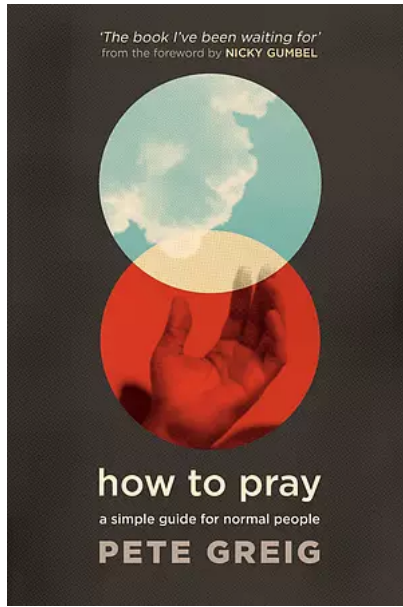
Save the Date!

We know it's only just Spring ...
but organising the Christmas
Fair takes months of planning.
So apologies if this gives you a
jolt!

All the proceeds go towards the
good causes we run from the
church, and we are also able to
provide free and affordable
Advent experiences for local
families. So please support us
if you can!

Book Reviews

We'd love to make this a regular feature. Is there a book you've read that you'd like to share with others? We'd love to hear about it.



How to Pray By Pete Grieg

Published in 2019 by Hodder and Stoughton

This a great book and very practical. It's full of down to earth wisdom and interspersed with real life stories to help and inspire you. Pete Grieg unpacks nine essential aspects of prayer: stillness, adoration, petition, intercession, perseverance, contemplation, listening, confession and spiritual warfare. It links with free online videos, see the Prayer Course, and helpful advice on prayer, online in Toolshed

Pete has been teaching on prayer for many years and co-founded the 24-7 prayer movement.

Carolyn Stilwell

The Language of Tears: David Runcorn

David Runcorn was originally warden of Lee Abbey and has written numerous books. This rather unusual book is a treasure and very thought-provoking, especially when he writes about emotional tears. He points out that human beings are thought to be the only creatures to shed those. He addresses the therapeutic value of tears but also refers to the spiritual gift of tears. To quote:

“ My wife [the Bishop of Crediton I believe] came downstairs one morning (as a child) and found her fatherweeping. ‘Why are you crying?’ she asked. ‘I’m just praying’ he said, as if no other explanation were necessary”. He also addresses the problem that some of us have, of finding it difficult to cry.

A section I found particularly fascinating is when he refers to the work of Rose-Lynn Fisher. She is a micro-photographer and has discovered that no two tears are alike – the scenes vary across all our different emotions. Her images have a stark simplicity and beauty. If you want to look at some of them, go to her website rose-lynnfisher.com To quote Runcorn again: *“Tears are part of an essential irrigation system for our growth and fruitfulness, softening the ground of our soul where it has become hard and downtrodden”.*

Paula Gooder says of this book: *“ Read this and you’ll never utter the words ‘don’t cry’ again.”*

Viv Elce

May 12-18th CHRISTIAN AID WEEK



2024
“ACT ON POVERTY”

**Discussion evening- “how can we end poverty?”
wednesday 15th**

**street collections
friday 17th and
saturday 18th.**

**sat 18th Family
sponsored walk to
Ashprington with tea
and cakes!**

For more info or to get involved contact Becca:
robinsonrebecca153@gmail.com

Amanda Makin wasn't with us on Mothering Sunday at **St Mary's Dartington**.

She was in London with the Mothers' Manifesto.

We started our Mothering Sunday Service with prayer for her.

Amanda writes: Thank you so much for your prayers. Whilst I fasted 'part time', my role was supportive of those who were fasting for the 5 full days. We 'camped' on the street outside Parliament between 11am and 4pm each day, under a gazebo if it was raining. The police were happy to let us do our thing, so all was calm and peaceful.

The group was so committed and humble in the cause of highlighting the crisis that mothers across the world face both to the government and the passing public. An open meeting had been organised for MPs to attend in Portcullis House and a few MPs came to talk to us on the street!

It was full-on!!

We also met a few women in crisis who sought our comfort and solidarity - which we willingly gave. I felt these were God-given opportunities where his love was shared. I'll be helping again next year!!



Latest News from St Mary's Reordering Project

Exciting times are ahead! On April 23rd, St George's Day, we will be formally launching our local appeal for St Mary's.

To date, we have been busy focused on submitting grant applications for funding. Now we have to wait and pray that some of these funders will support us. However, in the meantime, we are busy getting ideas and plans in place for this year.

St Mary's will be transformed. It will be a warm, welcoming, light and accessible place available to the whole community. Our worship continues to grow, with new groups and styles of praise and learning, and we continue to have wonderful concerts and events of all types. This will be SO MUCH better when we can start our planned works.

Not only that, but we are pioneering a new heating system that is sustainable and environmentally friendly. We are totally committed to preserving God's wonderful creation.

Would you like to know more? Would you like to get involved? There are many ways you can do this ...

Why not ... become a Friend of St Mary's? Join a growing group of enthusiastic supporters of the church who value it in all its guises.

Why not ... support our emerging fundraising group? Get stuck in, bring your ideas and enthusiasm, mine your local contacts of people who care about our church.

Why not ... volunteer your time supporting events and activities?

Why not ... do something crazy ... like a sponsored paddle board? (watch this space!!)

Contact us! Talk to us! And get very excited ... Fr Jim Barlow, Peter Hilken, Mike Gibbons and Diana Walters – or via ttmcomms@gmail.com
<https://www.facebook.com/stmarystotnes>
<https://www.stmarystotnes.org>

Abbess Elisabeth Gybbes



Our story begins at Venton Manor, Rattery in 1450 when a baby girl is born. Elisabeth was daughter to Margaret and Thomas Gybbes who had vast lands at Holne, rich in tin deposits, and huge acreage of sheep lands. She grew up in a routine of daily prayers. She walked with Anna her lady's maid up the trackway to St Mary's church Rattery to sit in the Lady chapel praying the

rosary under the watch of the beautiful Madonna. There was the well-known Rood tree of the Crucifixion above the carved Mediaeval screen which gave the village the name Rattreu.

The Gybbes family were social climbers with a chapel in St Mary's Dartington, behind the huge Manor House. The priest was Fr Thomas Wylle from St Dogmael's Abbey in South Wales, rebuilt funded by Sir Robert Fitzmartin of Dartington Hall in the 12th Century. Elisabeth had cousins who lived at Bicton Manor near Otterton, two of them were already Sisters in far off Syon Abbey, Isleworth of the River Thames. This monastery was founded by King Henry V in 1415, inspired by Saint Birgitta of Sweden.

One spring morning Elisabeth and Anna walked up through the bluebell woods to St Mary's Rattery to pray Nones in the lady Chapel. She fell on her knees when she heard the voice of our Lady tell her that soon after her 18th birthday, would be time for her to leave home and make the long journey by sea to enter Syon Abbey as a nun with Anna accompanying her to become a lay sister.

In 1487 Elisabeth Gybbes OSsS became fifth Great Abbess of Syon Abbey, being one of 30 who entered from Devon. She had great influence living until 1518. It is no coincidence that Syon Abbey eventually returned to the very same parish of Rattery in 1925 from Chudleigh until the last three sisters left in 2011. Syon was the only religious community to return as such after the Reformation. Their legacy as powerhouse of prayer still continues.

Joy Hanson, monastic gardener Syon Abbey

Choral Evensong at St Mary's, Totnes, on Sunday 7th April at 6.30pm

marks the centenary of Charles Villiers Stanford, one of the greatest figures of English church music at the turn of the 20th century. A contemporary of Charles Wood, both Anglo-Irish composers, and teacher to many of the great Victorian and Edwardian composers through his work as a founding professor of the Royal College of Music in London and as a Professor at Cambridge University. The list is extraordinary and includes [Samuel Coleridge-Taylor](#), [Gustav Holst](#), [Ralph Vaughan Williams](#), [John Ireland](#), [Rebecca Clarke](#), Herbert Howells, [Frank Bridge](#) and [Arthur Bliss](#).

All of the music in this service is composed or arranged by 'Stanford. The anthem is his a cappella masterpiece, 'Beati Quorum Via' while the introit is 'How beauteous are the feet'.

The psalm is Stanford's setting of Psalm 150 whilst the setting of the canticles is the much-loved (and possibly most popular) B flat Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis while, for most if not all of us, the Preces & Responses will be new. Created and collected from across the whole of Stanford's works by Prof, Jeremy Dibble of Durham University, this setting is newly available from the Royal School of Church Music to mark the centenary of Stanford's death in 1924.

The hymns include an original of Stanford's writing, 'Engelberg' for our first of three items. The other two are his arrangements to well-known tunes which feature specially composed organ accompaniment. And the organ completes this tribute to CVS with his Postlude in D minor played by Ian Curror.

Details of all musical events and choirs, contact Mike Gibbons
mike.gibbons@totnesmusic.co.uk

Save the date! - "Welcome to the Churchyard Day" June 15th 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Love your Burial Ground Week is a celebratory week which has been running for many years. Caring for God's Acre has been encouraging all who help to look after churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries to celebrate these fantastic places in the lovely month of June – in any way you choose. We've seen history talks, picnics, volunteering work parties and even abseiling teddy bears! More details next month!



At the World Day of Prayer service in March we were fortunate enough to hear from Suzan Sahori, director of Fair-Trade Artisans in Bethlehem. She asked us to share this appeal.

Dear friends and partners of Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans,

I write this third appeal with a deeply wounded heart. The inhumanity against Palestinians just gets worse and worse. I think there are many facts about our situation that are unknown to many people, because for so many decades, our demands for freedom and for equality have been silenced.

Did you all know that since the establishment of the separation wall Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza are banned from travelling through Ben-Gurion airport? We have to make the long journey to Amman, in Jordan. Did you know that we are living in ghettos, imprisoned in our cities? We only dare to travel to another city if we have no other choice. This is the West Bank my friends – I feel shame sharing these mundane issues we have to endure when Gaza is being pulverized to dust.

More than 26,000 Palestinians have been killed, not counting the bodies still under the rubble. Almost two million Palestinians are displaced - their families and homes destroyed. This is a man-made humanitarian catastrophe.

I am very sad and outraged. Are we not humans? Palestinian lives are worthless, it seems. Palestinians are Christians and Muslims and we have always stood together as one people, despite the cynical attempts of our oppressor to pretend otherwise. Are we not all created by the same God, our only saviour?

The women we worked with in Gaza, those still alive, are now all living in tents – they have lost everything. Yet these women still manage to tell me that each day they can sleep and wake up alive, they say thank you God. Shame on the world that this is their reality. Please support us. Please keep our people in your prayers.

BFTA produce a catalogue of goods for sale. If you are interested in being part of an order from the Totnes Churches, please contact Diana via ttmcomms@gmail.com or on 07773551030. We will sell these at the Christmas Fair.



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May Newsletter Deadline: April 20th

ttmcomms@gmail.com or Diana on 07773551030

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