

Hello all

It has been such a beautiful sunny day.. but isn't it chilly this evening! The gardens are rapidly springing into life with birds and wildlife busy, shrubs already in need of curbing and lawns a rich lush green. After so much rainfall recently, I suppose it's understandable that some plants are taking off apace even though they hardly made an appearance last year when it was so dry. I didn't know we had so many grape hyacinths.. and bluebells have totally taken over some flowerbeds.. and I thought I'd cleared them! I love Spring time and part of that joy is the sound of the birds getting busy. This afternoon I enjoyed watching four sparrows happily settled having a good peck on a shrub. Sparrows which seemed so abundant a few years back now seem quite a rare sight.

This weekend, we begin Holy Week, with Palm Sunday tomorrow - the start of Jesus' journey into Jerusalem, when he rode into Jerusalem on a colt, with the crowds of people cheering him, shouting 'Hosanna, Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!'. How joyfully they laid their cloaks on the road with branches cut from the trees to herald his arrival. What an amazing scene it must have been. We will distribute Palm Crosses tomorrow to identify with Jesus' journey. But, how quickly the mood changed in Jerusalem. Within days, the happy, cheering crowds were shouting for Jesus to be crucified. This week, during Holy Week we have various special services and Youth Group and Messy Church gatherings, which will remember Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Day. Do please come along if you can. Easter is such an important and significant season in the Christian Calendar. It is the foundation of our faith.

Sadly, Chalgrave Church is still full of scaffolding. The scaffolding in the Nave is due to be taken down on Monday and Tuesday as that work is coming to an end, but scaffolding will be erected in the Chancel. We think it will be very difficult to clean the church in time to hold services for Easter and expect to be holding joint Benefice services at Toddington Church (but a final decision will be made early next week after discussion with the Archdeacon and the Diocesan Registry). If you would like to register a family loved one's name to be remembered with an Easter lily please contact Sandy for Chalgrave and Dee for Toddington churches. The churches always look so beautiful decorated with the special white lilies. (If Chalgrave church is closed, their lilies will be displayed at Toddington Church)

This Sunday's Service:

11.00 am Palm Sunday Benefice Holy Communion Service at Toddington Church. (No service at Chalgrave Church again this Sunday)

Services and Events this week:

Monday 25th March

9.30 am Morning Prayer, Toddington Church

Tuesday 26th March

10.30 am Knitting Group, Wilkinson Hall

5.45 pm Youth Group, Wilkinson Hall

Wednesday 27th March

11.00 am – 1.00 pm Chalgrave Pop Up Tea Room at Tebworth Memorial Hall

12.00 noon Lent Lunch, Wilkinson Hall

6.30 pm Alpha week 5 'Why and How do I Pray', The Rectory, 41 Leighton Road, Toddington

Thursday 28th March

9.30 am Toddington St George Lower School visit to Toddington Church for their Easter Service

11.00 am Maundy Thursday service at St Albans Abbey (please let Linda know if you would like a lift)

6.00 pm Maundy Thursday Supper, Wilkinson Hall

7.30 pm Maundy Thursday Holy Communion Service, Toddington Church

Good Friday 29 March

10.00 am [An Hour at the Cross, Reflective Service at Chalgrave TBC \(This may not be possible due to the restoration works - I will confirm later this week\)](#)

10.30 am – 12.00 noon Easter Messy Church, Wilkinson Hall

2.00 pm An Hour at the Cross, Reflective Service, Toddington Church

Easter Day 31 March

9.30 am [Holy Communion Service at Chalgrave TBC \(This may not be possible due to restoration works - I will confirm later this week\)](#)

11.00 am Easter Day Holy Communion Service, Toddington Church

This week we remember in our prayers, the Princess of Wales and King Charles and wish them a speedy recovery. We also pray for all who are anxious, sick or afraid and for the war torn areas of the world.. and we pray for the peace, the love and the light of Christ to overcome the darkness, as we remember Jesus, who died on the cross, in the most generous, selfless gift of love to us all.

With love in Christ

Linda
Rector

Toddington and Chalgrave Churches