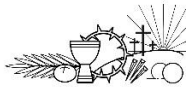




**St Mark's Parish Magazine
April 2026**



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Donations to cover the cost of this publication are welcome



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Your Views & Contributions

Next issue will be available from
30 April 2026

All contributions to the editor by
Tuesday 21 April 2026

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LETTER FROM THE VICAR

Dear Friends

April comes like a quiet miracle. One week the trees seem bare and still; the next, blossom colours the trees and daffodils and other spring bulbs brighten the whole area. However changeable the weather, the season has turned. Beware though – April is also officially 'Wrong Coat' season – whatever outer garment you opt to wear each day; it will be the wrong choice!



There is a well-loved saying: "No winter lasts for ever; no spring skips its turn." Those simple words capture something deep and steady. However long and hard the winter feels – in the world, in the fields or in our own hearts, it never has the final word. Spring comes. Light lengthens. Life returns.

The first week of April carries us through Holy Week into Easter – the heart of the Christian year. For the first disciples, Good Friday felt like the end of everything. Hopes were buried with Christ in the tomb. Fear and grief took hold. Easter morning was not a gentle symbol, but a shock of joy: the discovery that death itself had been defeated. We can become so familiar with the story that we miss its power. Hope breaks through again. Easter tells us that God is at work precisely where we think all is lost.

That still matters in life today. Alongside baptisms and weddings, there are funerals. Alongside the beauty of open fields, there can be loneliness, financial pressure, and uncertainty about the future. Easter does not ask us to ignore these realities. It asks us to remember that such realities are always subject to transformation.

As gardens demand our attention, we might notice the small transformations around us: blossom unfurling, swallows returning, light lingering into the evening. Each is a quiet reminder that hope is woven into the fabric of creation – Hope breaking through again.

Easter invites us not only to receive that hope but to live it – through practical kindness, encouragement, and neighbourly care. These small acts matter deeply. They are seeds of resurrection. May the risen Christ meet you this April in familiar places and ordinary days. And may the hope of Easter take root afresh in our parish and in our hearts.

With every blessing for a joyful Easter.



CHURCH NEWS

Harry Ingram

It was with sadness that we learned of Harry Ingram's passing in February.

Harry was a valued member of our congregation for many years and a regular contributor to this magazine. His writing, insight and thoughtful reflections made a lasting contribution, and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday 18 April at 12.30pm in Church followed by refreshments in the hall. All who knew him are warmly invited to attend.

Easter Garden

The Easter Garden has been a lovely addition to the church this season and is well worth a visit.

The garden which can be found at the front of the church, reflects the Easter story, with crosses on the hill and the tomb nearby. As the days unfold, the tomb opens, offering a simple and meaningful visual reminder of hope and new life.



Our sincere thanks go to Patricia Bird, Phil and Valerie Jones for their care and creativity in putting this together, and to all the volunteers who give their time so generously during the Easter season.





The Archbishop of Canterbury's Presidential Address

These are some highlights from the first Presidential Address by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally, at the February 2026 General Synod group of sessions.

I stand here among you by no means for the first time, but for the first time as the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is a humbling privilege to be called to serve in this role. It brings with it huge weight of responsibility, at a time when people love to remind me that the church faces significant challenges.

But when the wind and the waves are rocking the boat, I am reminded that what I need to do is to focus on Christ, who calms the waters and stills the wind. With your help and with God's grace, I pray that I am able to approach this ministry with calm, consistency and compassion – as we seek to be what the Church has for so long been: a stable presence in an unstable world.

Do, please, continue to pray for me in the months and years to come, as I will always pray for you. I do not carry my new responsibilities alone. We serve God's church together, lay and ordained; uniquely reflecting God's image into one another, and remembering His prayer that we should be one in our love for God and of one another.

At my Confirmation of Election, I was deeply moved to be asked, during the Charge which was given to me, to 'help the Church love itself more ... believing that its best days are still to come'. And I do believe that this is true. Through every challenge, our hope in Christ remains - and our confidence in the Gospel, as good news for our nation and for God's world, is not shaken.

I see God's Kingdom, the pearl of great price, revealed in countless places across the Church of England and the Anglican Communion. The Church of England is a Christian presence in every community. In parishes and chaplaincies across the country, day in and day out, faithful clergy and congregations worship God and love their neighbours. With every Eucharist that is offered, with every prayer said; with every child helped to flourish in our schools; with every family cared for in times of celebration and of sorrow; with every night shelter and food bank; with each worship service, youth group and community lunch; with every effort to work for justice, dignity and fairness in our nation and our world – with all of this and so much more, we live out our calling to share the love of God with those around us.

And across the global Anglican Communion, in its profound diversity, we see Anglicans offering that same hope to a world around them: working for peace in places of war, caring for the sick and lifting up new generations of young people, and speaking of the hope that we find in Jesus Christ.

Because with Christ, the Church is there in all those places and with all those people, and the Kingdom is made known. I rejoice in every example I see of this – the pearl of great price – glimpsed in faithful, local, sensitive, intelligent ministry which embodies and speaks of the Kingdom.

So, what sort of Archbishop do I feel called to be? As I said when I accepted the nomination, as I respond to the Call of Christ in this new ministry, I remain rooted in my first calling: to follow Christ, to know Him – and to make Him known in the world. My Christian vocation first led me to become a nurse – then later a priest, then a bishop, and now an archbishop. The theme that has run through all of these chapters of my life has been washing feet, and in serving and caring for others.

And so, I believe that I have been called to love and serve the Diocese of Canterbury, the Church of England, and the Anglican Communion, not through developing new programmes and initiatives, but by being a shepherd, who works collaboratively and in partnership, enabling others to flourish.

And I will work with you, Synod, with my fellow bishops, and with our national church bodies, striving to ensure that the Kingdom is being nurtured everywhere – in parishes, chaplaincies, cathedrals and schools, in the smallest and most fragile communities, as well as the larger and more confident expressions of church, wherever disciples seek to be salt and light.

The role of the Archbishop of Canterbury is a complex and challenging one. But at its heart is something profound and simple. Along with my fellow bishops, I am called to share the hope that we have found in Jesus Christ – and what that means for us all as individuals, and as a society. I pray that the thread running through my time as Archbishop will be that of nurturing confidence and hope, rooted not in institutions, but in God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. With our confidence in God, we can believe that indeed, the best is yet to come for the church that we love and nurture, and therefore for the world that the church is called to serve.

As Archbishop of Canterbury, I commit myself to nurturing, supporting and praying for all our parishes, chaplaincies, cathedrals and schools, where quiet faithfulness is coupled with a readiness to respond to every opportunity, however small, to embody the hope of the Gospel at the heart of a community; where people, together, become places where the Kingdom happens.

As a shepherd, I will strive to be calm, consistent and compassionate to all. I commit myself to enabling the Church to be the Church. May we continue to offer ourselves in God's service for God's world: our hope rooted in the Gospel, and our confidence rooted in God, who holds the Church and its future in love. Please pray for me as I pray for you. Amen.

Parish Pump



Ian sadly passed away on 12 December 2025, but he has left us with unpublished articles. These articles he had planned to be included in the magazine.

Lonely

I wonder how many people feel lonely in any day? Many live alone and maybe don't see anyone else to talk with for days on end. Are they lonelier in the midst of the night if they wake up, or during the day which can seem to last so long?

Sometimes this is of choice if by their nature they like to be alone, but so many have no alternative, especially if they are separated from former loved ones, are bereaved or handicapped in other ways. Sometimes it can be when one of those want to be with the one they love, but are unable to do so, either by force of circumstances or the feelings of that person whom they love who might not feel the same way.

Some of us are blessed with friends who ensure we have some happy contact day by day, physically or by other more remote methods such as the phone. But it is also possible to be lonely, even if with others, if we cannot be on their wavelength. With modern means of communication, we can keep in touch with those we know are alone, and if we are mobile enough we can visit them.

Communication is the important thing, as then we can at least contact someone who might otherwise be lonely. Maybe we don't even need to talk with them, just to be with them. There is also the spin off in that, if I contact someone else, I have the benefit of hearing what they have to say.

But what if the person we are in contact with does not want our company? We could feel sad about that, but then we just need to find someone else who needs our company. I find that if I ring an old friend up whom I haven't contacted for some time, he or she will not be angry because I haven't been in touch sooner, just grateful for this contact.

I have been reading a wonderful book by Paul Galico called "The Lonely". He was such a wonderful writer who also wrote "The Snow Goose" and this book is so sensitive, where 2 people were in love during the 2nd World War but could not be together. I don't think it is still in print but it really is a gem of small books.

As a widower I am often alone but happily so far have not often been lonely. With prayer I can, at least, feel closer to God than when in crowded or noisy situations.

Ian Archer



Contact

How important it is to keep in touch with others. In the first 13 years of my retirement, I was editor of a newsletter published for fellow pensioners and some 30 editions of it entitled "Contact" were published in that time.

It seemed then, as it is now, important for us to keep in touch with as many other people as possible, and former colleagues was one such group. It is so good to find opportunities of being able to talk with and listen to others, whether in church or other gatherings of people we are associated with.

At one time we could contact people by word of mouth or with more difficulty, in writing. How life has changed with the advent of newspapers, radio, recordings, television, telephones, texts, emails and so many other possible methods of contact arising every day. But as so many methods arrive, how often do we use them and how efficient are we in using these more modern methods of contact?

When someone is lonely or unwell a visit, an old-fashioned post card, a letter or phone call can perform wonders, even if it is only to say that that person is in our thoughts and prayers. Such contact is important for children, young people, middle aged as well as for those of us who are aged. By contact we can listen to the thoughts, worries and joys of each other, whether they have been friends for years or someone we have just met.

When my wife, Jenny was alive I used to be in contact with her, sharing our experiences but now she has died I share my thoughts and prayers with all of you who read my scribblings.

How important it was that Jesus was able to talk to us when he was here on earth.

How lucky we were to have the words of the Gospel writers to ponder over and how lucky we are to have the words of St Paul to think about.

The contact they left us was so important and as Christians we can believe that we can receive guidance even today in our journey through life.

Ian Archer

CALENDAR FOR APRIL 2026

Wednesday 1st April	Wednesday of Holy Week 8.00pm Stations of the Cross and Compline
Thursday 2nd April	Maundy Thursday 8.00pm Sung Eucharist and Liturgy
Friday 3rd April	Good Friday 10.00am Messy Church 1.30pm Liturgy of Good Friday
Saturday 4th April	Holy Saturday 8.00pm Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter
Sunday 5th April	Easter Day 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
Wednesday 8 th April	9.00am Prayer Meeting
Thursday 9 th April	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 12th April	2nd Sunday of Easter 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00 am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online 1.00pm Community Lunch
Wednesday 15 th April	9.00am Prayer Meeting
Thursday 16 th April	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Saturday 18 th April	8.00pm Social Dance
Sunday 19th April	3rd Sunday of Easter 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online 4.00pm Messy Church
Wednesday 22 nd April	9.00am Prayer Meeting 3.25pm T-Time Tales
Thursday 23rd April	St George 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 26th April	St Mark – Patronal Festival 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online 6.00pm Taizé Prayer
Wednesday 29 th April	9.00am Prayer Meeting
Thursday 30 th April	3.25pm T-Time Tales 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Please remember that planned services are subject to change at short notice so please check the details on our website or with the Parish Office.

CALENDAR FOR MAY 2026

Friday 1st May	St Philp and St James
Sunday 3rd May	5th Sunday of Easter 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online 4.00pm Family Service – in Church
Wednesday 6 th May	9.00am Prayer Meeting 3.25pm T-Time Tales
Thursday 7 th May	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 10th May	6th Sunday of Easter – Rogation Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00 am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online with APCM 1.00pm Community Lunch 2.00pm Rogation Day Walk – ‘Beating the Bounds’
Wednesday 13 th May	9.00am Prayer Meeting 3.25pm T-Time Tales
Thursday 14th May	Ascension Day 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Saturday 16 th May	8.00pm Social Dance
Sunday 17th May	7th Sunday of Easter – Sunday after Ascension 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online 4.00pm Messy Church
Wednesday 20 th May	9.00am Prayer Meeting 3.25pm T-Time Tales
Thursday 21 st May	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 24th May	Day of Pentecost 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online 6.00pm Taizé Prayer
Wednesday 27 th May	9.00am Prayer Meeting
Thursday 28 th May	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 31st May	Trinity Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church 10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online

Please remember that planned services are subject to change at short notice so please check the details on our website or with the Parish Office.



Easter Story Biscuits

Preparation Time: 20 minutes **Total Time:** 1 day

Ingredients:

1 cup pecan nuts
1 tsp. vinegar
3 egg whites
1 pinch salt
1 cup sugar
large plastic bag
wooden spoon
tape
Bible



Instructions:

Preheat oven to 150C.

Place pecans in the plastic bag and let the children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. **Read John 19:1-3.**

Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. **Read John 19:28-30.**

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. **Read John 10:10-11.**

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. **Read Luke 23:27.**

So far the ingredients are not very appetising...

Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. **Read Ps. 34:8 and John 3:16.**

Beat with a mixer on high speed until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the colour white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. **Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.**

Fold in broken nuts.

Drop, teaspoon by teaspoon, onto non-stick baking parchment-covered baking sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. **Read Matthew 27:57-60.**

Put the baking sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF.

Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. **Read Matthew 27:65-66.**

GO TO BED! Explain that they may feel sad to leave them in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers felt despair when the tomb was sealed. **Read John 16:20 and 22.**

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. **Read Matthew 28:1-9.**

Parish Pump



A Lasting Gift for St Mark's Church

Leaving a legacy

Legacy gifts can make a huge difference to churches. Each year, gifts in wills, ranging from £100s to £100,000s are received. Faithful witnesses leaving generous legacies have enabled churches to invest in their buildings, pioneer new ministries, and sustain a welcoming presence in their communities.

Why should you write a will?

Writing a will means you choose:

- How you would like to share your property and possessions;
- Who you would like to look after any children under the age of 18;
- How to support any charities or churches that are important to you.

Without a will, these decisions will be made according to pre-ordained rules, and by the courts, which may be different from your wishes. Leaving a will gives you peace of mind and lifts a burden from loved ones after you are gone.

To make it easier the Church of England has partnered with Farewill, the UK's favourite will-writer, so anyone can write a simple will online for free, in as little as 30 minutes. You can find out more by visiting <https://farewill.com/southwarkdiocese>

We strongly advise seeing a solicitor for more complicated wills, or for people wishing to review their existing will or add a codicil.

A gift for future generations

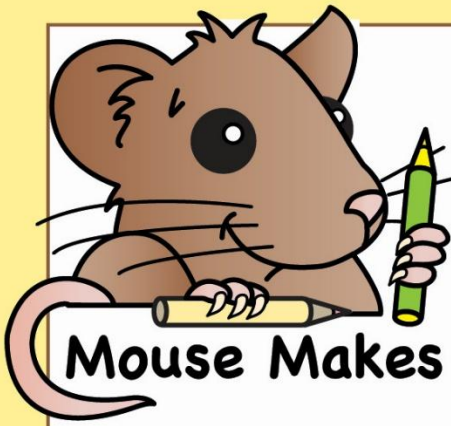
After you have made provision for your family and friends, we hope you'll also consider leaving a gift in your will to St Mark's. A legacy is a valuable expression of how meaningful a church has been during your time there. It's a way to give thanks - a lasting testimony to the faithfulness, goodness and generosity of God.

The policy of the PCC is to use legacies to help fund additional mission or development projects in the parish, whether buildings, equipment or staff. Circumstances change over the years, so church members are encouraged to leave legacies for the general purposes of the parish. The PCC will discuss the most appropriate use of the legacy in the light of current projects and the donor's known areas of interest in the church (for example, children and youth, music, buildings).

You may also receive tax benefits for including a gift to St Mark's in your will. A gift in your will to a charity is free of inheritance tax and may also reduce the amount of tax payable on the rest of your will. <https://www.gov.uk/donating-to-charity/leaving-gifts-to-charity-in-your-will>

Please consider leaving a legacy to St Mark's.

Mel Crighton, PCC Treasurer

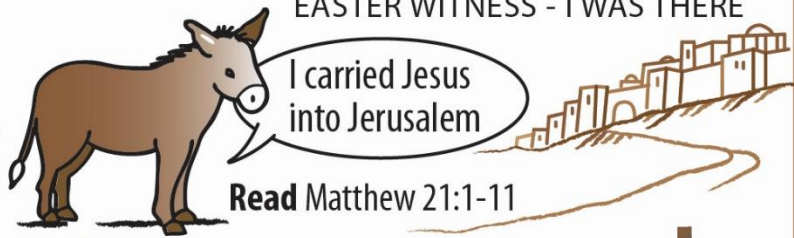


G O O D N E W S
 O H O S A N N A
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 V N C O E E U I
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 S R Y E M P T Y

JESUS • DONKEY • PALMS
 HOSANNA • PILATE • THORNS
 CRUCIFY • NAIL • CROSS
 QUAKE • DEATH • BURY
 TOMB • STONE • EMPTY
 ANGEL • MARY • HEAVEN
 RISEN • ALIVE • GOD
 GOOD NEWS • CHRIST
 SAVIOUR • EASTER • JOY

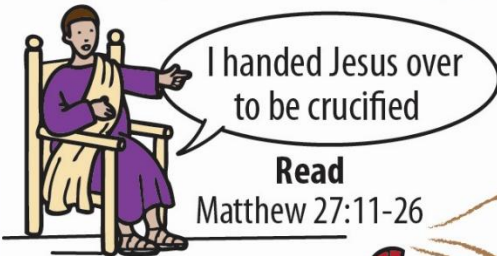


EASTER WITNESS - I WAS THERE



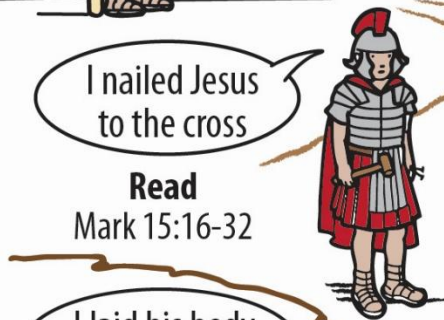
I carried Jesus into Jerusalem

Read Matthew 21:1-11



I handed Jesus over to be crucified

Read Matthew 27:11-26



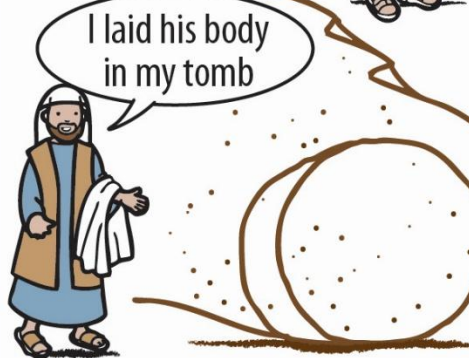
I nailed Jesus to the cross

Read Mark 15:16-32



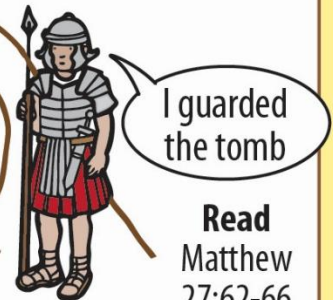
We watched Jesus die

Read Mark 15:33-41



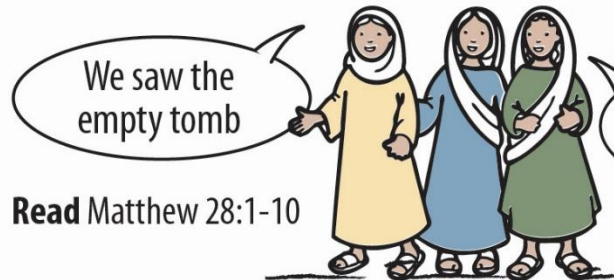
I laid his body in my tomb

Read Mark 15:42-47



I guarded the tomb

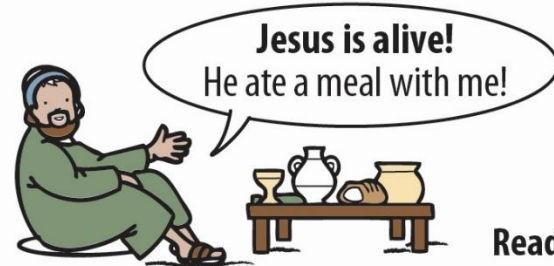
Read Matthew 27:62-66



We saw the empty tomb

Read Matthew 28:1-10

and spoke to the angel



Jesus is alive!
He ate a meal with me!

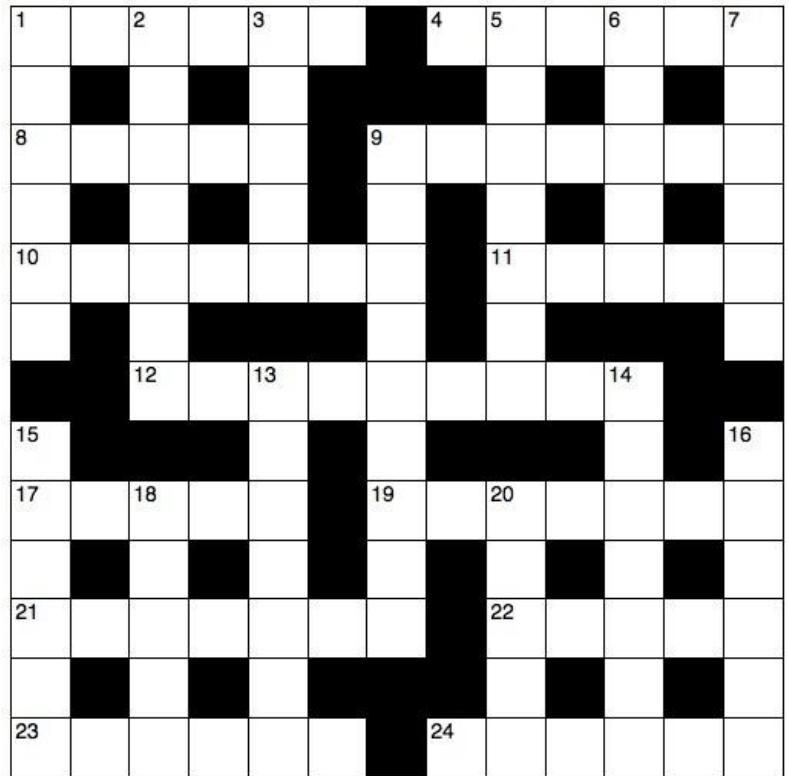
Read Luke 24:13-35

April Crossword

Biblical references are from the New International Version

Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
 12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)
 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)
 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)
 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)



Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
 5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
 6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
 7 He reps (anag.) (6)
 9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
 13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)
 14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
 15 The human mind or soul (6)
 16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
 18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
 20 Bared (anag.) (5)

March answers

ACROSS: 1. Awaken 4. Quench 8. Hit me 9. Sadness 10. Semitic 11. Ridge 12. Testimony 17. Psalm 19. Indulge 21. Deserve 22. Ariel 23. Rose as 24. Beggar

DOWN: 1. Aghast 2. Attempt 3. Eject 5. Undergo 6. No end 7. Hasten 9. Sacrifice 13. Samaria 14. Yelling 15. Spider 16. Dealer 18. Asses 20. Drake

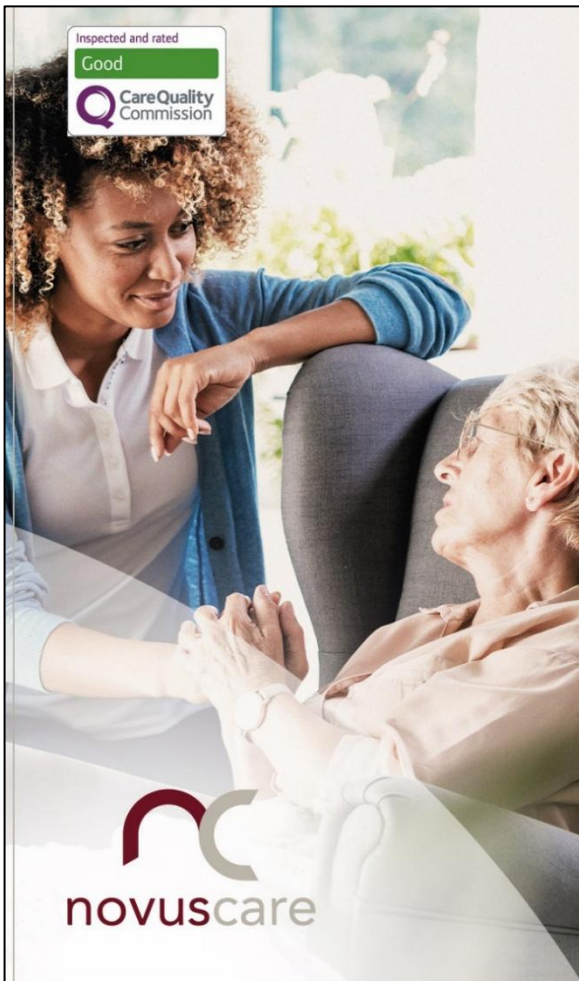
Puzzles

April Sudoku

					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					

March Solution

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



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Are you or an elderly loved one looking for extra care and support at home in **Reigate** or the surrounding areas? Then our local carers are here to help.

Novus Care is regulated by the Care Quality Commission and can provide a qualified carer to support your loved one in their own home from just **a visit per week to around the clock live-in care.**

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www.novus-care.com



RIDGEGATE
HOME

A HOME WITH A HEART

RESIDENTIAL ♦ RESPITE ♦ DAYCARE

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