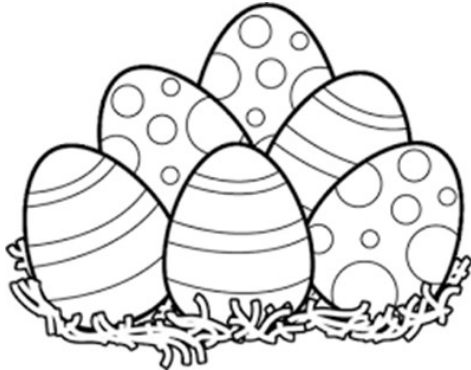


NORTON NEWS

April
2018

Alleluia, He Is Risen!

Is it really already a year since the great Cadbury's egg hunt debate. If you may recall, Cadbury's ran their annual Easter egg hunt, only they decided to leave out the word Easter. And it was them who were left with egg all over their faces. Thousands complaining, even the prime minister and the Archbishop of York engaged with this storm in an egg cup. But it raises an important question. Are we in danger of losing our sense of Easter as a country?



Well, the ex-policeman in me went to investigate for myself. Paying, I have to say, scant regard for my own waist line, I entered one of our local supermarkets in search of Easter Eggs. There I encountered many egg-shaped chocolates, but with no mention of Easter – although there was a nice man dishing out some chocolate. There was plenty of bunnies and pictures of pretty spring flowers, but the only mention of Easter were four cards, hidden amongst sundry other cards.

Now, don't get me wrong here, I'm no killjoy, I think it's good we can share all these things with family and friends. God wants us to enjoy his creation in all its richness. But he also wants us to remember who created it all. To celebrate creation and the creator. The trouble is, as that super market shelf reminded us, we tend to get distracted in the creation that can lead us away from God. This is nothing new. Augustine, the man using soundbites before they were even invented, said in the 5th century 'The beautiful things of this world kept me from you'.

We have to keep our eyes set firmly upon God to enjoy creation in all its richness and abundance. Easter shows us that the creator God is willing to go to any lengths to share a relationship with him. He is even willing to sacrifice himself so we can have newness of life in him, the Good News of the Easter message. The resurrection on Easter day changes everything and invites us to share a new relationship of perfect love with him.



Augustine, soundbite inventor?

Just as Jesus broke from the tomb on Easter day, so we too can break from the darkened tombs of our existence, from where we never fully appreciate the wonders of his creation. We can break out from our old lives that hold us back from discovering the new life to be found in Jesus Christ.

In the gathering light of that first Easter morning, when Jesus asks Mary Magdalene, why are you crying? Jesus is asking to share in all our sadness and despair and lift us up. As he calls her by name, 'Mary' he is inviting us all into a personal relationship with him, where he knows us by name. And as Mary answers Rabboni, he is inviting each of us to let him be our teacher and begin to discover the perfect love between himself the Father and the Holy Spirit, and to join in.

Continued overleaf

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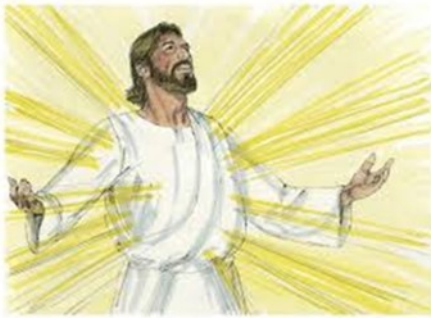


The Parish of Norton, Letchworth Garden City

This is the discovery Augustine made when he looked beyond creation to behold the creator,
'I breathed your fragrance, and now I pine for you.
I tasted you, and I hunger and thirst for you.
You touched me, and I burn with desire for your peace.'

So this Eastertime, break out into the light of a new day. Break out and share in the resurrected life. Go on that Easter hunt to discover the sweet taste of new life in Jesus. A taste sweeter than any chocolate you are likely to find. As Psalm 34 implores us, 'O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him!'

May you and your family find new life in Christ this Easter. We wish you all a blessed Easter.



Christ
is
Risen!

Rev Trev

Give us a ring – St Nicholas Bells open evening

As part of St George's day celebrations, St Nicholas bell ringers are holding an open evening on Monday 23rd April. The event will showcase the work of the dedicated team of volunteers, and is part of a project to make St Nicholas church more accessible to the public. People will be able to see the team working close-up and even given the opportunity under supervision to ring one of the bells themselves!

Don Salisbury, who heads the team, explains, 'This exercise is being carried out so that people can come along and understand what bellringing involves. It is not intended to recruit new ringers, but if anyone expresses a desire to learn, then it can be arranged.'



Visitors will not only be given an insight into the history of the bells, some of which date back several centuries, but will be able to watch the ringers demonstrate their skills of this ancient craft and learn how they ring changes and what actually happens when the bell is pulled.

The tower bells, which are the only set in Letchworth, are a well-loved feature of Norton community life and among the most valuable parts of the church fabric. As they have done for hundreds of years, they still ring out every Sunday morning after the 8am service to announce the presence of the church and Christ in the parish.

If you are interested in coming along and discovering more about the glorious sound our bells produce, please give Don a ring on 01462 677851, as places are limited. If demand is high, a second evening can be arranged. All places will be booked on a first come first serve basis.

ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH & SCHOOL

St Nicholas' School

St Nicholas School Takes Up The £20 Challenge

Inspired by the tremendous success that was our £20 Challenge, you might be interested to know that in the run up to Easter, St Nicholas School have followed our lead and launched their own project. The response was very positive and a total of £260 has been distributed for children and their families to go away over the Easter period and use their God-given talents to invest, grow and return. Early initiatives are already showing what a talented, creative and engaged group of children we have at St Nick's, with honeycomb and personalised keyrings selling like hot cakes in the playground and people booking their cars in for an Easter wash-by-hand from one industrious family! If the opportunity presents itself over the school holidays please do show your support to the various local projects that are underway. I'm sure you'll agree, it's heartening to see that a project we started here in our Parish, which had such a positive impact on our church and the community around it, is providing ideas and inspiration for others. Let's pray that all those involved find it as spiritually and financially rewarding an experience as we did.

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Thank you's

- Thank you to Tim, Keith and the choir for singing in so many services and really raising our worship, you've earned your two weeks off!
- Thank you to all the servers for supporting the worship and enable it to run so smoothly (but no two weeks off for you!)
- All those who read the passion readings on Palm Sunday and Good Friday, really bringing the stories to life.
- Thank you to David Parry, the sacristan, for setting up and preparing for our worship each day and getting all the right things in the right places.
- Thank you to all those who prepared and led our Lent reflections and made them all so different and thought provoking!
- Thank you to Jane and all the Sunday school for running the Sunday school activities.
- And thank you Jane again for all the preparation and imagination in delivering of the First communion lessons.
- Thank you to all the flower ladies, who decorated our church so beautifully for Easter.
- Thank you to David and Michael for constructing the Easter garden.

Thank you to anyone else who I haven't thanked but deserves to be thanked - so many people have contributed in so many ways it's impossible to list you all, but thank you!

If you feel there is anyone in the church who deserves a 'thank you' please get in touch with the editor (i.e. the vicar, but editor sounds much more cool).

Social Committee Future Events:

28th April Fundraising Dinner
19th May Pyjama Party, 12th May Beetle Drive
Please add these dates to your diary

From the Registers

Funerals

8th March - Ernest Hanna
9th March - John Sale

16th March - Lena Critten
29th March - Stojan Maric

REGULAR SERVICE DETAILS

Every Sunday	8 a.m. 9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion at St Nicholas' Church Parish Communion at St George's Church Sunday School meet in St George's Hall Crèche is held in the Lady Chapel
3rd Sunday of the month	11.15 a.m.	Informal Praise & Worship in St George's Church
Wednesdays	10 a.m.	Holy Communion in St George's Church
Thursdays	7.30 p.m.	Eucharist at St George's Church
Morning Prayer	9 a.m.	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays St George's Church
Evening Prayer	5 p.m.	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays, St George's Church

REGULAR EVENTS

Mondays	7.30 p.m. 7.45 p.m. 8 p.m.	House Group at 29A Eastern Way Bellingring Practice in St Nicholas' Church Badminton in St George's Hall
Tuesdays	10 a.m. 1.30 p.m. 1.30 p.m. 8 p.m.	Bible Study Tuesday Club in the Clulow Room Tuesday Cherubs meet in the Lady Chapel (term time) Music Group in St George's Church
Wednesdays	10 a.m. 8 p.m. 8 p.m.	Norton Coffee Shop Ladies Choir in St George's Church House Group at 17 Heathermere
Thursdays	1.15 p.m.	Norton Nippers Parent and Toddler Group (term time)
Fridays	12 noon 1.30 p.m. 6.15 p.m. 7 p.m. 8 p.m.	Friday Lunch in the Clulow Room House Group meet in the Clulow Room Choristers Street Dragons (fortnightly) Choir Practice in St George's Church
Sundays	6.30 p.m.	In-Betweeners Norton Parish Centre

YOUTH EVENTS

<i>Street Dragons</i>	<i>Fridays 7 p.m.</i>	<i>Norton Parish Centre</i>
<i>Norton In-Betweeners</i>	<i>Sundays 6.30 p.m.</i>	<i>Norton Parish Centre</i>
<i>Choristers</i>	<i>Fridays 6.15 p.m.</i>	<i>St George's Church</i>