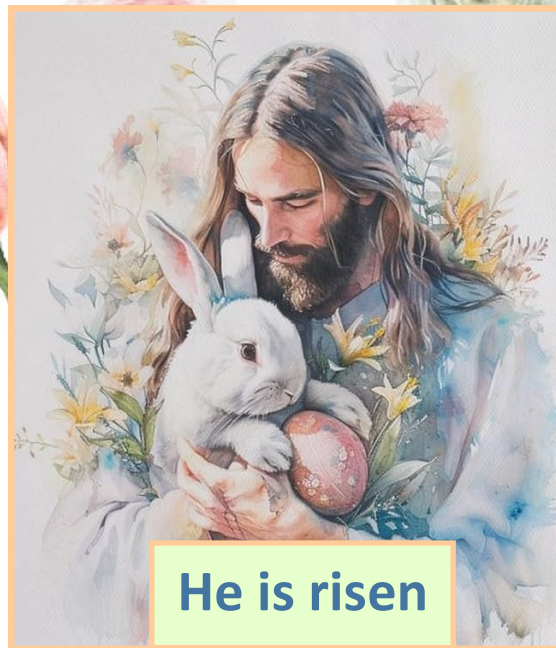


# Arle Valley Voice

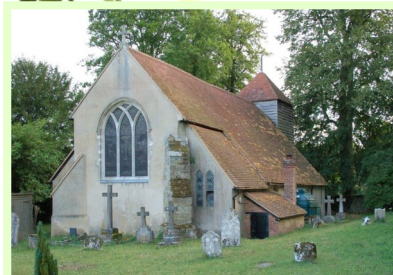
April 2026

£1.60

Church & Community Magazine



He is risen





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## Editorial

Spring is here at last. As I write this the sun is shining, the sky is blue and I haven't had to wash the dog yet again.

Spring is a time of hope, of new life and of course that ties in with Easter which offers us through Jesus new life in eternity.

For many it may not feel like Easter with the devastation in Gaza, Ukraine, Iran and so on; with world leaders seemingly having lost all common sense never mind compassion.

And yet when Jesus lived and died in Palestine two millennia ago his land was ruled by one of the most brutal Empires. He knew, none better, just how dreadful things could be, and yet he speaks of joy.

So in spite of everything I wish you all a Joyful Easter—and don't go too mad on the chocolate.

*Charlotte Ryton*

Apologies for any mistakes. However we are all volunteers and not professional so, sorry, errors will happen.

This magazine only keeps going with the quality it has because people subscribe each year so please do consider that. Contact Caroline Hawkins [chawkins826@sky.com](mailto:chawkins826@sky.com)  
Each issue costs £1.60 but a year's subscription is an economic option at £15.00.

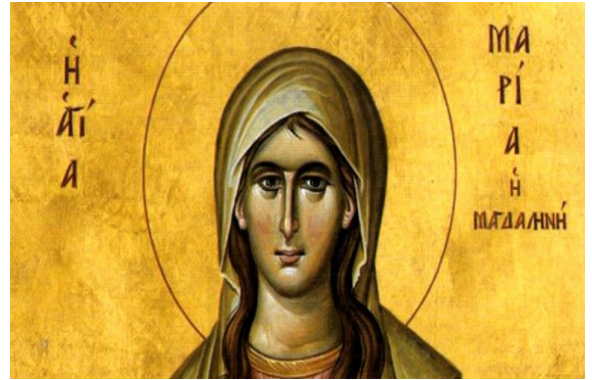
**Please email contributions and comments to [cstryton@gmail.com](mailto:cstryton@gmail.com). The preferred format at the moment is Microsoft Publisher or Word otherwise a pdf. Please as plain as possible as formats do not transfer from one programme to another. Please copy in [events@stjohnsalresford.org.uk](mailto:events@stjohnsalresford.org.uk) for additional publicity on our Facebook page and inclusion in St John's online Events Diary. The deadline for each month is the 10th of the month before. And if you use some of the businesses advertising do tell them you saw them in this magazine. Please note that we do not endorse any advert**

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## FAITHFUL FOLLOWER

When I agreed to write the April leader for the magazine I had completely forgotten it would involve Easter! When I sat down to write something I thought immediately about Mary Magdalene, the first person to see the Risen Christ; she was a faithful follower of Jesus and was certainly rewarded



So who is she? She is mentioned in all four Gospels and I discovered that her name is mentioned no less than twelve times.....more than any other apostle! She probably came from the town of Magdala by the Sea of Galilee and from a wealthy family [we are told she helped Jesus with resources] She has her own Feast Day on July 22nd



She is described as being healed by Jesus before accompanying him during his ministry. It seems that whatever happened she remained faithful. She was there at the crucifixion, witnessed the burial, was first to see the empty tomb and the first person to see our Risen Lord; but above all she was the first to tell others of the resurrection. Jesus instructed her to tell the disciples about the resurrection. For that reason she has been called 'The Apostle to the Apostles'. For a woman in those times she was remarkable. She was faithful. She was a wonderful witness.

All this got me thinking about faithfulness in times of joy and adversity. Are we fair weather Christians? Are we faithful followers of Jesus? Mary Magdalene, I think, must have had a lot to put up with; a woman among twelve male apostles each with their own opinions, relying on money from a woman, having her always there. Did all this deter her? No! I think it all made her stronger and more determined to let as many as possible know about Jesus, his love and his healing powers. We do not have any of these problems to stop us being faithful followers, but still find it difficult

So how do we witness to our love of God and Jesus? How do we help financially, time wise and using our talents with the work of the church? How faithfully do we follow Jesus' teaching? Mary is such a wonderful example to follow. Please re-read the Gospels and look out for Mary Magdalene. If we as a church become faithful followers like her we could certainly change things

Angela

## April Church Services for the Arle Valley Benefice

### NEW ALRESFORD St John the Baptist

**Monday 30 March - Wednesday 1 April**

19.00 Compline

**Thursday 2 April: Maundy Thursday**

19.30 Maundy Service, Communion and Vigil

**Friday 3 April: Good Friday**

14.00 Good Friday Service: An Hour at the Cross

**Sunday 5 April: Easter Sunday**

08.00 Holy Communion

09.30 Parish Communion

**Sunday 12 April : Second Sunday of Easter**

09.30 Breakfast Church

18.00 Sunday @ 6

**Sunday 19 April: Third Sunday of Easter**

09.30 Parish Communion

**Sunday 26 April: Fourth Sunday of Easter**

08.00 Holy Communion

09.30 Celtic Service of the Word

**Every Tuesday**

09.00 Morning Prayer

**Every Wednesday**

10.00 Midweek Holy Communion / Service of the Word

### OLD ALRESFORD

St Mary the Virgin

**Sunday 5 April: Easter Sunday**

10.00 Parish Communion

**Sunday 12 April : Second Sunday of Easter**

09.30 Morning Praise

**Sunday 19 April: Third Sunday of Easter**

11.00 Parish Communion

**Sunday 26 April: Fourth Sunday of Easter**

09.30 Holy Communion

**Every Wednesday**

09.00 Morning Prayer



**Arle Valley  
Benefice**



### OVINGTON

St Peter's

**Sunday 5 April: Easter Sunday**

11.00 Parish Communion

**Sunday 12 April : Second Sunday of Easter**

11.00 Parish Communion

**Sunday 19 April: Third Sunday of Easter**

10.00 Morning Prayer

**Sunday 26 April: Fourth Sunday of Easter**

11.00 *No service*

**Every Thursday**

09.00 Morning Prayer

### BIGHTON

All Saints

**Sunday 5 April: Easter Sunday**

11.00 Parish Communion

**Sunday 12 April : Second Sunday of Easter**

11.00 Morning Prayer

**Sunday 19 April: Third Sunday of Easter**

11.00 Morning Prayer

**Sunday 26 April: Fourth Sunday of Easter**

11.00 Parish Communion

**Every Monday**

09.00 Morning Prayer



## Calendar

- ♦ March 26th 7.30 Art Society Meeting
- ♦ March 28th 9.00 Church and Churchyard Tidy Up
- ♦ March 29th Palm Sunday
- ♦ March 29th 2.30pm Tale of Two Trees—come and take part
- ♦ April 1st 12.15 Lent Lunch @ John Pearson Hall, St John's
- ♦ April 1st 7.30 WI talk on Chalk Streams
- ♦ April 2nd First Day of Watercress Line Easter Train
- ♦ April 2nd Maundy Thursday
- ♦ April 3rd Good Friday
- ♦ April 4th Dead Saturday/Easter Eve
- ♦ April 4th 9.30 Bacon Butties at the Methodist Church
- ♦ April 5th Easter Day
- ♦ April 6th Last Day of Watercress Line Easter Train
- ♦ April 7th World Health Day
- ♦ April 8th 7.30 Horticultural Society Meeting
- ♦ April 9th 2.30 Methodist Women's Fellowship
- ♦ April 10th Charity Dog Walk
- ♦ April 13th Closing Day for Electoral Roll @ St John's
- ♦ April 15th Lit & Hist Society Talk on HMS Agamemnon
- ♦ April 17th 12 noon Table Talk
- ♦ April 19th Farmers' Market
- ♦ April 19th 12 noon Heritage Open Day
- ♦ April 19th Solos Sunday Tea
- ♦ April 25th 10am Lambs and Bluebells
- ♦ April 25th 7.30 Alresford Community Choir Spring Concert
- ♦ April 28th St John's APCM
- ♦ April 29th 6.30 Celebration of Spring Concert
- ♦ May 9th 10.00 Table Top Sale @ St John's
- ♦ May 17h Watercress Festival
- ♦ Sept 5th Alresford Show
- ♦ Oct 31st 10am Michael Project Coffee Morning

## Church News



St. Mary's Church, Old Alresford

### **CHURCH CLOSURE**

The church will be **closed** from 1<sup>st</sup> January until Easter 2026

whilst toilet facilities are built into the West End of the church.

**During this period the building will be closed to everyone.**

Busby's Builders and the Parochial Church Council are sorry for any inconvenience this might cause.

**During this period our normal Sunday services will take place in Old Alresford Place.**

Roger Parsons  
Churchwarden 07854 144023



### **NEW BENEFICE OFFICE HOURS!!**

**The church office will now be open Monday to Friday from 9am - 11am.**

***Children are welcome at all services here.***

**A hearing aid 'loop' system operates at St John's, St Peter's & St Mary's.**

**If moving is difficult** and you wish to have communion brought to you, please ask the Churchwarden on duty.

**If you require a gluten-free wafer**, please inform us before the service begins.

**Know of anyone who'd appreciate reading this notice sheet?** Please feel free to forward it to them.

### **Live Streaming at St. John's**

**LIVE**

The link for the live-streaming of services is:  
[www.youtube.com/@theearlevalleybenefice5720/streams](http://www.youtube.com/@theearlevalleybenefice5720/streams)  
It will come up under a Live heading with a green oblong with a small round picture of St John's underneath.  
Click on the oblong and it will open the live stream.

## Church Notices

### St John's Electoral Roll

St John's Electoral Roll: The Electoral Roll is revised every year prior to the APCM. In order to vote at the APCM, or to be elected to the PCC or any office, you must be on the Roll. If you are not on it yet and wish to be, please add your name now. Should you be unsure if you are already on the Roll, there is a copy in the Parish Office or you can ask our Electoral Roll Officer, Janet Pooley. The closing date for entry on the Roll is **Monday 13th April**, after which no names may be added until the APCM has been held on **Tuesday 28th April**. You can download a form from the Arle Valley Benefice web site (look under 'Our Churches – supporting our churches) or apply with a paper form available at the back of the church or direct from Janet. Completed forms should be left in the Parish Office or be sent to the address below.

Janet Pooley, 8 The Mulberries, Off Station Approach, Alresford SO24 9FL.  
Tel 01962 732779.

The Arle Valley Benefice takes its duty and obligation to protect everyone, extremely seriously. If you have any safeguarding concerns or issues of a safeguarding nature our Safeguarding Officers are: Sarah Wilding (St. John's) or Alison Mayne (St. Mary's/All Saints/St. Peter's) e-mail: [arlevalleysafeguarding@gmail.com](mailto:arlevalleysafeguarding@gmail.com)

### Benefice Vacancy Update -

The advert for the position of the Rector of the Arle Valley Benefice is due to be re-advertised as at the recent short listing meeting no candidates fitted the diocese role description. We will let you know as soon as we can when the next round of potential interviews will take place. We ask you to keep the whole process in your prayers.

***Arle Valley Benefice Churchwardens.***



# Church Events and Activities

11:00am - 12:00pm,  
5th April Easter  
St Mary's Church, SO24 9DX



Easter Communion Service

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH NEW ALRESFORD

## IT'S TIME FOR BREAKFAST CHURCH

12th April

2ND SUNDAYS @ 9.30AM

FAMILY FRIENDLY WORSHIP + FUN

AGES 0 - 100!

The graphic has an orange background. At the top, it says "ST. JOHN'S CHURCH" and "NEW ALRESFORD". Below that, in large black letters, is "IT'S TIME FOR BREAKFAST CHURCH". To the right is a small illustration of a church building. In the center is a large, smiling yellow toaster. A blue starburst shape contains the date "12th April". Below the toaster, it says "2ND SUNDAYS @ 9.30AM". At the bottom, it says "FAMILY FRIENDLY WORSHIP + FUN" and "AGES 0 - 100!" in a white diamond shape. The bottom edge has a black and white checkered border.

St. John's Church  
Alresford

## Celtic Service of the Word

This quiet, reflective service contains music, hymns, bible readings and periods of silence in the Celtic tradition.

You don't have to be "religious" to attend. Those with faith, those without faith and those who are searching, are all very welcome.

Fourth Sundays at 9.30am

Please join us for refreshments afterwards.

+

WEDNESDAY  
MIDWEEK  
HOLY COMMUNION

10am  
St. John's, Alresford

*An oasis of calm during the busy week.*

Coffee, cake and fellowship following the service.

The graphic features a central white rectangular area with text, framed by colorful floral and leafy decorations. At the top center of the white area is a small orange cross. The text is centered and includes the day, time, and location of the service, along with a quote and a note about refreshments.

## Church Events and Activities



### Prayer requests:

If you would like the Prayer team to pray for you, your family, friends or any other situation, please contact:

**Rosie Waring Green**  
**rosie@22rwg.co.uk**  
**t. 01962 733237**

We, of course, always respect the confidentiality of your requests

**Prayer Meeting** for the parish and our community - **every Friday at 10-11am** in church - feel free to drop in. And if you can't get down to the church then do join us in prayer wherever you are.



## St John's Porch Prayer Tree and Prayer Cards

Please do spend some time praying the prayer requests on the Prayer tree as you go in or out of church or as you walk by. It is a privilege to support all those who have written these

Also there are prayer cards available in a display case which you are most welcome to take and use for yourself or friends and family.

Some of the titles are: Being Accepted, Looking for God, Worried about Someone, Finding Peace, Feeling alone, Grieving, Being thankful



### Bible Study

If you are interested in exploring the Bible and having some help reading and understanding it do consider getting Bible notes. You can order notes from Pearl Page—her email is [pearlpage@aol.com](mailto:pearlpage@aol.com)

## Church Events and Activities

### Table Talk

A chance to meet, eat and discuss  
issues raised  
in an open, friendly  
and non-judgemental atmosphere.

**12pm in the John Pearson Hall**

Bring and Share lunch

3rd Friday in the month

**Starting Friday 17th April**

**All Welcome**



### Coffee, Cake & Chat @ St. John's

**Come and join us on the second Tuesday  
of every month (10am—11.30am)**

**in the John Pearson Hall  
for tea coffee and delicious homemade cakes!**

**This is for everyone across the local community**

**We'd love to see you**

**Feel free to invite family, friends and  
neighbours as well**



**For more information please contact**

**Angela Peel 01962 734 814**

### Solos Sunday Tea

A warm welcome.  
sandwiches  
homemade cakes and  
conversation for those who  
live alone.

Every Third Sunday 2.30pm—4.30pm

**Next meeting:**

**Sunday 19th April**

John Pearson Hall St John's Church

We do hope to see you there.

Info:

Margaret 01962 735185

Roger 01962 734045

**Gluten free  
available**



Come and  
join us



### MEN'S SUPPER CLUB

**FOR WIDOWERS**

**WE MEET ON THE LAST THURSDAY  
OF THE MONTH AT 7PM**

**IF INTERESTED, PLEASE CONTACT  
ROGER WHIFFEN ON 01962 734045**



# Holy Week and Easter Reflections & Services 2026

Palm Sunday 29th March 11am Holy Communion and blessing of Palms St Peter's Ovington  
 Sunday 29th March 4pm The Tale of 3 Trees - a musical start to Holy Week. Come and watch at 4pm or come along to learn the songs and join in at 2.30pm

@ St John's

Compline 7-7.30pm Monday  
 30th March Tuesday 31st  
 March Wednesday 1st April

Wednesday 1st April 10am  
 Holy Communion

2nd April **Maundy Thursday**

Communion with foot washing and stripping the altar 7.30pm

3rd April **Good Friday** Hour of the Cross Reflections 2-3pm

5th April **Easter Sunday** 8am and 9,30am Easter Communion



# ST. JOHN'S CHURCH & CHURCHYARD SPRING TIDY



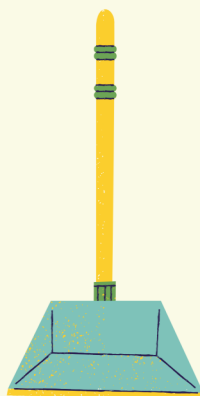
It's time for our annual Spring Tidy for **both** the church and churchyard!

**SATURDAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 9AM - 12PM**

**We warmly invite you to join us!**

Set for Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, we'll kick off at 9am and work until noon. **Refreshments provided.**

Don't forget to bring your trusty work gloves and garden tools as we come together to spruce up the church in preparation for Easter!



THANK YOU FOR LENDING A HAND!



YOU ARE INVITED TO TAKE PART IN

## THE TALE OF THREE TREES

'THE TALE OF THREE TREES' MUSICAL BY ANN BERESFORD IS A RETELLING OF THE TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN FOLKTALE OF THREE TREES.

**Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> March**  
**St. John's Church**

Rehearsal 2.30pm - 3.30pm  
 Performance at 4pm (approx. 20 mins)  
 Everyone invited, no tickets needed!

Tea and cake afterwards!

To take part and receive the song pack in advance (4 songs), details from Rosie Waring Green, t. 07891 120662 / e. [rosie@22rwg.co.uk](mailto:rosie@22rwg.co.uk)

# ST JOHN'S LENT LUNCH

Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April  
 12.15 pm, JPH

£5 per person payable on the door, or reserve your place in advance by emailing: [pippa@chocolatecraft.co.uk](mailto:pippa@chocolatecraft.co.uk)

Homemade Soup, bread, cheese and chutneys.

Raffle £1 a strip



## Alresford Methodist Church April 2026

### 04.04.26 - Bacon Butties

Come and join us for Bacon Butties (also hot croissants and fresh coffee) and good conversation. No payment is asked for, but donations are accepted for the work of the church. Breakfast is served from 9.30-11.00am.

### 06.04.26 – Memory Lane Café

The Monday Memory Café was initially set up with the specific purpose of supporting those suffering memory loss and their carers. However, we also welcome anyone who finds life a little lonely and would therefore welcome an additional social opportunity in their diary. If you would like to join us, you will find a warm welcome awaiting you. We offer an afternoon of fun, activities, fellowship, homemade cake and lots of tea – all for a cost of £2!

If you would like more information, or would like to attend, please contact us on - 07711066116.

### 09.04.26 - Women's Fellowship

The 'Women's Fellowship' group will meet in the Methodist Church hall at 2.30pm. Mr Jon Hughes will be the speaker, and the meeting will be followed by tea and cake. A warm welcome is extended to everyone.

### 11.04.26 – Church Cream Tea

We are hosting another of our legendary cream teas to which all are warmly welcomed. No payment is asked for, but donations will be gratefully accepted for the work of the church. Tea will be served from 2.30-4.00pm

Also, for the first time we are offering a home delivery service. If this is of interest to you, please phone 01962 734481 for further details.

### 18.04.26 – Church Prayers

The church is open on the third Saturday of each month from 10–11am. All are welcome to join us in a time of reflective prayer, as we share concerns both local and worldwide. At the close of prayer time, we invite everyone to stay and chat over a coffee and biscuits in the coffee lounge.

### 25.04.26 – Lambs and Bluebells

An open invitation to a Coffee Morning at Dewpond Cottage, Barnfield Farm, Colemore, Alton, GU34 9PX (07759 223447) from 10.30am. Donations towards the work of Alresford Methodist Church.



# Community Events

ALRESFORD & DISTRICT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION  
FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

**FRIDAY MORNINGS  
at YOUR  
COMMUNITY CENTRE**



**TEA / COFFEE  
& BISCUITS**

**Weekly Meat Raffle  
Books Sale  
Jigsaw Puzzles**

## Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union is a worldwide Christian organisation dedicated to promoting marriage and family life. It has 3.6 million members in 76 countries.



The Mothers' Union was started in 1876 by Mary Sumner, the wife of an Anglican vicar. It is open to all baptised men and women and encourages all members to attend church and to read the Bible regularly.

### Joining the Mothers' Union

If you are interested in joining the Mothers' Union, please contact Stephanie Durrant, t. 01962 732318 or email [stephanie.durrant@hotmail.com](mailto:stephanie.durrant@hotmail.com)

**New Members are always welcome.**

We look forward to welcoming you to be a part



**theWI**  
INSPIRING WOMEN

NEW ALRESFORD  
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

**Next Meeting  
Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April**

**"Chalk Streams - what's so precious?"**  
A talk by Helen Clarke



Meeting starts at 7.30pm  
At St Gregory's Church Hall,  
1 Grange Road  
SO24 9HD

Visitors very welcome- please come and join us  
For further information contact  
Sue Dinnis 01962 732309  
Jude Cowen 01962 738755

*Royal Air Forces Association*

*Alresford & District Branch*



We are the local branch of the RAFA and we are looking for new members to join our team. Whether you are an ex serving member of the RAF or not you are welcome to join us. We are an active team of people holding many social events and we meet in Alresford each month.

**For more information or details of how**

**to join please call Mike Trevelyan on**

**07920772781 email [yann\\_221@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:yann_221@yahoo.co.uk)**

**Registered Charity 1071073 (England & Wales)**



  
 HAMPSHIRE  
 MEDICAL FUND

A Celebration of  
**SPRING**  
 An uplifting evening of music

In association with  


The Hospital of St Cross, Winchester  
**Wednesday 29th April**  
 6.30pm - 9.45pm

Book tickets at: [hampshiremedicalfund.org/events](http://hampshiremedicalfund.org/events)

# Chatty Cafe Scheme



**At a loose end?  
 Fancy a cuppa?**

The 'Chatter & Natter table' is a wonderful way of encouraging people of all ages to talk to others. During the day and time below, the table will be hosted by a friendly volunteer. Do come along and sit for a chat.

**Where:** The Arlebury Cafe  
 Arlebury Park, The Avenue,  
 New Alresford,  
 Alresford, SO24 9EP

**When:** Every Monday  
 1:30pm - 3pm

## Alresford & District Horticultural Society



Wednesday 8th April  
 From 7.30pm to 9.30pm  
 St Gregory's Parish Hall, Grange Road,  
 SO24 9HE

Talk by Pamela Holt - The Royal Botanic  
 Gardens, Kew.



Visitors welcome - £3.  
 Further information  
 at [www.alresfordhorticultural.org](http://www.alresfordhorticultural.org)

Alresford Art Society:  
 AGM followed by

A demonstration  
*Monet—100years*  
 by Anne Anderson

Thursday 23rd April at 7:30pm  
 at Bishops Sutton Village Hall,  
 Alresford, SO24 0AH.  
 Non-members welcome, admission £3.  
 For further information: 01962 733031  
 or visit [www.artsociety.alresford.org](http://www.artsociety.alresford.org)





Alresford  
Community Choir

with

The Clarendon Ensemble

present

# A Season to Sing

Featuring Joanna L'Estrange's Choral  
Celebration of the 300th Anniversary of  
Vivaldi's Four Seasons

Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup>

7.30pm

St John the Baptist Church

New Alresford, SO24 9AG

Pre Concert & Interval Bar

Tickets: £20 and £15

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/alresford-community-choir>

Charity Number: 1148708

In anticipation of warmer weather we will perform Joanna Forbes L'Estrange's wonderful new choral work, 'A Season To Sing'. Written in 2025, this was co-commissioned by Alresford Community Choir, and celebrates the 300th anniversary of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*.

We will also be singing works by Brahms, Fauré, Monteverdi, Mozart and many others.

# Lambing Day



**Saturday 28th March 2026**

**Newmer Farm, Upper Wild, SO24 9RN**

///stall.purest.pine



Tea, coffee and cakes available to buy all day, plus small kids area



£20 per car in aid of Candover Valley Pre-School

Registered charity number 1038184



Sorry, no dogs allowed. Also, not suitable for anyone pregnant

Please don't put unnecessary chemicals down the drain - buy Eco-friendly products - see The Good Shopping Guide



**Sunday 19 April**

12.00 - 4.00

**Heritage open days at the Eel House, Museum and Medieval Bridge**

Come along and see Alresford's heritage. Entry is free but donations are appreciated to maintain these attractions.

**Eel House**

**Open 11.00 - 5.00**



**Along the river path from The Dean**

**Alresford Museum**

**Open 12.00 - 4.00**



**The Old Fire Station Broad Street**

**13th C Medieval Bridge**

**Open 12.00 - 4.00**



**Mill Hill, off Broad Street**

# Children's Activities

## Monday Meet + Eat

Join Us

Mondays @ 3.30pm  
Everyone Welcome

Organised by  
CTiA

Families with primary school children and under are invited to join the fun in the John Pearson Hall.

3.30pm | A drink and a snack to start.  
Followed by Board Games, Puzzles,  
Word Searches and lots more fun!

4.45pm | Dinner - we share a **FREE** hot meal.



Please inform us of any dietary requirements

Please book a place at:  
e. [rosie@22rwg.co.uk](mailto:rosie@22rwg.co.uk)  
or t. 07891 120662

## Families at 4pm

Everyone welcome

1st Sunday of  
the month

St. John's Church  
Alresford

Story, craft, song,  
drinks and snacks

No more than an  
hour, very informal

## CHILL, CHAT & CHOMP

Youth Group Y7 upwards

St John's Church

Contact Rosie on 07891 120662



### Chatterbox



is our parent/carer & baby/toddler group that meets every Thursday (10am - 11am) in the John Pearson Hall.

Do come along and enjoy new friends (with refreshments) and fun activities for your little ones.

Please book a place with Vicki,  
t. 07907 035998.





10AM - 12PM  
 1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH  
 CHRISTY HALL, OLD ALRESFORD

## Old Alresford Family Mondays

TOYS FOR TODDLERS AND A CHANCE TO  
 MEET AND CHAT TO OTHER FAMILIES.

REFRESHMENTS TOO!

EVERYONE IS WELCOME FROM 10AM - 12PM  
 ON THE 1ST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH

ORGANISED BY ST. MARY'S CHURCH,  
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We run full day activity camps during the school holidays for children aged 5-12. Children can sign up for one day or multiple days, the woods offer something different every day!

<https://hampshirebushcraft.com>

## Join the Adventure



soul  children

Youth Gospel Choir  
 in Alresford

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 For young people aged 10-18  
 hello@timuffindell.co.uk

[soulchildreuk.com](http://soulchildreuk.com)

## Some Music Events at Winchester cathedral



A programme of talented organists will put Winchester Cathedral's great "Father Willis" organ (installed in 1854) through its paces. Come along and celebrate the beauty of organ music.

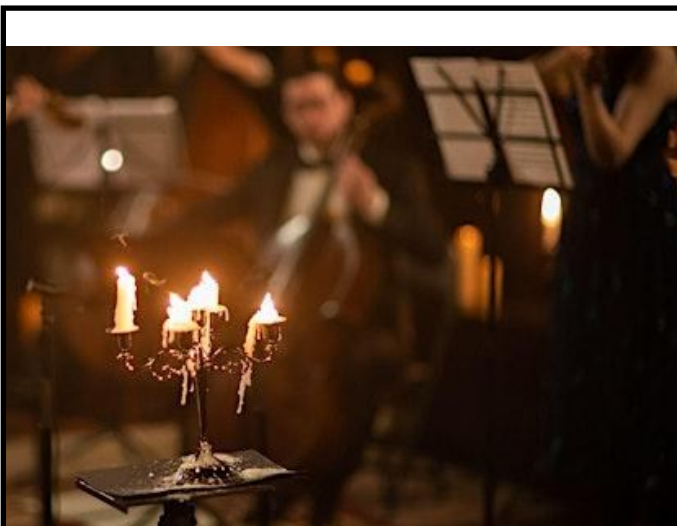
On selected Mondays, Evensong will be preceded by a short, informal recital given by a host of talented organists.

All are welcome to join from 4.30pm – 5.00pm in the Quire. There is no entry cost for these informal recitals, donations are welcome upon exit.

MONDAY 6TH APRIL, 4.30PM Oliver Morrell, Sub-Organist at Winchester Cathedral

MONDAY 4TH MAY, 4.30PM Roger Judd, Organ adviser to the Diocese of Hereford

MONDAY 25TH MAY, 4.30PM Claudia Grinnell, Director of Music at St Edmundsbury Cathedral



### **Rachmaninov 2nd and Grieg Piano Concertos by Candlelight**

Winchester Cathedral

Sat May 2nd @ 7.30pm

For all Winchester Cathedral concerts and events book online <https://www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk/event>

Or call 01962 857 275 or book in-person at the Box Office inside Winchester Cathedral

## Winchester Cathedral Tours and Workshops: a selection



Turn trash into treasure in this fun, hands-on jewellery-making workshop with contemporary maker Bronwen Gwillim. Using waste plastic as her medium, Bronwen invites you to explore creative, sustainable ways of transforming discarded materials into bold, wearable art.

Thursday 7th May 10.30am to 1.00pm

£40pp

Book online or call 01962 857 275 or book in person at the Cathedral



Discover the beautiful, fluid art of ink marbling in this hands-on workshop led by Rachel O'Connell of ROCWORX.

Friday 8th May 2.00pm to 4.30pm £48pp

Book online or call 01962 857 275 or book in person at the Cathedral

Plus there are tours run throughout the year which are well worth going on—some you have to book, some you need a party of ten to book and some are just available.

Find out. <https://www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk/event/tours/>



## Enjoy cracking Easter fun at The Watercress Line this Spring

### Join the Easter Bunny for fun and games at The Watercress Line in April. Photo: Richard Martin.

Easter egg-citement will be in the Spring air at The Watercress Line in Hampshire when the Easter Bunny Train returns from Thursday 2nd to Monday 6th April.

Visitors of all ages can meet the Easter Bunny, take unlimited travel along the 10-mile route on the heritage trains, and join in Easter activities at Ropley and Alton stations.

The Easter Bunny will greet visitors - who are welcome to bring their soft toy furry friends - at Ropley Station, pose for photos and give every child a chocolate egg. On board the Easter Bunny Train, there will be a singalong to Easter-themed songs and jokes with the Easter Bunny's helpers. There will be Easter fun to enjoy with an Easter Spotter Trail, Easter Ear crafting, activity sheets and Easter colouring.

Look out for Easter selfie spots for capturing the moment, playtime at the locomotive playground and the chance to enjoy seeing the huge locomotives up close.

Hot and cold refreshments and tasty treats will be available, while Easter gifts from The Watercress Line can be purchased at Alresford and Ropley stations.

#### **Rebecca Dalley, CEO of The Watercress Line, said:**

"The Easter Bunny is hopping back to join us at The Watercress Line and looking forward to meeting children and their grown-ups to create some egg-cellent heritage railway fun.

"The Easter Bunny Train is one of our most joyful events of the season, combining classic steam train travel with springtime activities. It's the perfect place to make happy memories this Easter."

Tickets are on sale now, book in advance at <https://watercressline.co.uk/special-days/easter-bunny-train/>



## 1<sup>st</sup> April - Fooling Around

In years gone by, the rules surrounding April Fool were this: between midnight and noon on 1<sup>st</sup> April, everyone is 'fair game' to be made a fool of. It is the morning of the practical joke. But the aim is not just to discomfort the victim: he must be tricked into taking action himself, sent on a 'fool's errand'.

And so children would be sent to the dairy for a pint of dove's milk, or to the bookseller for *The Life of Eve's Mother*. Practical jokes on a bigger scale were played: in 1860 a vast number of people received an official looking invitation to the Tower of London that read: 'Admit the Bearer and Friends to view the Annual Ceremony of Washing the White Lions.' Precisely the same trick had been played in 1698.

Probably the most famous April Fool's joke of all time was the 1960's BBC TV broadcast feature on the spaghetti farms of Italy. A BBC reporter interviewed Italian farmers about their work and the progress of the spaghetti plants in great detail. Spaghetti plants were filmed being carefully planted, and then being harvested. And all in the BBC's most serious documentary manner. It took a while to appreciate that this was Auntie playing games. Whatever next!



The odd thing is that no one is quite sure of the origin of this very British tradition. Most attribute it to changes in Britain's calendar in the 1700s, when New Year's Day moved from 25<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> January. Not surprisingly, the change caused a lot of confusion and mistakes around the start of April. Others look even further back, to the ancient Roman feast of Hilaria, when the goddess Cybele was celebrated with pranks and jokes around the Spring Equinox, 25<sup>th</sup> March.

Then, on the stroke of noon, tradition decrees, April Fools is finished. If anyone attempts devilry thereafter, even while the clock is still striking, it recoils on his own head. A child would then race through the sing-song formula: 'April-Fool-Day's-past-and-gone-you're-the-fool-and-I-am-none!'

Another time of mayhem is Mischief Night which is practised on the eve of Hallowe'en or Bonfire Night, where teenagers and children engage in pranks, vandalism, or minor chaos. Common activities include egging, toilet-papering houses, and removing garden gates, particularly in parts of Northern England, the US, and Canada. And of course this links in with the ubiquitous North American custom of Trick or Treat at Hallowe'en.

It seems that throughout the centuries there have been times when the normal rules of conduct are set aside and people can indulge in some moderate law breaking. In the Middle Ages this was held on May Day and in Ancient Greece this sort of behaviour was linked with the god Dionysius.



## JANUARY CELTIC SERVICE SERMON

TEXT: MATTHEW CH4 vv 12-23

*This was preached in January and was meant to be in the March edition but by some mistake got missed out. Nevertheless what is said is still relevant today.*

Our reading starts just after Matthew's account of Jesus being tempted in the desert.

I'm sure he must have been looking forward to the safety of his home and being with his loving parents again.

He must have been longing for a good bath, some home cooking and a chance to reflect on his ordeal.

That situation was not going to be allowed, because Jesus learns that John the Baptist has been imprisoned.

The time for Jesus to start the mission he had been sent to do must start immediately. He must now fulfil what was proclaimed by the prophets. He must continue

where John had left off; he must proclaim the Kingdom of God; so he leaves his home and sets off towards Capernaum.



According to Matthew the very first thing he did was to begin getting a band of followers; the beginning of a community, the Kingdom people. He did this before any teaching or healing. Walking by the Sea of

Galilee he calls Simon, Andrew, James and John, simple fisherman, to leave what they are doing and

follow him. These four men know nothing about Jesus. He does not offer them fame or fortune, success or excitement, just a mission to draw others to Jesus and preach the Kingdom of God, just as they have been drawn.....in other words 'Fishers of men'.

Those four quickly became twelve and from that, into a great multitude which no one can number. But it is still the same community begun by Jesus.



This passage has made me wonder how the disciples, as we know the first community as, managed to do this work and be successful. They had to confront many difficult and dangerous people

and situations, but still continue their work.

During our silence, I asked you to think about who had helped you grow; how they had achieved this and what you had done in your life to help other people. I feel sure that the disciples knew each other very well; many had the same occupation, understood the hardships of life and more importantly loved each other and worked as a team

Throughout my working life I learnt that unless I knew my patients well I could not treat them to the best of my ability, and unless my patients did not feel cared for they would not co-operate and accept medical advice. The same is so true about the Christian life. We are a Christian Community here at St John's and our mission is to pass on the Gospel to those who are not within our Community. That is a tall order in itself but is made so much harder if we do not know the people we are working with.

Going back to the picture of the shoot growing, do we know who needs help in our community; who is finding life hard at the moment; who needs encouragement; who simply needs a hug? We are in a vacancy situation at the moment waiting for a new priest. But it is not a priest alone that makes up the church in our benefice; it is all of us working together. We can only work together if we know each other, just like the disciples. If we knew all the strengths and weaknesses in our community we could be a vibrant working force here in Alresford. We could discern who is best for each task and encourage each other in our mission. It saddens me to see adverts in the news-sheet every week for jobs that need to be done; there is someone to take on every task I'm sure, with help and encouragement from others.



I would like to throw out a challenge to you all, By the next time we meet for Celtic Worship, may we each have got to know someone here unknown to us. May we have started to help someone grow, given encouragement or simply listened to another's concerns. If we are to be true disciples we must get to know each other, give love and support when needed and so build the Kingdom of God here in Alresford. Amen

Angela



## Prayers



We pray for the church, creation and the needs of the whole world

- We continue to pray for peace in our broken world thinking especially of the situation with Iran, Israel and the United States, in Gaza and the West Bank. We also remember the Sudan, Ukraine, Myanmar and so many other places of conflict.
- For all in authority and with power that they may have compassion, courage and wisdom to do what is right for the people in their care. Help them have a heart for peace and for justice. Guide their decisions.
- For all who have taken a wrong path and ended up in addiction or crime. Help them find their way back to the path of righteousness and give them the courage to move away from their past.
- For this planet and its needs as pollution and climate change continue to threaten its fragility. For all affected by climate change who experiencing fires, floods, droughts and storms. For our farmers that may find a way to raise their crops and animals in spite of the changes in our weather. Give them the resources they need and help them feel less isolated in our increasingly urban society.
- For all who are ill or injured or hurting. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and may your healing grace fill them so they know they are not alone.
- For all those who walk alone, fear the future or are in any other adversity.

# WHY UK RIVERS ARE SO IMPORTANT

Our rivers are arguably our most important natural features. Not only do they help make the British landscape so picturesque and vibrant, they've been crucial for the growth of our towns and cities, providing fresh water for drinking and farming, and for our business and transport over centuries.

Some of our most beautiful rivers are 'chalk streams'. Their pure, clear, constant water from underground chalk aquifers and springs, flowing across flinty gravel beds, make them perfect sources of clean water – and ideal for lots of wild creatures to breed and thrive. We're lucky because the majority of the world's chalk streams are found in England.

But far too many of our waterways have been overused and undervalued. Drained almost dry in places, and polluted in others. Less than a fifth of England's rivers are healthy, and climate change is putting more pressure on them. Our rivers need help.

**Visit one of these roadshows below and see how you can help save our chalk streams.**

## 'CLEAN GREEN - PROTECT OUR STREAMS' ROADSHOW!

A local project to protect our chalk streams from household cleaning chemical pollutants and raise awareness of cleaner alternatives.


This event will be repeated on the following dates / locations.  
Choose from:

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March, 7pm, Cheriton Village Hall**  
**Weds 8<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm, Bishop's Sutton Village Hall**  
**Weds 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 7.30pm Old Alresford Village Hall**

FREE EVENT all welcome! Book at:  
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/upper-itchen-restoration-cic>


Recent studies show that many toxic chemicals are discharged into our chalk streams, where they build up and cause harm to river life. Household cleaning products contribute to this problem.

**Be aware   Use less   Reduce chemical load**


Funded by 

**At the Roadshow:**

**Talks** – Learn how cleaning products work, and be aware of how toxins cause harm to river life.  
**Demonstrations & participation** – Join our interactive activities.  
**Recipes for home-made 'river savers'** for non-toxic cleaning – Take home product samples and a 'goody-bag'.




It has never been more important to act together to ease the stress on our streams, keeping them safer for river life and for future generations.



### Upper Itchen Restoration

Community Interest Company

Working to protect our precious chalk streams  
[www.upperitchenrestoration.org.uk](http://www.upperitchenrestoration.org.uk)  
[upperitchenrestorationcic@gmail.com](mailto:upperitchenrestorationcic@gmail.com)



## Holy Week part two

### 2<sup>nd</sup> April – Maundy Thursday,

Maundy Thursday is famous for three things. The first is one of the final acts that Jesus did before His death: the washing of His own disciples' feet (see John 13). Jesus washed His disciples' feet for a purpose: **“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”** His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

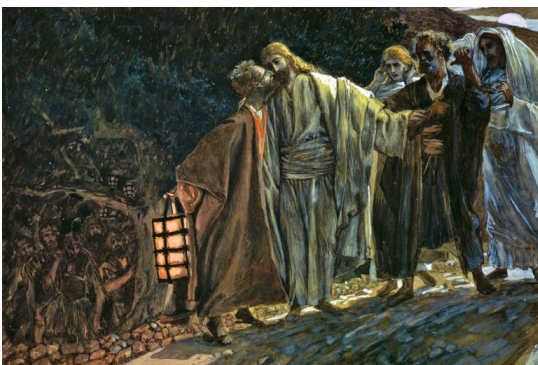


In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is *‘mandatum novum do vobis’*. The word ‘maundy’ is thus a corruption of the Latin ‘mandatum’ (or command). The ceremony of the ‘washing of the feet’ of members of the congregation came to be an important part of the liturgy (regular worship) of the medieval church, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

But Thursday was also important because it was on that night that Jesus first introduced the Lord’s Supper, or what we nowadays call Holy Communion or Eucharist



Jesus and His close friends had met in a secret upper room to share the Passover meal together - for the last time. And there Jesus transformed the Passover into the Lord’s Supper, saying, ‘this is my body’ and ‘this is my blood’ as He, the Lamb of God, prepared to die for the sins of the whole world. John’s gospel makes it clear that the Last Supper took place the evening BEFORE the regular Passover meal, and that later Jesus died at the same time that the Passover lambs were killed. The other gospels place the Last Supper as a Passover meal. However the festival of Passover in fact lasted a week.



The third thing is that on this night Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray that his cup might be taken from him. It is a very human moment as he is scared and dreading what is to come. And yet he says that he will do his Father’s will. And then Judas leads the temple guards to arrest him. He is taken to the High Priest for questioning so beginning his series of so-called trials with the High Priests, with Herod and with Pilate.

Many churches end this service with stripping the altar, removing decorations and turning out all the lights. Some have a ‘garden’ set up and many hold a vigil where people pray in silence in the quiet, dark church.

## Good Friday

### 3<sup>rd</sup> April - Good Friday, the day the Son of God died for you



Good Friday is the day on which Jesus died on the cross. It was not 'good' for him, but it brought about good for us. It is the most solemn day in the Christian year and is widely marked by the bareness of the church as all decorations have been removed the previous evening.

Jesus was beaten and mocked and Pilate hoped that would be enough but the crowd that had shouted Hosanna now shouted Crucify him and said they preferred Barabbas. Then he was made to carry his cross—probably just the cross bar but was so weak he fell and had to be helped. There is some suggestion that when soldiers pitied the victim they beat them up more so that they died quickly

but this is only a suggestion.

Crucifixion was an horrific death that could last days as the victim struggled to breathe. Jesus was on the cross for six long hours.

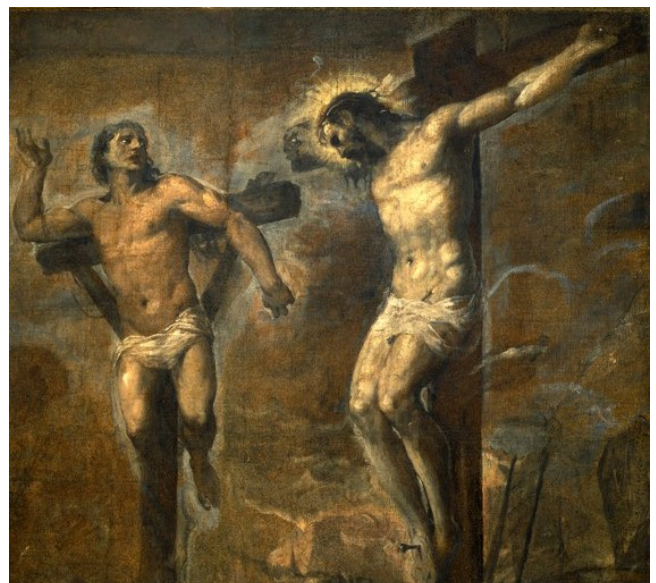
Luke's account of the crucifixion (Luke 23:32-43) emphasises the mocking of the crowd, '*If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself*' (35,37,39). In their view a Messiah does not hang on a cross and suffer. In considering the two men who were crucified with Jesus, we are also confronted with the issue of how Jesus secures salvation for us.

The words of one of those crucified with Jesus reflected the crowd's taunts: '*Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us.*' He highlights the question of Jesus' identity: how can He save others, when He cannot save Himself from death?

The other criminal's response in his last moments is a moving expression of faith. When challenging the other man, he spoke of the utter injustice of the crucifixion: '*this man has done nothing wrong.*' He perceived the truth that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. In a wonderful picture of grace, '*remember me when You come into Your kingdom*', the second thief confessed his guilt and secured Jesus' forgiveness and mercy.

In reply, Jesus promised the man life from the moment of death; '*Today you will be with Me in paradise.*' Jesus recalls the perfect garden of Adam and Eve to help the man understand His promise of protection and security in God's love and acceptance eternally.

This gives hope to all who have taken a wrong path – as most of us have at some moment – that we too can be forgiven.



#### 4<sup>th</sup> April – Easter Eve or Holy Saturday or Dead Saturday

Easter Eve is the last day of Lent. It is the day between Good Friday and Easter Day, and represents the one full day that Jesus was dead. It is a day of quiet reflection and anticipation for Christians worldwide.

In various church traditions it is known as Easter Eve, Holy Saturday, the Great Sabbath, Hallelujah Saturday, Saturday of the Glory, Dead Saturday and Black Saturday.

Easter Eve is sometimes incorrectly called Easter Saturday. But Easter Saturday is the Saturday *following* Easter Sunday.

Most churches do not have any services on Easter Eve. In the Catholic Church, the altar remains stripped completely bare. Many Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, and other churches observe many of the same customs as the Catholic Church; however, their altars may be covered in black instead of being stripped.

Some churches end Lent with the vigil on Easter Eve but others maintain that the gospels make it clear that he rose early in the morning just before it was light so they hold Dawn services.

What did Jesus do on that one full day in the grave? Christian understanding varies on this.

The Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and most mainline Protestant churches teach that Jesus descended to the realm of the dead on Holy Saturday, to save the righteous souls who died before His crucifixion. This is called the Harrowing of Hell and many artists have painted this.

The catechism of the Catholic church calls the descent "the last phase of Jesus' messianic mission," during which He "opened heaven's gates for the just who had gone before Him."

But some Protestants say there is little scriptural evidence for the detour to hell, and that even Jesus' own words contradict it. For on Good Friday, Jesus told the Good Thief crucified alongside Him that "today you will be with Me in Paradise," according to Luke's Gospel."

The Bible says little about the interlude between Jesus' death and resurrection. Churches that teach He descended to the realm of the dead usually quote 1 Peter 3:18-20. "Christ was put to death as a human, but made alive by the Spirit," Peter writes. "And it was by the Spirit that He went to preach to the spirits in prison."



## 5<sup>th</sup> April - EASTER, the most joyful day of the year

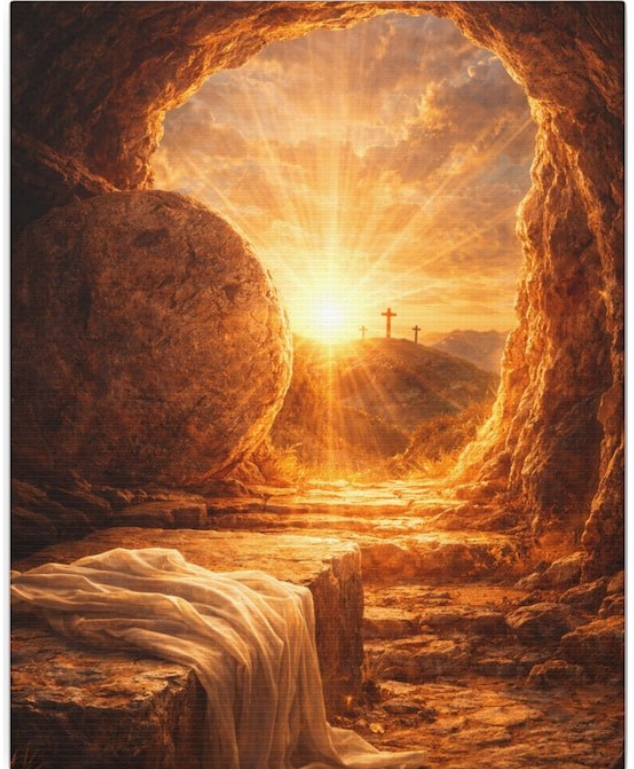
Easter is the most joyful day of the year for Christians. Christ has died for our sins. We are forgiven. Christ has risen! We are redeemed! We can look forward to an eternity in His joy! Hallelujah!

The Good News of Jesus Christ is a message so simple that you can explain it to someone in a few minutes. It is so profound that for the rest of their lives they will still be 'growing' in their Christian walk with God.

The story is simply told indeed. Very early in the morning either before it was light (John), or at dawn (Matthew and Mark) the women went to the tomb so that they could anoint the body. On the way they worried about the stone and the soldiers. There are differences in the gospel accounts but their main points are the same. John speaks only of Mary Magdalene, the other three mention other women. Matthew, Luke and Mark say the women met one or two young men or angels who asks them who they are looking for and when they reply Jesus they are told he is not there but has gone to Galilee.

The women tell the male disciples who do not believe them but Peter and the disciple Jesus loved go to the tomb and find it empty.

Then according to Matthew Jesus appeared to the women and according to John and Mark to Mary Magdalene alone.



Why the differences? Well, if you listen or read different people's accounts of an event they do vary like this, as any police officer will tell you. The car was green or blue or black. There were three people in the car. There was only one. And so on. And memories vary as you unconsciously select what mattered most to you.

Another question is why wasn't Jesus's mother among the women? She was his nearest female relative so the right person to anoint him. Maybe, just maybe, she didn't need to go as even before the women went to the tomb Jesus had come to her already as she lay awake in the cold hours before dawn.

A simple yet amazing story but why is so joyful for us. Because it means that death is not the end, that we have a future and not the sort of future the ancient pagans imagined which was a thin sort of half-life but an eternal life that is fuller, richer, more vibrant than anything we can imagine.

Happy Easter.

# More on Easter

## The Date and Name of Easter.

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 the first Good Friday: Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 30 AD or Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 33 AD with Easter Day falling two days later. Modern scholars continue to think these two Fridays to be 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 complicated. The earliest possible date for Easter in the West is 22<sup>nd</sup> March, which last fell in 1818. The latest is 25<sup>th</sup> April, which last happened in 1943.

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.

## Eggs, Bunnies and Lambs

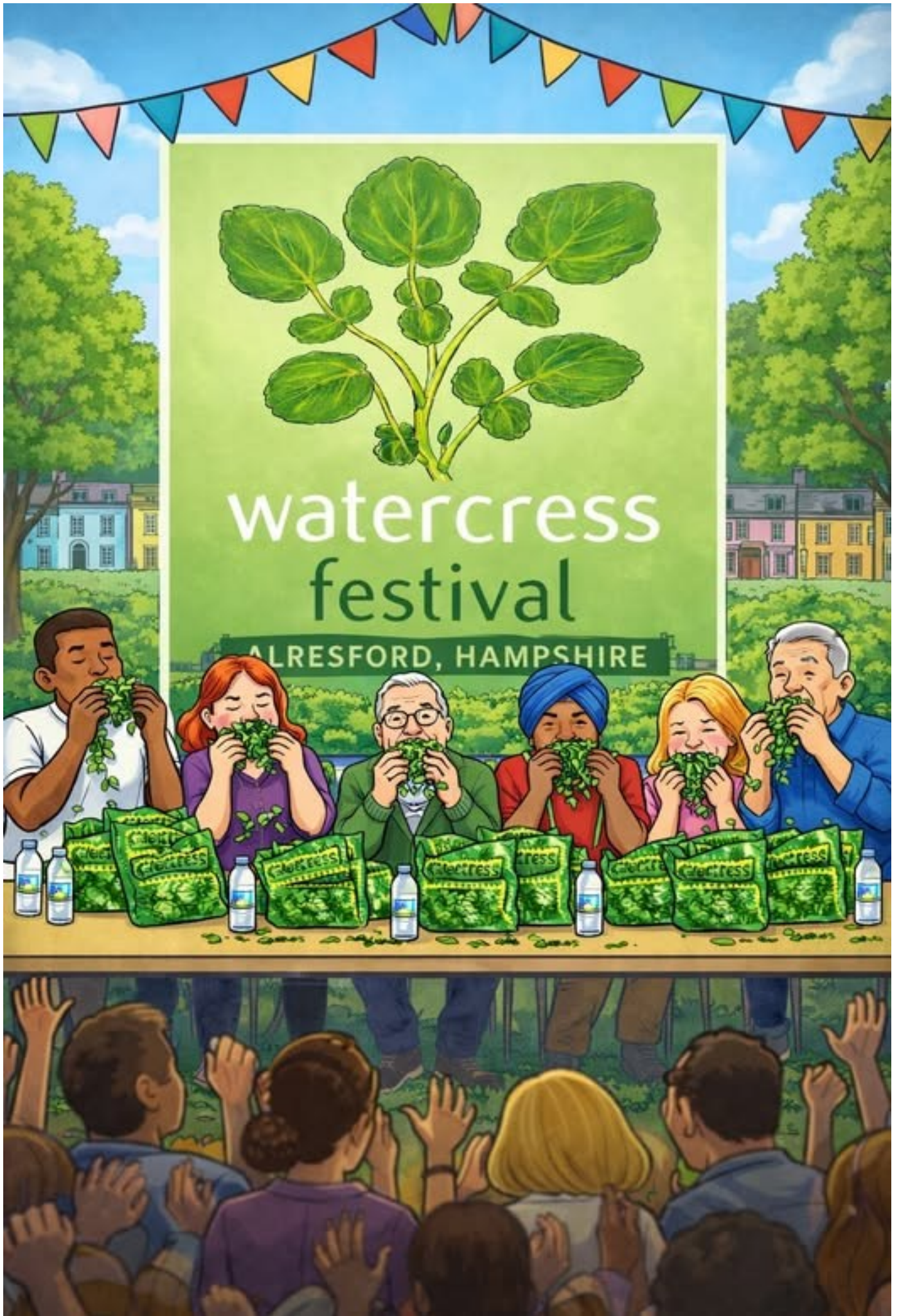
Why have these things become associated with Easter. They are all to do with spring and symbolise new life as Jesus's resurrection brings new life.

Lambs are of course linked to the Passover lamb that is sacrificed as Jesus is seen as the perfect Passover lamb, the perfect sacrifice.

Eggs also are connected to Passover but they are also seen as symbols of the tomb as the shell is cracked just as Jesus cracked open the tomb.

Rabbits - actually originally hares—are linked to ancient pagan religion where the hare is the symbol of the goddess of spring and new life . In Germany the legend is that the Easter hare or rabbit lays Easter eggs and gives them to good children just as Father Christmas gives present to good children at Christmas.





## Watercress Festival @ St John's

A warm welcome  
& delicious  
homemade cake



### The Café at St John's

The Watercress Festival

Sunday 17th May

10.00am - 4.00pm

in the Church Hall

(outside tables if good weather)

Enjoy a cup of tea/coffee  
with your choice of cake  
Squash available for children

## CAFÉ AT ST JOHN'S

The Watercress Festival - Sunday 17th May



### COULD YOU HELP?...

Perhaps by baking a cake or joining the happy band of helpers for a stint in the café on the day.

It's a fun day as everyone works together to warmly welcome and serve with a smile all who come in for a cuppa and slice of cake.

Sounds like something you might like to be involved in? Sign up sheets will be at the back of the Church from Sunday 22nd March.

Why not pop in and have a look at the help we need and maybe add your name to one of the boxes.

Whether you sign up with a friend or come alone, we'd love to have you on the team.

**It is important that all volunteers are risk aware. So please take a risk assessment sheet and tick the red box beside your name on the sign up sheet to indicate that you have one.**

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Announcing the release of local author Bonar Ash's latest book :  
***My Heart in Hiding.***

To quote the official press release:

*'My Heart in Hiding is a sweeping and emotionally resonant novel set against the shifting social landscape of the second half of the twentieth century. Moving from tropical childhood innocence to the restrained world of an English boarding school, the novel explores first love, repression, and the fragile line between belonging and exile.'*

Bonar Ash is a familiar figure to customers of Alresford's café *Coffee 1* where most mornings she is to be found tapping away on her laptop. *My Heart in Hiding* is Ash's seventh novel and can be found either at Oxley's, Alresford's popular bookshop, or on Amazon under Bonar Ash books.



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 Email: [bonar@bonarash.com](mailto:bonar@bonarash.com)  
 Instagram: @bonarashwriter



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## Accommodation – Ovington



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For bookings, please use the QR code above, or send Kevin and Jo an email on [jomilner1@hotmail.com](mailto:jomilner1@hotmail.com)

## A history of our Easter chocolate

Chocolate. Just a mention of the word can trigger off all kinds of emotions: craving, greed, passion. Few foods have the ability to get such a hold on people. As you buy your Easter eggs and bunnies and whatever else this month, here are some of the facts of chocolate:

**Where does chocolate come from?** Chocolate is made from the seeds of the tropical cacao tree, *theobroma cacao*. The Greek word 'theobroma' means literally 'food of the gods'. The Cacao Tree is found in Latin America.

**Who first discovered it?** The Aztecs. The cacao beans were used to prepare a hot, frothy beverage with stimulant and restorative properties, something like hot chocolate.

**Who was (probably) the first chocoholic?** The Emperor Montezuma. He drank 50 goblets a day of the frothy drink.

**Who used chocolate as currency?** The Aztecs. 100 cacao beans would buy a slave; 12 cacao beans bought the services of a courtesan, etc.

**When did chocolate come to Europe.** The first record of chocolate in Europe is in 1544 when a Dominican friar brought a delegate of Kekchi leaders to Philip II of Spain and the brought a variety of New World foods. The friars aim was to persuade the King to stop the enslavement and killing of these people. Sadly that didn't work. Chocolate became popular later in Catholic Europe as the Jesuits promoted it as an acceptable food on fast days instead of meat, dairy, sugar etc. (So maybe we may eat it in Lent?)

**When did chocolate as we know it today begin?** Surprisingly, not until 1879. That year Rodolphe Lindt had the inspired idea of triglyceride cocoa butter. The cocoa butter in chocolate contains saturated fat, but a normal level of consumption doesn't have any bad effects.



**At what point does a chocolate lover become a chocoholic?** It is generally considered to be when a person feels impelled to consume 12 or more 60 gram bars of chocolate per week. Chocolate contains its own cannabinoid (a chemical that prolongs pleasurable sensations) and when you eat chocolate, there is an increased blood flow in areas of the brain which are also activated by addictive drugs such as cocaine. But scientists agree that occasional over-indulging will cause no long-term problems... except perhaps around your waistline!

### **How to get the best from your chocolate:**

Keep your chocolate cool (16 – 18 degrees Centigrade) and in a dry, airtight place.

Never put your chocolate in the fridge (if you already have, let it warm to room temperature for a couple of hours before you eat it).

Bring out the full flavour of chocolate by drinking water with it.

If you are drinking tea or coffee, don't bother with expensive chocolates – you won't be able to appreciate them properly!

## Easter Puzzles

Even as Jesus ate that last Passover meal with his disciples, he warned them he was about to be betrayed. He took the bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to them; he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them to drink. The Old Covenant, based on Law, was ticking away its final hours; the New Covenant, based on Christ's body and his blood, was about to be ushered in. Jesus prayed in Gethsemane that this fearful cup might be removed from him, but even more, that God's will might be done. And it was. From Easter onwards we can only approach God through his Son, Jesus Christ, not on our own merit.



Find these words in the grid:

**Approach, Ate, Betrayed, Blessed, Blood, Body, Bread, Covenant, Cup, Disciples, Drink, Easter, Gethsemane, God, Jesus, Last, Law, Meal, New, Old, Passover, Removed, Thanks, Warned, Will, Wine**

## EASTER

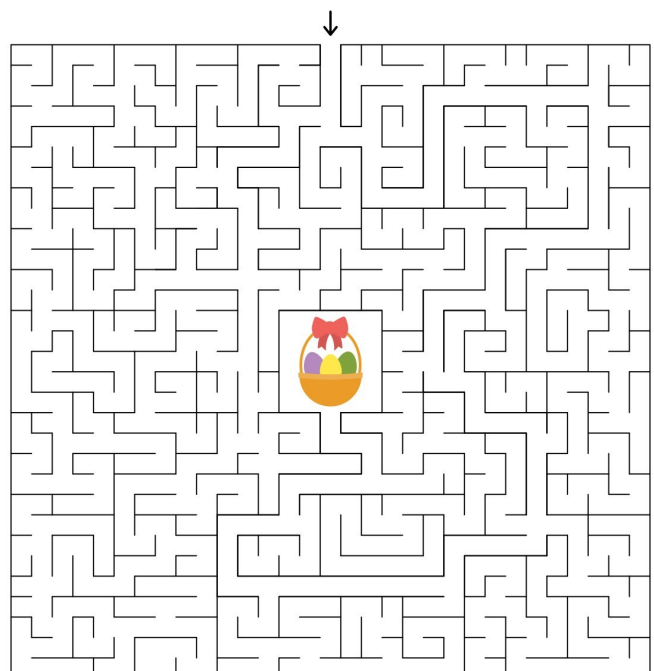
### WORD SCRAMBLE

- NUYNB \_\_\_\_\_
- PSGINR \_\_\_\_\_
- UHTN \_\_\_\_\_
- UTPIL \_\_\_\_\_
- HCCKI \_\_\_\_\_
- SBTKEA \_\_\_\_\_
- YMIAFL \_\_\_\_\_
- SAGEM \_\_\_\_\_
- RTIDIONAT \_\_\_\_\_
- SGASR \_\_\_\_\_
- FDALODIF \_\_\_\_\_
- NETBON \_\_\_\_\_
- NSUYAD \_\_\_\_\_
- MABL \_\_\_\_\_
- RETSAE \_\_\_\_\_

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## EASTER MAZE

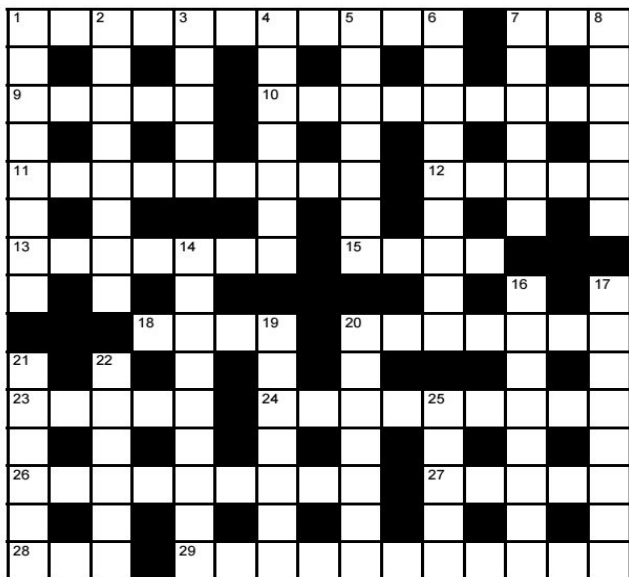
Find your way through the maze to reach the Easter egg basket



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# Puzzles

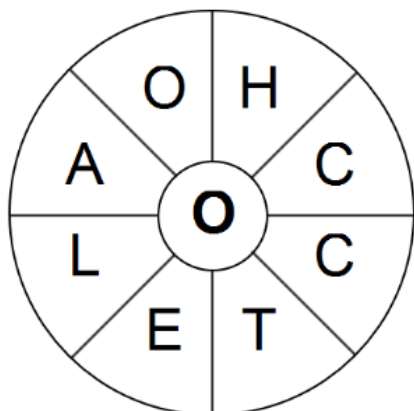
<b>Across</b>		<b>20</b> Holy trio (7)	<b>3</b> One of several sharp nails left alongside fences (5)	<b>19</b> Disappointment of a flat tyre? (7)
<b>1</b> Segregation arranged for dragon-slayer (11)	<b>23</b> Trip abroad occasionally for headdress (5)	<b>4</b> Stud, drop or hoop? (7)	<b>20</b> Timothy gets contagious fear mostly from drums (7)	
<b>7</b> Prompt treatment saving rector (3)	<b>24</b> Watch rhythm section (9)	<b>5</b> I write in crimson - not green (7)	<b>21</b> Plaster didn't come off, I'm surprised to hear (6)	
<b>9</b> Sail off after British boy (5)	<b>26</b> Beefeaters, perhaps, as men in festival finishing early (9)	<b>6</b> Gums cut? I pay dental practice, ultimately for treatment (9)	<b>22</b> Stan's wreath of honour (6)	
<b>10</b> Grasping devout, absorbing account supporting sun god (9)	<b>27</b> Canine mother's beliefs (5)	<b>7</b> Gloomy - noisy in outskirts of city (6)	<b>25</b> Cycle exercise has boy going uphill (5)	
<b>11</b> A boy harbours criminal since uprising (9)	<b>28</b> Olive, sunflower or rapeseed (3)	<b>8</b> Consumer embraces beginning of song festival (6)		
<b>12</b> Register a place for Beavers (5)	<b>29</b> Peaceful King's philosophy (11)	<b>14</b> Secusion is nothing - nothing in Roman words (9)		
<b>13</b> Paying attention to ambassador, English, at the sound of a bell (7)	<b>Down</b>	<b>16</b> Rented piece made a killing (5,3)		
<b>15</b> Drug in complicated operation (4)	<b>1</b> Southern sailor washes on rest days (8)	<b>17</b> Character set with kind expression (8)		
<b>18</b> Silly dessert (4)	<b>2</b> Move is recent, behind closed doors (2,6)			



					5	3	2	
					3	8	7	5
				8	7	1		6
4			1		2	9		7
	6		9		8		5	
3		9	7		4			8
	1		5	8	6			
5	4	7	3					
	8	2	4					

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Fill the grid above so every column, row and square have the numbers 1 to 9



How many four letter words can you find all using the centre letter. No letter may be repeated unless repeated in the wheel.

40—brilliant 30—good 20—fair



## The local charity solving problems and transforming lives

In 2024, I began volunteering as an adviser at Citizens Advice Winchester District and have found it very rewarding to support local people in need (either in person, over the phone or by email). I've helped people facing a variety of challenges in their lives, supporting people to access food banks, energy vouchers, and social tariffs, as well as assisting with applications for benefits such as Pension Credit, Attendance Allowance, Universal Credit, or apply for a disability badge.

For those of you who may be unaware, Citizens Advice Winchester District is a local, independent charity and part of a network of some 250 Citizens Advice charities across the country. The first Citizens Advice services opened in 1939, the day after war was declared, to support the civilian population during wartime, providing free advice on issues such as housing and the new social welfare system.

The ethos of a free, impartial advice service that is open to all continues today, and every week, people from all walks of life turn to our service in Winchester for advice on issues that are negatively impacting their lives.

Many of those who come to Citizens Advice for help have significant money worries, and many have multiple, interconnected issues – for example, a housing concern, debts, difficulties with their energy supply, a family breakdown, disability, or an employment issue.

The advice we provide helps people overcome their problems, understand their rights, and changes lives for the better. We also work to address the root causes of people's problems by advocating for fairer policies – both nationally and locally – using evidence gathered from our service users.

Citizens Advice has had a presence in Winchester District for over 60 years, and demand for our service today, sadly, remains incredibly high as we continue to provide a lifeline to people in their time of need.

To contact Citizens Advice Winchester District: -

Call for free on 0808 278 7861.

Drop into their office in Winchester (Colebrook St) or hub at Wickham Community Centre.

Email them via their website [www.citizensadvicewinchester.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicewinchester.org.uk)

To donate to Citizens Advice Winchester District, visit: [www.localgiving.org/charity/citizens-advice-winchester-district](http://www.localgiving.org/charity/citizens-advice-winchester-district)

To find out about volunteering, visit: [www.citizensadvicewinchester.org.uk/volunteer/](http://www.citizensadvicewinchester.org.uk/volunteer/)

*Robert Sanders*

## Alresford Community Minibus shopping trips – do you know anyone we can help?

The Alresford Community Minibus is a door-to-door service for people with mobility issues, which enables them to maintain their independence, even when they can no longer drive or find it hard to use public transport.

We pick up from New and Old Alresford, and many local villages, and take our passengers on trips to supermarkets, to garden centres, into Winchester and other local towns, and of course into Alresford itself. As well as the chance to go shopping, it's a social event and an opportunity to meet up with friends. The trips run on a fixed monthly schedule, so you can plan in advance where you are going and when.

A number of our regular monthly trips have spaces for new passengers. **Do you know anyone who could benefit?** We welcome anyone who needs support – whether mobility problems are temporary or long term – and we can manage walking sticks, frames and wheelchairs. Carers are also welcome to join the trips where space allows, if this gives passengers more confidence.

Contact the email address below for a registration form, and to find out which trips have spaces or waiting lists. We ask for a donation towards running costs of £4 for the Supermarket and Winchester trips and £2 for the Friday morning trip to Alresford, per person.

For more information email [minibus@towntrust.org.uk](mailto:minibus@towntrust.org.uk) or telephone 07510 474231



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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY - COULD IT BE YOU? HEALTH & SAFETY VOLUNTEER - ST. JOHN'S

St. John's Churchwardens are looking for someone who can look after our maintenance programme for our church. The role would involve booking regular outside agencies and overseeing risk assessments. If you could you help, it would be **VERY** much appreciated. Please contact Rosie: 07891 120662 or [rosie@22rwg.co.uk](mailto:rosie@22rwg.co.uk).

We have been so grateful to Paul Whiffen who has done an outstanding job over the last few years.

**Thank you, Paul.**



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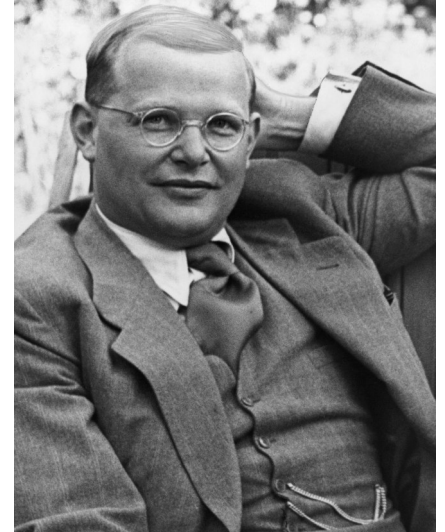


## 9<sup>th</sup> April - Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran pastor and martyr

Standing up to tyrants, no matter what the cost. That kind of courage has been in the headlines since the war in Ukraine began, as many brave people have defied Putin's oppression. As also is the courage of those in Israel/Palestine and elsewhere who speak out against the destruction of Gaza and its people.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer did not have Putin or Netanyahu to contend with, but Hitler. Bonhoeffer did not back down either, when the time came.

Bonhoeffer grew up with no thought of ever defying the leader of Germany. Nothing could have been further from his mind or background. Born at Breslau in Silesia (now the Polish city of Wroclaw) in 1906, Bonhoeffer was the son of an academic. In 1912, his father was appointed to be Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology at Berlin university, and so the family moved to Berlin.



Bonhoeffer never even considered going into politics. Instead, he studied theology in Tubingen, Berlin and New York, before returning to Berlin as a lecturer in theology in 1931.

But though Bonhoeffer did not chase political trouble, it soon came to him. For on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1933 Adolf Hitler, leader of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, had come to power. His totalitarian approach left no room for anyone in public life to disagree with him. Including anyone in the two major churches - Lutheran and Catholic.

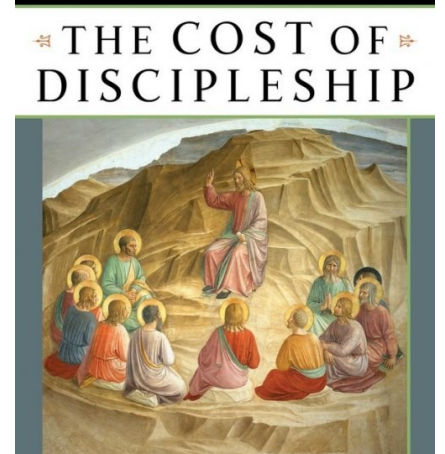
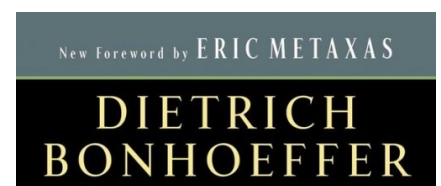
But Bonhoeffer refused to be compliant, and joined the Confessing Church, which had formed in opposition to the takeover of the Lutheran Church. The Confessing Church also opposed Hitler's attempts to force antisemitism on the church and society.

Bonhoeffer was in America when war broke out in 1939, but he returned to Germany. He said: "I shall have no right to participate in the reconstruction of Christian life in Germany after the war, if I do not share the trials of this time with my people."

Back in Germany, he joined the underground anti-Nazi opposition and worked hard to oppose Hitler. In 1943 he was arrested and imprisoned at Tegel prison in Berlin. The involvement of many of his contacts in the July 1944 plot to kill Hitler may well have sealed his fate. He was finally moved on to Flossenberg concentration camp.

In April 1945, as American troops were approaching the camp, Bonhoeffer was hanged. The last words of this brilliant and courageous 39-year-old opponent of Nazism were: "This is the end - for me, the beginning of life."

Bonhoeffer left a great legacy behind him. His writings, and especially his *Letters and Papers from Prison*, have inspired many trying to make sense of persecution and needless suffering. His 1937 book *The Cost of Discipleship* is described as a modern classic.



## 23<sup>rd</sup> April - St George, our Patron Saint who isn't English

The English have a patron saint who isn't English or even British which is ironic considering how some people use his flag to promote racism.

We know very little about him but it is most likely that St George was a soldier, a Christian who was martyred for his faith somewhere in Palestine in the early fourth century. Some stories say that he was an officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror, and was martyred at Lydda in Palestine about the year 300 AD - supposedly 23<sup>rd</sup> April.



At some point in the early centuries of the Church he became associated with wider military concerns, being regarded as the patron saint of the Byzantine armies. There is no doubt that St George was held as an example of the 'godly soldier', one who served Christ as bravely and truly as he served his king and country.



The story of George and the dragon is of much later date and no one seems to know where it comes from. By the Middle Ages, when George was being honoured in stained glass, the dragon had become an invaluable and invariable visual element, so that for most people the two are inseparable. Pub signs have a lot to answer for here: 'The George and Dragon'.

The legend says that he rescued a princess from being eaten by a dragon and when the people saw the defeated dragon George agreed to behead the beast provided the whole town became Christian. They agreed—a very neat feat of evangelism.

However, it's probably more profitable to concentrate on his role as a man who witnessed to his faith in the difficult setting of military service, and in the end was martyred for his faithfulness to Christ.

The idea of the 'Christian soldier' was, of course, much loved by the Victorian hymn-writers - 'Onward, Christian soldiers!' The soldier needs discipline. The heart of his commitment is to obedience. The battle cannot be avoided nor the enemy appeased. He marches and fights alongside others, and he is loyal to his comrades. In the end, if the battle is won, he receives the garlands of victory, the final reward of those who overcome evil.

St George's Day presents a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to distance the message of his life from the militarism, aggression and triumphalism that can easily attach itself to anything connected to soldiers and fighting. The opportunity is to celebrate the ideal of the 'Christian soldier' - one who submits to discipline, sets out to obey God truly, does not avoid the inevitable battle with all that is unjust, wrong and hateful in our world, and marches alongside others fighting the same noble cause.

Discipline, obedience, courage, fellowship and loyalty - they're not the most popular virtues today, but that doesn't mean that they don't deserve our admiration.

## The South-East Youth striking contest is coming to New Alresford on the 18<sup>th</sup> April

The striking competitions are either on 6,8,10 or 12 bells, this particular one is the South East England Youth 8 bell striking contest, or SEECON. Rest assured, there will be no striking of youths, but bellringing teams of young people from districts in the South East will be striking bells!

They will be marked on precision ringing, how evenly the bells are struck, and for any errors in the methods or call changes they have chosen to ring.

Each team has a 5 minute practice so they can get used to the bells and how they handle, then they will ring a bell three times to signal they are beginning their test piece. The sharp eared judges then mark each piece for errors and the team with the fewest mistakes is the winner. We will be entering a Winchester and Portsmouth team.

Bearing in mind this may be the first time they are ringing on bells they may not have encountered before which is challenging even for the most experienced ringer, and these teams comprise 8 young people under 19

There will be 8 to 10 teams, and the competition will start at 11, followed by refreshments for the ringers and families, then the results will be given and prizes presented.

While the teams are waiting to ring they will have the opportunity to ring at Old Alresford, and there will be some mini rings of bells around the town that you are welcome to come and try. If you are inspired to learn how to ring

These competitions were a very important social event in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The local hostelry would put up the prizes, for example, a pair of gloves, a fine hat, several guineas and a dinner were some of the prizes on offer. Neighbouring villages and towns would be incredibly competitive, and it would often be a highlight of the social calendar

Of course this would bring big spending in the local establishments, so they did rather well out of encouraging these events. Unfortunately this may have led to some over indulgence and the associated undesirable behaviours that can come after too much ale..... however there is no need to be concerned, these things don't happen anymore, bellringers are (mostly) a well behaved bunch. As with any sporting competition there were fierce rivalries, and people would lay bets on the teams to win, often leading to wild accusations of cheating or corrupt judges.

Some of you may have seen the Midsomer Murders episode aired in 2002 called 'Bring out your Dead' . The story is based around a striking competition, only the bellringers are being murdered one by one..... luckily Alresford doesn't have the same reputation as Midsomer....anyway maybe watch it after we've hosted the competition!

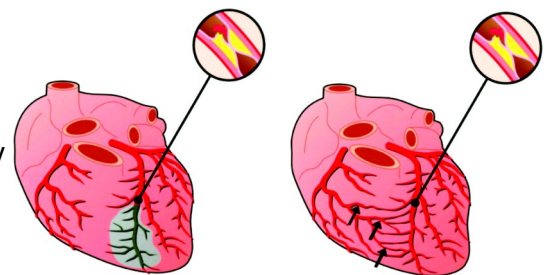


## Heart Attack by Sue Clarke

First of all I would like to thank the kind souls who offered prayers, sent cards and flowers and showed love and concern after my heart attack in January. They really helped. A number of people have asked what it felt like, how did I know what was happening to me, what were the symptoms? My husband died of cardiac arrest. He walked upstairs, said he felt awful and dropped down dead. No warning, he was feeling better, no secondary symptoms, an instant event. That can be the popular perception of what a heart attack is. Dramatic, unexpected.

It was not like that for me. I had been feeling vaguely unwell for days, very tired, back ache, indigestion and chest pain. The indigestion I had put down to the bowel cancer I had and the chest pain to the two mastectomies, all operations over ten years ago but all resulting in some ongoing discomfort. Tiredness I put down to lack of sleep and my advancing years (78), likewise back ache. I couldn't have a heart problem, there was no family history, I was active (Jessie my cockerpoo makes sure of that) I lived a full busy life.

So, on the Saturday morning I woke up with the above symptoms. I made myself some breakfast but couldn't eat it (anyone who knows me will be aware of my love of food). I came out in a cold sweat and I felt dizzy. It 'wasn't anything to do with my heart' so I went upstairs and had a shower. Probably a bad decision. I still didn't feel right. The pain in my chest was uncomfortable, a feeling of wearing a bra two sizes too small but I could move about. Then I noticed that my arms ached. I broke my left elbow and tore ligaments a few years ago, so I often have pain in my left arm, especially when it's cold, but this was more persistent and covered both arms. As my granddaughter returned from a trip to the gym I decided to go on the 111 website and check on symptoms. She realised that I didn't look right, phoned 111 who immediately called an ambulance. The ECG showed something unusual, so I went to Basingstoke hospital where they found the right coronary artery was 100% blocked, so no stent option. The problem had been building up for years, possibly helped by my age, by having chemo and the stress of John's sudden death. Fortunately, my other left coronary artery had created collaterals (a natural by-pass) smaller arteries to compensate for the blocked artery. They are working and I'm going to cardiac rehab to improve my general health and lose weight and taking drugs to reduce cholesterol and hopefully prevent another heart attack.



So why am I writing this? I knew about heart attacks, but I didn't realise that for many people extreme tiredness, back pain, feeling sweaty and faint and having lower chest/abdominal pain (not necessarily all at once) are also symptoms. My husband was unable to move when he had heart related chest pain, or angina, I walked upstairs and had a shower. Left to myself I may have returned to bed to 'sleep it off' and that may have been disastrous.

So, take symptoms seriously. The medics would rather check and prescribe medication than have to deal with a more serious outcome.

1 April - 5 May  
2026

# National Pet Month

Promoting responsible pet ownership across the UK

Get involved



## OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Promote responsible pet ownership
- Make people aware of the mutual benefits of living with pets
- Increase public awareness of the role of pet care specialists
- Raise awareness of the value of working and assistance companion animals
- Encourage fundraising for UK pet welfare charities and organisations



## THE FIVE WELFARE NEEDS: to ensure the health and happiness of pets and these are now law in the UK

- 1. A suitable environment** - providing a safe, comfortable place to live, with appropriate space, shelter and opportunities to rest and feel secure
- 2. A suitable diet** - feeding a balanced, appropriate diet and ensuring pets always have access to fresh water.
- 3. The ability to behave normally** - allowing pets to express natural behaviours through exercise, play, enrichment and mental stimulation.
- 4. Appropriate companionship** - ensuring pets have the right level of social contact – whether with people, other animals, or the appropriate time alone.
- 5. Protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease** - looking after pets' physical and mental health through responsible breeding, preventive care, regular veterinary attention and forward planning.

**Benefits to people:** Statistics show that owners are healthier and make less visits to the doctor than their pet free neighbours.

In Germany, for example, pet owners have been shown to make 15% fewer visits to their GP, saving 5.9 billion euros per annum. And indications are that similar results are in evidence in the UK.

Pets are proved to help reduce blood pressure, heart rate and stress. Just stroking a pet or watching fish swim in an aquarium also leads to reduced blood pressure

Yet many people cannot afford pets especially with veterinary bills which is why organisations such as the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) are so valuable as they make visiting the vet affordable

## National Gardening Week - 28<sup>th</sup> April to 4<sup>th</sup> May

Led by the Royal Horticultural Society, this annual premier UK celebration encourages everyone to experience the joy of gardening.

Aimed especially at beginners, events and activities are run up and down the country, offering tips, events, and resources to promote the health, wellbeing, and environmental benefits of cultivating plants. The RHS provides expert tips, how-to guides, and fun, easy gardening challenges to build confidence in new gardeners. One example of their how-to guides is below.

Some nearby events for this week:

**BBC Gardeners' World Spring Fair (1–3 May 2026):** Located nearby at Beaulieu, this event features floral displays, expert talks, and special nurseries.

**Plant Heritage Hampshire Plant Fair (May 4, 2026):** Held at Longstock Park Nursery, offering a vast array of specialized plants.

### Wildflower Growing



Spring is here and there's no better way to celebrate National Gardening Week 2026 than by planting some wildflowers. Wildflowers are a brilliant alternative to traditional lawns and borders. They will provide a stunning display for many months as well as bringing a wide array of beneficial wildlife to your garden with bees, butterflies and wild birds in particular attracted to the blooms.

New gardeners often struggle with how and where seeds should be sown and how thinly. It's all too easy to cram a packet of seed meant for a 10m squared (108 ft squared) space into just a metre squared (11 ft squared). A great way for novices to get around this is to use wildflower seed mixes or carpets. In these the seeds are pre-mixed, meaning you will have an even distribution of random mixed wildflowers wherever you sow them.

Wildflower seeds can be sown any time between March and June or from late-October to mid-November. First clear your border or flowerbed, making sure you are rid of any vigorous perennial weeds, before digging, firming and then raking. Sow your seeds directly onto the prepared soil and cover with a very thin sprinkling of compost. Keep the soil moist and you should see the first signs of flowers: six to eight weeks after sowing if sown in spring, or from April if sown in autumn or in the second year.

Wildflower meadows are not only beautiful but also support declining pollinator populations and create important habitats for wildlife. They require minimal maintenance once established and can thrive in most UK gardens.



## Easy Carrot Cake



This is a simple, delicious cake to make that transforms the humble carrot into something wonderful. The cake calls for olive oil (it doesn't affect the flavour) – but, if you prefer, you can use sunflower or rapeseed oil. The uniced cake can be frozen and stored for up to three months. If iced, it is not suitable for freezing and should be kept in the fridge and eaten within three days.

### Ingredients

#### Cake:

350 g self raising flour, sieved  
325 g dark soft brown sugar, sieved  
2 teaspoons cinnamon  
250 g carrots grated (use the coarse side of the grater)  
4 medium eggs  
200 ml olive oil  
4 tablespoons milk  
75 g walnuts roughly chopped (optional)

#### Icing (optional):

180 g full fat cream cheese (such as Philadelphia Original)  
30 g icing sugar, sieved  
25 g walnuts finely chopped (optional)

### Method

Preheat the oven to 180C / 160C fan / gas mark 4 / 350F. Grease and line the bottom and sides of a 22cm / 9inch round cake tin with a double layer of greaseproof paper.

Mix together the flour, sugar, cinnamon, roughly chopped walnuts if including them, and grated carrots in a large bowl.

Beat together the eggs, olive oil and milk in a large jug.

Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients slowly, stirring to make sure all the flour is incorporated.

Tip the cake mixture into the lined cake tin and cook for 1h - 1h15, or until a skewer or knife blade comes out clean.

#### Easy Cream Cheese Frosting (optional):

Simply mix the cream cheese and icing sugar together and spread it on the top of the cake.

Sprinkle the finely chopped walnuts on the top to decorate, if you are including them.

### Time to fly! Fairy Cake



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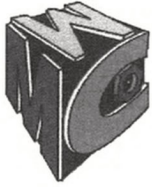
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## Volunteers needed

### Alesford Town Trust



**Helping at Open Days** – for just an hour or two on a few days per year, help to welcome visitors. No expertise needed, everything you need to know about the Museum, Bridge and Eel House is on display, we just need friendly people to help visitors enjoy their experience

**Driving the Community Minibus**-most drivers commit to just one half day trip per month, helping local people maintain their independence. You need D1 on your driving licence (which you will have automatically if you passed your test before 1997). If you are over 70, the Trust will fund the necessary eye and health checks to maintain your D1 entitlement.

clerk@towntrust.org.uk or by phone at 01962 733778

### Winchester Hospice



Volunteering inside our hospice gives you the opportunity to make a real difference to those using our services.

**In Hospice volunteer** - Our wonderful in-hospice volunteers support in many areas of our hospice, including helping out on our reception and providing support to our staff who care for our patients.

**Garden Volunteer** - Our hospice garden design was originally created as part of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2021! Gifted by the Bible Society to our hospice, the design was lifted and re-constructed in our very own grounds to provide a beautiful outdoor space for our patients, staff and visitors to enjoy.

These grounds require lots of care and attention, and our volunteer gardeners generously give up their time to help to maintain them with practical tasks such as watering, putting in bedding plants, keeping gardens free of litter, pruning and more.

Our volunteer gardeners also tend to the grounds in front of our hospice, ensuring the space is kept beautiful all year round.

Volunteering times for this role are very flexible.

For further information on both roles please Email [winchester.hospice@hhft.nhs.uk](mailto:winchester.hospice@hhft.nhs.uk) or phone 01962 828353.

—o0o—



**Volunteer Retail Assistants** needed for the new **St Michael's Hospice shop** in Alesford.

Are you friendly, enthusiastic and love meeting new people?

Please call in at the shop for further details



## Volunteers needed

### VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES - LOTS OF CHOICES TO SUIT...



**A variety of help needed please for St John's** - It is the time of year when we are beginning to do rotas for the autumn!!!

If you or anyone you know would be able to help with any of the below it would be VERY much appreciated.

**Please contact Rosie 07891 120662 [rosie@22rwg.co.uk](mailto:rosie@22rwg.co.uk).**

**(All below occur approximately once every 6 weeks or so.)**

**Church Locking** - the church needs locking, lights out etc at about 5pm each night for a week at a time.

**Monday, Meet and Eat in term time** - Either making tea, washing up or playing games with the children or cooking a simple meal for approx 15.

**Chatterbox on a Thursday in term time** - Time to welcome and chat to families of children under 5.

**St John's Tech Team** - Help needed to either control the sound or click on the service overheads or set the livestream on the camera. *Full training given.*

## Alresford & District Voluntary Care Group



Alresford & District Voluntary Care Group (ADVCG) is looking for a volunteer to join the **Co-ordinator Team** – these are the volunteers who answer the central telephone line which people ring when they need help with transport to their medical appointments; the line is diverted to the landline or mobile of the duty Co-ordinator, so it can all be done from home.

Co-ordinators carry out a week manning the telephone line on a rota basis, once every seven weeks or so. Details of requested journeys are recorded on our web-based computer system, and the Co-ordinator then allocates the journey to one of our pool of approximately seventy volunteer drivers.

Co-ordinators carry out a very important and rewarding role for ADVCG, as they are the 'bridge' between members of the public who need assistance, and our volunteer drivers; so if you can spare some time, please either email us at [alresfordvolcare@gmail.com](mailto:alresfordvolcare@gmail.com) or contact David Cooper, Chairman, on 07766 406704

## National Parks Fortnight - 4<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> April

This month would be a good time to visit at least one of our 15 National Parks, and to appreciate once again the role they play in conserving our environment and encouraging people to enjoy outdoor activities.

Just some highlights:

**Oldest:** The Peak District was designated as the first UK National Park in 1951.

**Largest Park:** Cairngorms National Park in Scotland, covering 1,748 square miles.

**Smallest:** New Forest National Park, at only 150 square miles.

**Most populated:** South Downs National Park, with about 12,000 people living within it.

**Most visited:** Lake District National Park, with about 18 million visitors a year.

**Longest coastline:** Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, with a coastline of 186 miles long.

**Altogether,** there are ten National Parks in England, three in Wales and two in Scotland:

**England** - Dartmoor, Exmoor, the New Forest, the South Downs, the Broads, the Peak District, the Yorkshire Dales, the Lake District, the North Yorkshire Moors and Northumberland.

**Wales** - Snowdonia, the Brecon Beacons and Pembrokeshire Coast.

**Scotland** - Loch Lomond & the Trossachs and Cairngorms.

**Altogether,** the National Parks make up roughly 10% of the total landmass in the UK.

More details at: <http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk/>



## New Thoughts on Being Overweight

### **Obesity is costing us millions and we don't seem to be able to do anything about it.**

66% per cent of UK adults are now overweight or obese. That is according to recent NHS England figures. Around 30% of these are officially obese, with a Body Mass Index of 30 or above. And this is also increasingly true of children.

It is affecting our chairs, our ambulances, and even our coffins. Furnishing companies are getting orders to provide bigger chairs. Airports provide wider seating. We now have bariatric ambulances with double-width stretchers to accommodate patients. And our firefighters are given special training on how to rescue people whom they can no longer lift.

Meanwhile, obesity has become a huge public health issue: it is the main cause of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and strokes. Treating weight-related diseases is now costing the NHS an estimated £11.4 billion a year.

The reason why this has become a problem since the 1950s is that we have far more food available and we eat more prepared foods which often have more sugar in them than we realise.

The traditional view is that it because we eat too many calories and don't use those calories in exercise. This is of course partly true but doctors are beginning to think that weight management is far more complex than that.

There are anomalies in the simple arithmetic of counting calories.

- Some apparently overweight people have low blood sugar, healthy levels of cholesterol and correct blood pressure i.e all the other indications of disease come out as the person is healthy.
- Many people manage to lose weight but the majority regain that weight within a couple of years.
- Some people who have followed diet and exercise regime under medical supervision do not lose weight as expected and have even gained weight.
- There are people who follow an apparently unhealthy diet and are comparatively sedentary and yet maintain a low Body Mass Index.

Why? What else is going on? Various areas are being researched.

- The role of gut micro organisms—it has been found that some people who struggle to lose weight are able to do so and keep the weight off when they are taking probiotics.
- Hormones. We all know that women are more likely to gain and keep weight on after pregnancy and this is down to hormones. There is also evidence that anyone who is on insulin (a hormone) is likely to gain weight. Hormones control whether we feel hungry or full so are they out of sync and if so what can we do about it?
- Our bodies have evolved and are programmed to maintain the status quo so if somebody has been overweight for years the body thinks that is the normal healthy weight and will work to maintain that weight.

Unfortunately this doesn't mean if we are overweight we shouldn't eat less and eat healthier (cut the cakes, chocolate and fast food) but one suggestion is that if you have been overweight for years you should lose weight slowly—maybe over years so that you maintain weight loss.

However research is continuing so maybe in a few years we will have some clearer answers.

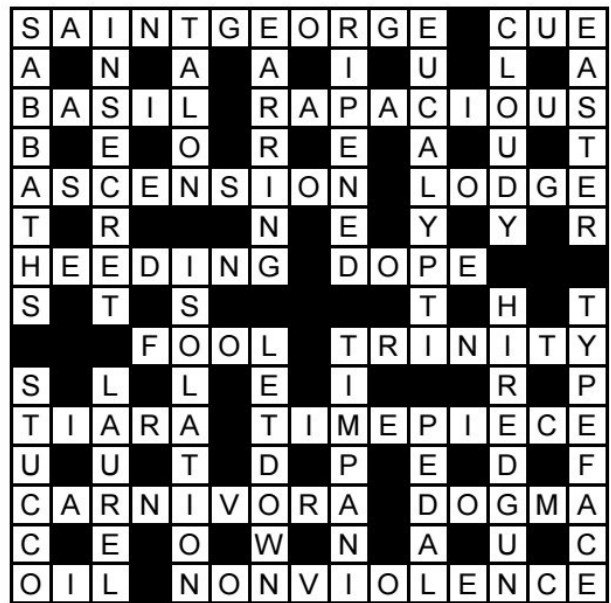
## Puzzle Answers

8	7	4	6	9	5	3	2	1
1	9	6	2	4	3	8	7	5
2	3	5	8	7	1	4	6	9
4	5	8	1	6	2	9	3	7
7	6	1	9	3	8	2	5	4
3	2	9	7	5	4	6	1	8
9	1	3	5	8	6	7	4	2
5	4	7	3	2	9	1	8	6
6	8	2	4	1	7	5	9	3



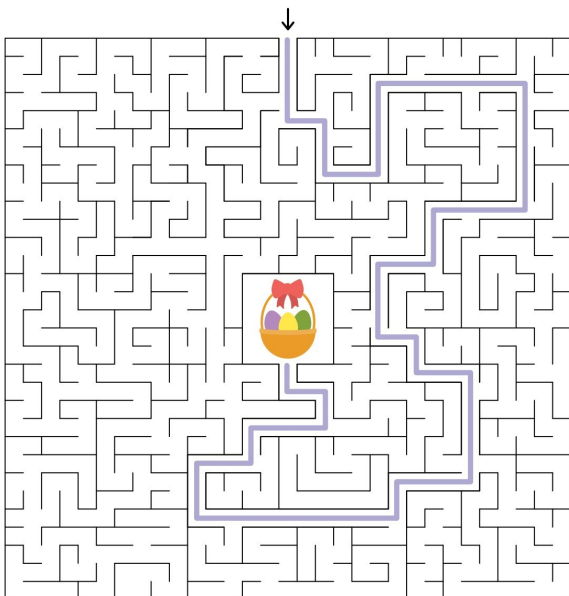
### Word Wheel words

aloe, alto, cahoot, chocolate, cloche, clout, clot, cloth, clothe, coach, coal, coat, cochlea, cocoa, cola, cole, colt, cool, coot, cotch, cote, echo, halo, helot, hole, holo, holt, hoot, hotel, loach, loath, loathe, locate, loch, loco, loot, loth, oath, ocelot, oche, octal, olea, oleo, thole, tool



## EASTER MAZE

Find your way through the maze to reach the Easter egg basket



### Easter Word Scramble Answers

Bunny, Spring, Hunt, Tulip, Chick, Basket, Family, Games, Tradition, Grass, Daffodil, Bonnet, Sunday, Lamb, Easter



# 2026 Calendar



## Open Days at the Museum, Bridge and Eel House



**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April**  
**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May**  
**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June**  
**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June**  
**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July**  
**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August**  
**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September**  
**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September**

## Markets and Fairs in Broad Street

**Street Market**  
every Thursday, 8am to 1pm

**Farmers Market**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month, 10am to 2pm

**Brocante Art & Antiques Fair**  
4<sup>th</sup> May and 27<sup>th</sup> September, 9.30am to 3.30pm

**EcoFair**  
Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June, 10am to 3pm

**Funfair**  
Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 3pm to 10pm

For more information contact [clerk@towntrust.org.uk](mailto:clerk@towntrust.org.uk)



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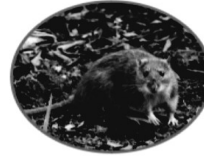
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# REGISTRY

## BAPTISM

Bella Anne Young

22nd February

St. John's

## FUNERALS

Funeral

Julia Champion

16th February

St. John's

Funeral

Michael Walden

2nd March

St. John's

## INTERMENTS

Interment

John Lynne

11th March

St. John's

Interment

Norah Cann

13th March

St. John's

Funeral

Kenneth Richmond

17th March

St. John's



**Have you suffered a bereavement?**

**Would it help to talk?**

**If so, please email:**

**[support@wbs.org.uk](mailto:support@wbs.org.uk)**

**or telephone:**

**07450 649679**

**Our support is confidential and FREE. It is carried out by trained Bereavement Visitors who are supervised by professionally qualified counsellors.**

**[www.wbs.org.uk](http://www.wbs.org.uk)**



## **BEFRIEND THE END**

**Are you curious?  
Do you have questions  
about death and dying?**

If so, come along to our informal afternoons and meet like-minded people to share and discover more about living well and dying well over a cuppa and a slice of cake.

**At the Alresford library on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month at 2 - 3pm**

For further information email;  
[contact@befriendtheend.co.uk](mailto:contact@befriendtheend.co.uk)

# Useful Local Information and Emergency Numbers

Emergency Services—Police, Fire, Ambulance 999 or 112

Police non emergency 101

Electrical Emergency 08457 708090

Gas Emergency 0800 111 999

Water Emergency 0800 820 99

Floodline 0845 988 1188

Samaritans 116 123

Childline 0800 111

## Health

Royal Hampshire County

Hospital, Winchester

01962 863535

**Alresford Group Surgery,**

Station Rd, Alresford

01962 732345

[www.alresfordsurgery.co.uk](http://www.alresfordsurgery.co.uk)

## Other Useful Information

**Cedar Veterinary Surgery 01962 732 535 (24hrs)**

**Alresford Library, 20 Broad Street, Alresford 0300 555 1387**

**New Alresford Town Trust minibus 07510 474231**

**Bus Information 0871 200 2233**

**MP for Alresford: Danny Chambers**

## Defibrillators available for public use

Alresford Recreation Centre

Alresford Bowling Club

Sun Hill Infant school gate

Stratton Bates Recreation Ground

Alresford Community Centre

Alresford Dental Care - The Dean

Old Alresford Village telephone box

Linnets Road telephone box

Alresford Methodist Church

## Wessex Pharmacies

Broad Street, Alresford

**01962 732445**

## Councils

Hampshire County Council

01962 841841

[Www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

**Winchester City Council**

01962 840222

[Www.winchester.gov.uk](http://www.winchester.gov.uk)

## East Hampshire District Council

01730 266551

[Www.easthant.gov.uk](http://www.easthant.gov.uk)

**New Alresford Town Council**

01962 732 079

[Www.newalresford-tc.gov.uk](http://www.newalresford-tc.gov.uk)

## BENEFICE CONTACTS

**BENEFICE OFFICE** Tel. 01962 733545 *Please leave a phone message or email the office.*  
*Office hours 9am to 11am Monday to Friday.*

St. John The Baptist Church, West Street, New Alresford, Hampshire SO24 9AG

**www.arlevalleychurches.org.uk** email: [arlevalleychurches@gmail.com](mailto:arlevalleychurches@gmail.com) Facebook/  
**StJohns Alresford & ourplaceyouth** Phone numbers unless otherwise stated are 01962

Rector  
VACANCY

[arlevalleyrector@gmail.com](mailto:arlevalleyrector@gmail.com)

### **Licensed Lay Ministers**

Ian Waring Green  
T. 733237

[iwg@robinhoodmusic.com](mailto:iwg@robinhoodmusic.com)

Peter Colquhoun  
T. 733035

[pscolquhoun@googlemail.com](mailto:pscolquhoun@googlemail.com)

Sue Armstrong  
T. 734542

[susanarmstrong@btopenworld.com](mailto:susanarmstrong@btopenworld.com)

Angela Peel  
T 734814

[Angela.peel420@gmail.com](mailto:Angela.peel420@gmail.com)

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[cstryton@gmail.com](mailto:cstryton@gmail.com)

Susan Roberts  
T732194

[susan\\_penny@btinternet.com](mailto:susan_penny@btinternet.com)

### **Alresford: St. John's**

Churchwardens  
Rosie Waring Green  
T. 733237  
[rosie@22rwg.co.uk](mailto:rosie@22rwg.co.uk)

James Lees  
[James@lees92.plus.com](mailto:James@lees92.plus.com)  
01962 732574

PCC Secretary

Jo Whiteman

[joanna\\_whiteman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:joanna_whiteman@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Ovington: St. Peter's**

Churchwarden  
Roger Harrison  
T 732761

[arlevalleychurches@gmail.com](mailto:arlevalleychurches@gmail.com)

PCC Secretary

Vacant - Contact Benefice Office  
T. 735455

[arlevalleychurches@gmail.com](mailto:arlevalleychurches@gmail.com)

### **Old Alresford: St. Mary's**

Churchwarden  
Roger Parsons T. 734561  
[rwpjparsons@gmail.com](mailto:rwpjparsons@gmail.com)

### **Bighton: All Saints**

Churchwardens  
Bob Ellis T. 773427  
[robert.sally120@gmail.com](mailto:robert.sally120@gmail.com)

Chris James  
T. 07974 927901  
[crjathome@hotmail.com](mailto:crjathome@hotmail.com)

Baptisms  
Benefice Office T. 733545  
[arlevalleychurches@gmail.com](mailto:arlevalleychurches@gmail.com)

Funeral Enquiries  
Kathryn Lockyer T. 809078  
[lockyerkathryn@gmail.com](mailto:lockyerkathryn@gmail.com)

Weddings  
Paul and Sue Dix T. 734863  
[dix.house@btinternet.com](mailto:dix.house@btinternet.com)

Bell Ringing

Elizabeth Johnson  
T. 733266

Belfry Practice Fridays 7.30 -  
9.00pm

Benefice Magazine Editor Team led  
by Charlotte Ryton  
[cstryton@gmail.com](mailto:cstryton@gmail.com)

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Bible Reading Notes  
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T. 734665  
[pearlpage@aol.com](mailto:pearlpage@aol.com)

Bookings: St. John's Church & John  
Pearson Hall  
Benefice Office T. 733545

Churchyard Volunteer Co-ordinator  
Ben Howlett  
[alresfordchurchyard@gmail.com](mailto:alresfordchurchyard@gmail.com)

Events Diary @ Facebook  
Miranda Pinch T. 732064  
[events@stjohnsalresford.org.uk](mailto:events@stjohnsalresford.org.uk)

Flower Co-Ordinator  
Maureen Skayman  
[gskayman@gmail.com](mailto:gskayman@gmail.com)

Fundraising Co-ordinator  
Miranda Pinch T. 732064  
[events@stjohnsalresford.org.uk](mailto:events@stjohnsalresford.org.uk)

Giving & Gift Aid Secretary

## BENEFICE CONTACTS continued

David Griffiths  
T. 734408

### **Continued on next page**

Hospital Visiting  
Patricia Todd  
T. 07810 723973

Pastoral Visiting  
St. John's Pastoral Team Leader  
Jackie Connell T. 732056  
Sue Clarke T 733597

Prayer Ministry Team  
Rosie Waring Green  
T. 733237  
[rosie@22rwg.co.uk](mailto:rosie@22rwg.co.uk)

Safeguarding Officer (Benefice) **Sarah Wilding**  
Assistant Safe Guarding **Alison Mayne**  
T. 07900 884125  
[arlevalleysafeguarding@gmail.com](mailto:arlevalleysafeguarding@gmail.com)

Treasurer  
Jon Whale  
T. 734941  
[stjtreasurer@arlevaleychurches.org.uk](mailto:stjtreasurer@arlevaleychurches.org.uk)

Youth Work  
Rosie Waring Green  
T. 733237 e: [rosie@22rwg.co.uk](mailto:rosie@22rwg.co.uk)

### **Groups and Clubs in the John Pearson Hall**

**Seniors Health & Fitness**  
Mondays, 9.45 - 11.15am

**Coffee, Cake and Chat**  
2nd Tuesday, 10 - 11.30am

**4th Alresford Brownies**  
Wednesdays, 6pm (term time)

**Chatterbox (Toddlers)**  
Thursdays, 10 - 11.30am

**Alresford & Cheriton Cub Scouts**  
Thursdays, 5.30 – 7.00pm (term time)

**Alresford Wine Circle**  
4th Thursday, 8pm

**Table Talk**  
3rd Friday, 12 - 2pm

**Solos Sunday Tea**  
3rd Sunday, 2.30 – 4.30pm

### **Interested in booking St. John's Church or the John Pearson Hall?**

**St. John's Church** - a large open space seating 300.

People have hired St. John's for a number of uses including:

- Choir Rehearsals,
- Concerts
- Community events



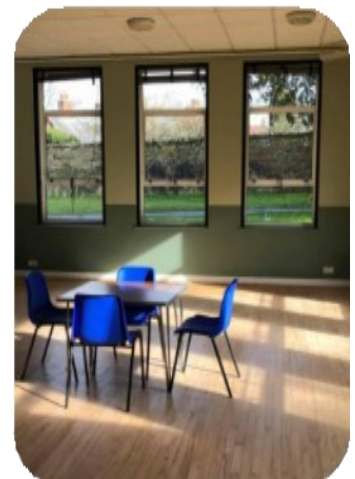
### **The John Pearson Hall (JPH)**

A newly refurbished venue that seats 80 in comfort with a modern kitchen.

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**Both St. John's and the JPH are open to everyone and you are assured a warm welcome.**

**For more information regarding regular and ad-hoc hiring of the church and hall, please call the Benefice office on 01962 733545 or email: [arlevaleychurches@gmail.com](mailto:arlevaleychurches@gmail.com)**





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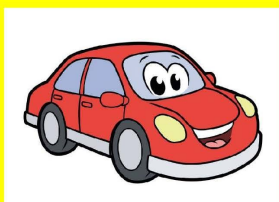
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