

St Mary's Speen Pew News 15/2021

Dear friends, Happy Easter!

- 1) **Today Sunday April 4th 10.30am Holy Communion** led by Rev Janice Macdonald.
Readings: Acts 10: 34-43 and Mark 16: 1-8.
- 2) **Next Week Sunday 11th April 10.30am Service of the Word** led by Jane Sutton.
- 3) **RE: THOSE WITHOUT INTERNET.** Some of our St Mary's friends, who do not have internet, have been receiving, each week since last March, Pew News and Sabbath Sustenance in a paper version, either delivered by Robin Read, come rain or shine, or by post when the pandemic was at its worst. Next week we will not be delivering, to allow some of us to take a holiday, in case anyone asks.
- 4) Item in the Times Friday April 2nd: **THE CIVIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHRISTIANS AMID LOCKDOWN.**

"In her long reign, the Queen has given only one address to mark Easter. It was last year, early in lockdown. To a nation and Commonwealth struggling with a historic crisis she said that "the discovery of the risen Christ on the first Easter day gave his followers new hope and fresh purpose and we can all take heart from this".

Her Majesty could not have foreseen that Christians, then prevented even from attending church, would still face tight restrictions at Easter in 2021. Yet the continuing devastation inflicted by the pandemic, and the restrictions or liberties required to protect the vulnerable, make her message still more vital. When worshippers assemble today (Good Friday) to recall the crucifixion of Christ and the atonement, they will still be limited in numbers, required to wear masks and practise social distancing, and unable to sing together.

In an age of pluralism and doubt it is easy to overlook how arduous isolation is for members of a religious community. Worship is a matter not only of private devotion but also of communal identity. Christians have had to draw on deep reserves of faith in the past year to main confidence in the future and the hope of redemption. And, across the nation, they have applied that faith by acts of kindness towards their neighbours and communities by distributing food or communicating by any means possible with those who are lonely, fearful or, especially, grieving.

In the plague year of 1624 the poet and preacher John Donne wrote his famous lines "Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee". To many of those whom today's pandemic has claimed or who have lost loved ones prematurely because of it, the fellowship of the church has provided solace. The sacrifices made by Christians should command the respect of their fellow citizens, of all faiths and none."

- 5) **PEW NEWS BY EMAIL.** If you would like to receive Pew News by email, please let me know. Bewst Wishes, Mavis mhughesdon@hotmail.com 01635 43120

