

# the bridge monthly bulletin

April 2024



## APRIL FOOL!

On the First April, 2001, the front end of a subway car from the newly opened subway, appeared in a public square in Copenhagen, surrounded by paving slabs looking for all the world as if it had broken through to the surface from the lines underneath. It was, of course, an April Fool's day joke. Look for it, if you can, on the April Fool's day Wikipedia entry.

The origin of the April Fool is not clear. Some have suggested it came from the time when the New Year's date was changed from Easter to the first of January in the middle ages, although there are references to the date from before that time. It is celebrated all over Europe, if not, the world, some countries having similar occasions on different days of the year.

This year, as you will know, April Fool's day and Easter Monday coincide. I read no sign of any thoughts about it, but it seems to me that this could be no coincidence. There was an early theory that, at Easter, God tricked the devil. The 'ransom' theory of atonement said that original sin meant that humanity was in thrall to the devil, and God needed to pay a ransom to set them free. Jesus paid this ransom, but God tricked the devil who didn't understand that Christ couldn't be held by the bonds of death. I see something of this in the book "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" which talks about the old magic not being understood by the White Witch.

There's a lot to be said for this theory, but I can't see God being involved in 'trickery'. There are, it seems to me, better ways of explaining the tremendous sacrifice made for us on the cross; ways that don't imply God told lies to the devil. Ways which talk of self-sacrifice and love. It is hard to fully explain the victory won for us by Christ on the cross, and I'm sure Christians and scholars will go on debating it for ever. Nonetheless, post-Easter, there is, rightly, an atmosphere of rejoicing and fun, celebration and laughter; so, why shouldn't appearing subway trains, or stories of liquorice farms, spaghetti harvest or, as appeared in a Boston park, signs asking people not to take photos of the statues as light erodes the stonework, be part of our celebration of the resurrection this year?

By the way, your shoelaces are undone!  
Easter Blessings, **Graham**

**Amazing God,  
you offer us love and new life  
through Jesus Christ, your Son.**

**We pray for those in need of  
healing and hope,  
those in need of new life.**

**We think of those overwhelmed by  
warfare, poverty or famine.**

**God of love and life:**

**We think of those laid low by  
illness, sorrow or anxiety.**

**We think of those who can find no  
meaning or purpose in life.**

**May we offer help and hope.**

**In the name of our glorious,**

**Risen Saviour,**

**Amen.**

*From Warming Up*

© **Christine Odell Sheasby**

*image: mi-pham-FtZL0r4DZYk-unsplash*



# Lectionary Reflections *from Brian Shackleton*

## 7 April JOHN 20: 19-31

If you have ever felt you have missed out, or been left out, this is the Sunday for you. Thomas wasn't with the other disciples when Jesus appeared on the evening of Resurrection Day. It must have been a very difficult week for him, before everything changed a week later. So perhaps as we continue to celebrate the Good News of New Life, we might think long and hard about those who for all sorts of reasons, feel left out and neglected. Those perhaps who long to belong to a particular group or set, but find themselves outsiders. For sure, add them to our prayers of intercession in church; but what could we do to change things for them in the physical world? A week can be a long time when you are isolated.

Image: <https://bcys.net/resource-categories/>



## 14 April LUKE 24: 36b-48

This year we read the second half of Luke's account of the Resurrection appearance, after the journey to Emmaus. It is a passage which challenges us to question our approach to hospitality; i.e. if we fail to invite the stranger, do we miss the opportunity to entertain Jesus? And how do we respond to the opportunity to share Good News? Cleopas and his companion went back straight away to Jerusalem, and so started the mission of proclaiming Good News. And Jerusalem was only the start. Maybe the question for us after thinking about this, and the other Resurrection appearances is "How do we share all this with others?"

### Questions! Questions! Challenges! Challenges!

Image: *Our Lady of Providence Catholic Church, Louis, MO.*

## 21 April JOHN 10: 11-18

For the next four Sundays we are in John's Gospel, looking at John's record of some of the teaching of Jesus. This teaching is shared with the disciples before the Crucifixion; but the implications are very much to do with the new life that the Resurrection brings. This week we look at the Good Shepherd, and as we read the passage the mind inevitably turns to John's description of the conversation between Peter and the Risen Jesus at the lakeside of Galilee. We are reminded that disciples are called to "feed my sheep".

So if we don't already know we had better look at this earlier passage pretty carefully, so that we are quite clear in our minds exactly what "good shepherding" involves.

<https://castlestudioinc.com/>



## 28 April JOHN 15:1-8

This week's setting is the night of the Last Supper; so it is no surprise that Jesus draws on the picture of the Vine. The vineyard was an Old Testament image for the people of Israel, and here we have the reminder that a branch detached from the vine cannot be fruitful. By the time that you read this I hope my allotment will be showing the promise of fruitfulness, of good cropping perhaps later in the year. In Galatians (5: 22-23) Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit: and this isn't just for the individual's enhancement. I get pleasure when the produce from my allotment is on the table and being enjoyed by others. So today, let's remember the way that we belong together, with the mission to enhance the life of others.

Constanta Rodica

<http://sacredartmeditations.com>

# THE EASTER STORY

Based on the children's rhyme "Who killed Cock Robin?"

*Who killed the King?*

**GUARD**

I, the guard,  
When they gave me the wood  
I hoisted him high  
And left him to die.  
I killed the King.

*Who stayed to the end?*

**MARY**

I followed my son  
And saw what was done.  
I stood by his side  
While he suffered and died,  
Yes, I stayed to the end.

*Who gave the orders?*

**PILATE**

I, Pilate, his judge  
Though I bore him no grudge,  
When they shouted so loud  
I gave in to the crowd  
And I gave the orders

*Who buried his body?*

**JOSEPH**

I, Joseph, one of the Jews  
Thought I'd so much to lose.  
I faced up to my fears,  
To the threats and the sneers  
And I buried his body.

*Who yelled for his blood?*

**CROWD**

We, the crowd on the street  
Who had kneeled at his feet,  
But we tired of him soon  
And the priests called the tune,  
So we yelled for his blood.

*Who saw him rise?*

**MARY MAGDALENE**

I, Magdalene, who owed him so much  
Who was healed by his touch.  
For good or for ill  
I believed in him still  
And I saw him rise.

*Who planned his death*

**CAIAPHAS**

I, Caiaphas, saw much  
How he questioned our law,  
Leading people astray.  
Yes, he got in my way  
So I planned his death.

*Where is he now?*

**ALL**

In Greece and in Gaul  
With Peter and with Paul.  
In hope and despair  
He has always been there  
And he's here with us now.

*Who gave him away?*

**JUDAS**

I, Judas, who knew  
What the priests meant to do.  
To save my own skin  
I thought I'd cash in,  
So I gave him away.



*Found in an old copy of Guttridge  
Methodist Church magazine*

## HE IS RISEN - the final Station of the Cross

Rev Peter will lead the last session in this Lenten series online on Monday 8th April, from 7.30pm.

Please contact him if you would like the Zoom link.

The previous talks from March are now available on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@ryedalemethodistcircuit>



**BENEFACT TRUST**

### Benefact Trust Grants

Three churches were successful in their recent applications to the Benefact Trust for property projects. These grants are financed through

Ecclesiastical Insurance which all Circuit churches use for their insurance cover.

- Norton Trinity £3,600 for double glazed windows and other Eco-Church improvements
- Helmsley £21,500 for the roof and repointing the gable front of the chapel.
- Malton Wesley £100,000 towards the redevelopment project

We are very grateful that these churches' endeavours are being supported from outside as well as inside the Circuit.

## Report from the March Circuit Meeting

The meeting expressed our thanks to Phil Evans for his six years' service as the Circuit Treasurer. His professional eye has kept our finance records in good order alongside helpful support for both local churches and staff. We appreciate the time and effort he has put into his role.

Having failed to find a replacement within the Circuit the decision has been taken to use the resources of the Bridge Circuit. This is run by the District to resource Circuits who are struggling to find volunteers to look after property and finance. From now any enquiries about Circuit money should be directed to Sue Cutting - ops.manager@yne-bridgecircuit.org.uk

It was also reported that the sales of Gillamoor, Hartoft and Kirbymisperton chapels were proceeding (and the first two are now completed). It is always sad when this happens but we will use the proceeds to support the work of the Circuit for ministry, lay staff and local church property. We are grateful to Richard Lukey for his work as the Circuit Property Officer.

It was agreed to continue the role of Julia Branson as the senior Circuit steward for a further year. In 12 months' time we will need to find some new volunteers to take on this crucial role, if you are interested or wish to nominate someone please speak to Julia or Rev Peter. It will help to bring someone onto the team soon to allow them to learn the ropes.

Sue Goodwill continues in her important role as the Circuit archivist. She is currently compiling a book about all the chapels in Ryedale (closed as well as open) and seeks any stories you can share with her about their history. Also please pass on to Sue any archive papers such as magazines, old plans, property information, my watchword is never to throw anything away but to throw it in Sue's direction!

## Rev Graham's Sabbatical

From 1st April until the end of June, Rev Graham will be on sabbatical. He (and Gillian) is hoping to do some walking round the Circuit chapels as well as have time to work on his model railway!

During this time please contact these "retired" ministers for pastoral matters:

PICKERING – Rev Richard Hall 07305 973163

KIRKBYMOORSIDE – Rev Penny Worth 01751 411908

SINNINGTON AND THE ECUMENICAL CHURCHES – Rev Brian Shackleton 01751 433034

For funerals please contact Rev Peter and he will find an available minister.

For all other matters please call Rev Peter or the Circuit Administrator Ann Thomas.

## Contacts

### Revd Peter Sheasby:

01653 692173

peter.sheasby@methodist.org.uk

### Revd Graham Ransom:

graham.ransom@methodist.org.uk

### Revd Melanie Burnside:

01439 741282

revmelburnside@gmail.com

## Spend 3 months in Palestine and Israel

### MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS

FULL TRAINING GIVEN  
EXPENSES COVERED  
LIVING ALLOWANCE PROVIDED

FINAL CLOSING DATE: 14 APRIL 2024 at 5PM

- Monitor human rights abuses for the UN and others
- Stand in solidarity with Palestinian and Israeli peace activists in the West Bank
- Advocate for justice, equality and an end to the military occupation of Palestine

For more info visit: [quaker.org.uk/applyeappi](https://quaker.org.uk/applyeappi)



EAPPI UK & Ireland



ryedalemethodists@gmail.com  
<https://www.ryedalemethodist.org.uk/events.html>  
for further information



29