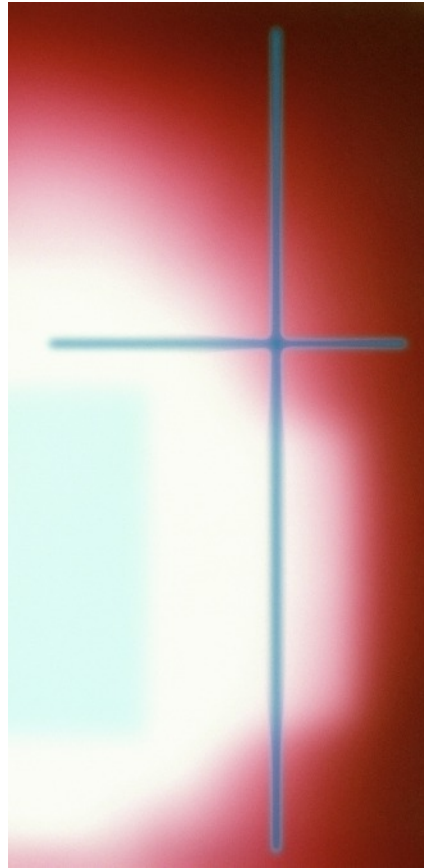




St Paul's
Little Eaton Church

Parish Magazine



Easter 2021

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The Vicar's Letter

JAMES HUGHES



Dear Friends,

We have certainly been living in interesting times since I last wrote in this magazine, before Christmas. I don't think any of us expected things to go quite as they have back then, but we rejoice that things are beginning to get back to normal.

Because of all that has happened, this year we have sat out the period between Christmas and Easter, and that probably means that the kind of things which normally indicate we are heading towards Easter might not have registered with us. Our timings these days are very much dominated by lockdown easing dates and vaccination dates! We might well be thinking—Easter already? We may not feel prepared.

And so, I want to invite you to join us over the Easter period – from the beginning of Holy Week (29th March), through to the two weeks after Easter (weeks beginning 5th and 12th April) to join us online as we think together about Easter. To prepare ourselves for it, and to reflect on it. We will have a special Easter playlist on our benefice

YouTube channel, and there we be a series of short reflections on what Easter is all about as we look at John's gospel.

And as we look at John, we find the kind of questions asked there that are surprisingly contemporary. We find *Pontius Pilate*, when confronted with Jesus asking **What is truth?**—the kind of question we still ask today, especially about 'religious' truth, which many people would say is relative—what is true for you is true for you, and what is true for me is true for me. We'll reflect on whether or not truth is relative. With 'doubting' Thomas we will explore whether **seeing is believing**, or whether it is possible to believe without having seen. We will explore why Jesus died, and what it means to say that he rose again from the dead.

So do join us online over Easter. Take the time to join us in John's gospel as we reflect on what Easter is all about. And I look forward to meeting you face to face sometime in the summer when we can think about it some more.

Happy Easter.

Gaslighting?

New words seem to come up so fast these days and I find them in popular use long before I've worked out quite what they mean. We got used to "surfing" a long time ago, not meaning the one connected with holidays by the seaside. "Social media" is now common and by many people's experience it isn't that social! I'm getting used to hearing about people or governments "doubling down" on an issue. I couldn't work out what that meant looking at the words alone, but I've learned that it's shorthand for concentrating efforts onto a problem. These are the more recent ones—like "woke"—and they are too new for my dictionaries. In this area, I am clearly not woke!

But this week I came across one that must have been around for a lot longer and I hadn't heard it before. I was reading a news article about events following the military coup in Myanmar. One commentator discussed the varied international responses and said that one country's response was an act of "gaslighting". What? What has gaslight got to do with Myanmar (or Burma)? I can just remember gas light fittings in my grandparents' old terrace house—even though they also had electric lighting. I couldn't think how that might apply. I had to look it up.



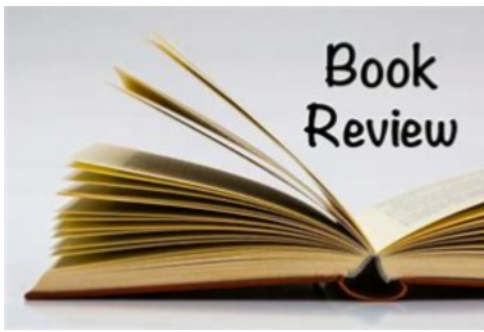
Wikipedia tells me that "gaslighting" originated from the British play *Gaslight* (1938) and the spin-off film, and is a form of manipulation where one person or a group or an organisation sows seeds of doubt, trying to get others to question their own reality, memory or perceptions. It's about changing trust in past authorities into believing the "new truth". I think we've had a year of "fake news", "conspiracy theories", or "gaslighting" stories!

But then I realised that this idea goes way back—even before that 1938 play. In the Bible account in the early chapters of Genesis, this is just what Satan did with Eve just before she and Adam disobeyed God. Satan sowed that seed of doubt over God's intentions—were they for good or evil? Satan prompted Eve, "*Did God say...?*" implying "surely not." It was gaslighting. He shoved that wedge between what God actually said and what he implied God said. He inserted doubts about God's intentions. And we've been living with that fake news, that conspiracy theory, that gaslighting ever since.

The only way to combat gaslighting is to focus on the truth—so join us as we weekly investigate God's word at St Paul's (either online via our YouTube channel or in-person at church when we are able to re-open). That way we can make our life-choices based on sound information rather than rumour, supposition, and half-truths.

We look forward to searching into God's truth with you.

Richard Nicholson



Who Moved the Stone?

By Frank Morison. First published 1930

This book, consisting of fifteen meaty chapters, is a close study of the events of the last week of Jesus' life, and seeks to bring into a sharper focus the secondary players of that week. All are people we have heard of, but perhaps put to one side, wondering perhaps whether they have as much of a role as other people we know about already.

What was the actual case presented against the prisoner Jesus, and why did Judas have to be bribed (or paid) to indicate Jesus, to those sent to arrest him? After his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, he had not gone to ground to conceal himself that week. And what of Caiaphas the chief priest, who was not only trying to be the chief priest, but was also having to collaborate with the Roman Occupiers who were also having to keep the Emperor—either Tiberius or Caligula, in a sweet frame of mind. And why did the word 'King' finally spur Pilate into some sort of action after some uncomfortable fence-sitting and buck-passing?

Why did Joseph of Arimathea approach Pilate for permission to remove Jesus' body and place it in a tomb reserved for more deserving folk? Why was he, a member of the priestly class, allowed to remove the body of an executed criminal and give it a

decent, honourable burial? What did Joseph of Arimathea know of Jesus?

The author then goes into some of the hypotheses used to disprove the Resurrection. The culprits would surely have let others know—money, perhaps, and who could the guilty party be? Who would want to get rid of the body? The Powers that Be (the Roman overlords)? The Powers that would very much like to Be (Caiaphas and co)? The Disciples, who were probably holed-up somewhere?

Did the women find the wrong tomb? Or did Jesus regain consciousness in the cool of the Tomb. After all, everyone gets over substantial blood loss and severe injuries if they just lie down for a bit somewhere nice and cool?

And what of Peter? Staunch friend who promised not to let Jesus down and did just that, then later became the de-facto leader of the nascent Christian Church. Or Saul of Tarsus, persecutor and hater of Christians who had a change of name and attitude and went on to write some letters that we still read today.

This would be an excellent book to study during Holy Week and the week after Easter. I recommend it. Make sure you have a modern version of the Bible next to you, as the author uses a much older version.

This is a small volume which packs a huge punch. I thoroughly recommend it.

MH

How can it be—a life-long journey

In this article, **CHRIS ASKER** reflects on his life-long journey to faith and what he describes as “...the greatest and best decision of his life...”.

I was born in rural Norfolk in the late 40s. Whilst I have a younger sister, we were not especially close in those days (we are now). Well, what does a 7 year old boy do when introduced to a baby GIRL?!



Ours was not a demonstrably Christian household but, looking back, I'm sure my parents had a faith. I do remember saying the Lord's prayer with a parent at bedtimes and I was 'expected' to attend Sunday School. It was also my parents' wish that I should be confirmed and, aged 12, this took place on May 18th 1960. I did not understand what it was all about and could not have appreciated how significant in my faith journey May 18th would become many years later.

Whilst still at junior school my mother succumbed to a debilitating illness. This led to her becoming bed bound for the last few years of her life. These must have been such difficult days for my dad—a primary school teacher—but as children we always felt loved and secure.

At the age of 15 my mother passed away and a year later my father married the widow of a former friend from teaching college. We relocated to Yorkshire and my sister and I acquired two step brothers and two step sisters in the process.

Apart from some aptitude for Maths and English, I was not a good secondary school student. I started work at National Provincial Bank in York in 1966 (one of the former banks which merged to form NatWest two years later). In those days the bank's preferred policy was for you to regularly move offices. This was “to give you experience of different cultures and industries”—reasonable—but also bizarrely “to avoid familiarity clouding your lending judgment!”

As a result of 'policy' the 20 years or so after York saw me serving in Hull, London, Sheffield, Chesterfield, Hull (again), York (again) and Nottingham.

Throughout my teens and early adult years, the church rarely featured in my life. Thankfully I met Eileen during this period and we married in 1979. Our family became complete with the arrival of Katherine and Lydia in the 80s.

In 1987 my work took us to Newcastle. It was during our seven years there that, with our girls, we regularly attended a local church with a wonderful welcoming church family. I became more familiar with scripture but still didn't understand what being a Christian really meant.

When we moved to Derby in 1994, God brought us to Little Eaton and St Paul's. However this was not the setting for my first real encounter with God. About 20 years ago I was driving to meet a bank client and for reasons I cannot now recollect was feeling deeply troubled. I had an overwhelming urge to pray and pulled into a car park to do just that. I know it was then I prayed with all my heart for the very first time. I remember vividly this great stillness and peace descending upon me and for a few minutes I was oblivious to my surroundings. I knew at that moment God was with me and all would be well, yet I was still some years away from coming to faith.

In 2003 I took voluntary redundancy from the bank. I immediately assumed (predictably) a finance role with a former client and finally retired in 2017.

By now I was a regular member of St Paul's, becoming more involved in church life and joining various Christianity courses. I supplemented this learning, then as now, reading books on various aspects of faith and the life of Jesus.

Thursday May 17th 2018 was the second session of a course 'Just start talking' (about Jesus). One of the key messages of that evening was that Jesus will equip you with everything you need to talk; just put your trust in him. I went to sleep turning over in my mind all I had learnt that evening. Everything finally fell into place. The next morning, May 18th 2018, I committed my life to Jesus—58 years to the day since my confirmation.

Since then scripture has been increasingly revealed to me and I have listened to the words of many beautiful hymns and songs with renewed understanding. 'How can it be' is a song by an American Christian singer and songwriter called Lauren Daigle. I find the words a humbling reminder of everything Jesus has done for me through the cross.

So my message: If you haven't already, it's never too late to come to faith. I am more at peace and content these days. As it was for me, it could be the greatest and best decision of your life.

Chris Asker

Simnel Cake

History and Description

This is a light fruit cake formerly eaten before Easter in the United Kingdom and Ireland, but it is now traditionally made for Easter Sunday. Nowadays it consists of the fruit cake with two layers of marzipan, one in the middle and one on top decorated with marzipan balls.

Simnel cakes have been known since at least medieval times. It was originally made for the fourth Sunday in Lent, also known as: Laetare Sunday; the Refreshment Sunday of Lent (when the 40 day fast would be relaxed); Mothering Sunday; the Sunday of Five Loaves; or Simnel Sunday after the cake. More recently it has been eaten throughout Easter, and especially on Easter Sunday.

In the 17th century live-in apprentices and domestic servants would go home to visit their mothers on Mothering Sunday, checking on their family's welfare, taking food and money if needed. The gift of a high-calorie fruit cake was very welcome at a time of low food stocks.

The meaning and origin of the word "Simnel" is unclear, but a reference in 1226 mentions finest white bread from the Latin "simila"—fine flour. There are various legends about who invented the cake: one being that Lambert Simnel was responsible, but there are references to the cake some 200 years earlier. Another story is that a couple in medieval times argued over how to cook the cake and ended up boiling and baking it because of the bread regulations at that time.

Different towns had their own recipes, with many from Hertfordshire, Gloucestershire, and Shropshire. In Shrewsbury, these rich fruit cakes were made as raised cakes, with the crust made of fine flour and water, coloured with saffron to give it a deep yellow colour. The interior was filled with a rich plum cake mixture. They were made up very stiff, tied in a cloth, and boiled for several hours. Then they were brushed with egg and baked so that the crust became very hard.

Easter Simnel Cake Recipe

Ingredients

- 4oz/100g glacé cherries quartered, rinsed and dried
- 8oz/225g butter softened
- 8oz/225g light soft brown sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 8oz/225g self-raising flour
- 8oz/225g sultanas
- 4oz/100g currants
- 2oz/50g chopped mixed peel
- Zest of 2 lemons
- 2 level teaspoons ground mixed spice



Topping and filling

- 1lb/450g marzipan or home-made almond paste
- 2 tablespoons apricot jam
- 1 large egg – beaten to glaze

Instructions

- Roll out 1/3 of marzipan and cut a circle same diameter as cake tin
- Cream butter and sugar, beat in eggs one at a time
- Mix in flour and mixed spice
- Fold in the dried fruit, glace cherries, and lemon zest
- Put half the mixture in the tin, level top, carefully place marzipan disc on top, then the remaining cake mixture and level the top again
- Bake for 2hrs 30mins until well risen, evenly brown, and firm to touch. Cover with foil after 1 hour if browning too much

Cake tin—8 inches/20cm diameter greased and double lined with baking paper

Oven—preheat to 150C/130C Fan/Gas mark 2

- Allow to cool in tin for 10mins then turn out on to wire rack and allow to cool completely
- To decorate, brush top with warm apricot jam. Roll out half the remaining marzipan, cut to size to fit top, press firmly and crimp the edges. Mark a criss-cross pattern on the top with a sharp knife
- Roll the remaining marzipan into 11 balls. Beat egg, brush top of cake, arrange balls on top and brush with egg. Place under a hot grill to brown, watch carefully as it burns easily
- Should there be 11 or 12 balls:
11 balls => 11 apostles without Judas;
12 balls => Jesus with 11 apostles

Fork Biscuits

Ingredients

- 4oz/100g butter softened
- 2oz/50g castor sugar
- 5oz/140g self-raising flour
- Optional flavouring—
 - ½oz/15g cocoa powder and only 4½ oz/120g flour
 - Or grated zest of a lemon or a small orange

Oven—Pre-heat to 180C/Fan 160C/Gas mark 4. 2 baking trays lightly greased

Instructions

- Put butter in a bowl and beat until soft. Beat in sugar then gradually beat in flour
- Using your hands bring mixture together to form a dough. Form into 16 balls the size of a walnut
- Place on baking tray well apart. Dip a fork in water and use to flatten the balls so you have a fat biscuit shape

- Bake in oven for 15–20 minutes until pale golden brown or browned for chocolate ones
- Lift off the baking tray and cool on wire rack

Decoration

- 2oz/50g icing sugar; 1½ teaspoons water/lemon juice; sprinkles such as hundreds & thousands, or small chocolate chips, or icing pens
- Hopefully the biscuits are slightly egg-shaped so you can decorate them to look like birds' eggs
- Put the icing sugar in a bowl and mix in enough liquid to make a thick icing
- Spoon a little icing onto a biscuit and smooth over the surface with the back of the spoon
- To decorate like spotted birds' eggs—wait a short while for the icing to dry before using the icing pens

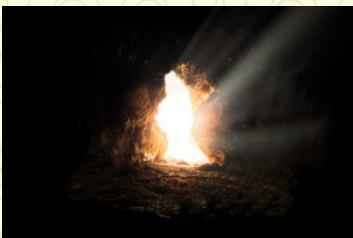
Ros Newton



EASTER QUIZ

(Answers on page 13)

1. The company J.S. Fry & Sons manufactured the first chocolate Easter eggs in the U.K. but when? a)1861, b)1869, c)1873.
2. Which disciple was the first to enter the empty tomb after Jesus has risen from the dead?
3. In Russia the Easter meal is often accompanied by butter-shaped into the form of which animal and why?
4. Who went and asked Pilate for the body of Jesus so he could take it away for burial?
5. What type of gifts were commonly given at Easter before chocolate Easter eggs?
6. On Maundy Thursday (the day before Good Friday) what did the medieval kings of England do for beggars that Jesus did for his disciples at the Last Supper?
7. Which disciple was absent when the risen Lord Jesus joined the others in a room with the doors locked?
8. Which famous Italian artist painted a mural of the Last Supper in the late 15th century?
9. In his gospel Luke gives the name of one of the two believers who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus. Who was it?
10. What two Easter events do hot cross buns signify?
11. What was the name of the high priest who questioned Jesus before sending him to Pilate?
12. In Brazil and other South American countries an effigy of which disciple is made out of straw and burned during the Easter festival?



Keeping On Keeping On

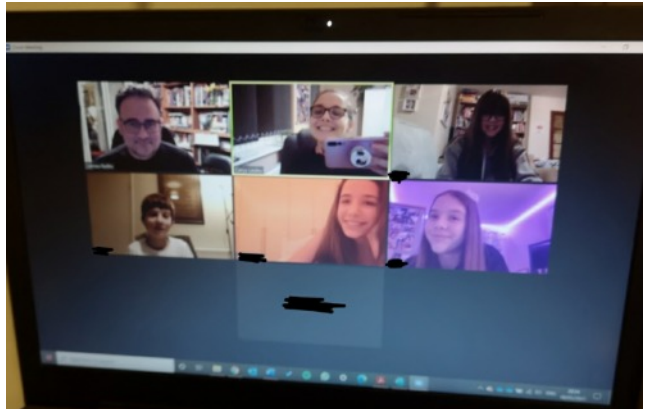
Well... it's been an odd first half term hasn't it? (for those of us who think of time in school 'terms', that is!) For myself, and the children and young people here at St Alkmund's and St Paul's, we've been adjusting to doing things without Helen (our former Youth and Children's Worker, who, as many of you will know, left to start a new job at Christmas.) We've also been adjusting back into doing children's work fully online through all-age slots on the online service on YouTube, and the children and young people are back to learning and doing their schoolwork online as well.

It's easy to slip into feeling discouraged, worn-out, or just plain fed up at this point! I'm aware that for a lot of our families, and for families across the country, this lockdown especially is proving seriously difficult. But I have found huge encouragements in this time as well. The weekly Zoom calls with Impact on Monday nights with the year 7–9s, and Ignition on Tuesday nights with the year 10–13s, both continue to be a real lifeline for me and the other leaders, just as I hope they are for the young people who attend! I can't tell you how much it brightens my day, even on the hard days, to see them, hear how they're doing, have fun together, and to hear from God's word together.

In a weird way, it's even quite comforting on the weeks where we log in and everyone's feeling a bit down or tired of everything that's going on (and there have been a few weeks like that recently!). Because, on those days, we're able to be honest and share how we're feeling. We can relate to each other's feelings, and know we're not alone in them. We can have a space where we don't have to pretend. And, we can come together and still find some encouragement and comfort from God's word and bring all those things we're feeling and struggling with to our Heavenly Father in prayer. That's a wonderful thing about the way the Church is a family—as family, we can be totally honest about the hard stuff, because we can also come together to the only one who can give us real comfort.

If you, or someone you know is secondary school-aged, and would like to join us as we support each other, play games together, and learn from the Bible together, then please do get in touch by emailing the church office: office@stalkmundsduffield.co.uk.

Carys Lesley



Knowing and Telling the Gospel

If you're someone who isn't a regular church attendee, possibly you've wondered why those who are involved in church sometimes seek to share their faith, to try to share the Gospel; (or to evangelise, to use the 'technical term'). Maybe a Christian friend or neighbour has invited you to particular church events or services from time to time? (Perhaps you came along to a previous Christmas Craft Evening, for example).



Well, I may not have all the answers, but (drawing on the MMTC¹ training course I recently completed as part of my job) I'd like to briefly share one or two thoughts. Here is why Christians seek to communicate their faith.

1. The Gospel is 'God's Story'.

The Gospel's about what God's done for us through Jesus and His death and resurrection. How God saves people from sin. Romans 1 verse 16 describes the Gospel as "...the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes..." and Ephesians 2 verses

¹ The Midlands Ministry Training Course, run by the Midlands Gospel Partnership

4 & 5 says: "...God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our sins, made us alive together with Christ—by grace we have been saved..."

Through the Gospel, we're saved from sin and from the judgement we rightly deserve from God for sin. But, you might ask, what is sin? What is it and why does God judge us for it?

We can summarise sin as a rebellion against God and his laws and the replacement of God with other things—which might be money, power, status, possessions, etc—seeking after and worshipping such things instead of God; worshipping that which is created, not the Creator.

Because God is creator of the world, he has the right to say how we should live and to judge how we live. We all instinctively have an inherent sense of justice and the death of Jesus on the cross emphasises how much sin and judgement matters to God. The cross shows the lengths God had to go to deal with sin, in order that people can be reconciled with God and have a restored relationship with him.



2. The Gospel is also ‘Our Story’.

My MMTC course tutor said he’s written a short testimony—around 500 words—which he revisits annually on his birthday. He looks back on the past year, reflecting on how and where he has seen God at work in his life during that time; and having reflected, he then updates his testimony accordingly.

I thought this was a good idea—particularly as in my experience as a Christian, it’s sometimes only when looking back and reflecting on past events that one can then see exactly where God has been at work in our lives; often it’s not always obvious at the time. I’ve now written ‘my story’—and if you’re a “regular” at St Paul’s, perhaps you might like to try this exercise too?

3. What’s ‘Your Story’?

If you wouldn’t consider yourself a Christian, there might be specific aspects of the Christian faith that you struggle with, or find particularly difficult to comprehend. Here at St Paul’s, we want to understand and recognise where people are coming from in relation to the Christian faith; to hear ‘your story’, as it were. And, we also

want to help you to better understand the Christian faith and what it’s all about.

Do join us—whether that’s our current online services on YouTube, or in church when we’re able to meet together once again. You will be very welcome indeed.

James Rollin

With thanks to the Revd Henry Curran, Vicar of St. Mary’s Wollaton Park, Nottingham, who taught the MMTC course module, ‘Know and Tell the Gospel’.



Easter Quiz Answers

1. 1873. 2. Peter. He was the second disciple to reach the tomb but the first to actually go in, according to John chapter 20. 3. A butter lamb because of its religious significance. 4. Joseph of Arimathea. 5. Hard boiled eggs that were dyed or painted, usually with bright colours. 6. Wash their feet. 7. Thomas. 8. Leonardo da Vinci. 9. Cleopas. 10. The cross represents the crucifixion and the spices in the bun represent the spices used in the burial of Jesus. They also mark the end of Lent by being made from dairy products that were traditionally not used during that period. 11. Caiaphas. 12. Judas Iscariot.

Why do we support Langham Partnership?

St Paul's Church supports several people and organisations financially and in prayer who are faithfully teaching people around the world about the Christian faith. One of these is Langham Partnership.

It was founded in 1969 by Revd. John Stott, then the Rector (or senior pastor) at All Souls' Church, Langham Place in London, hence the name. John Stott was a Bible teacher in great demand worldwide. He frequently visited churches in the Majority World—a more positive term than Third World or Developing World, encompassing Africa, Asia, South and Central America and the Caribbean. As he travelled, he understood the acute need for further biblical training for gifted local leaders.

Initially, a Trust was set up to sponsor young Christian leaders from the Majority World to study for doctorates at British universities, and to support them as they returned to teach at Bible colleges in their own countries. Those who received scholarship funding from the Trust became known as Langham Scholars, a worldwide family that has now grown to well over 300.

Langham Partnership then expanded into producing Christian books that would be a resource for Majority World Scholars and pastors. In the UK we have a wealth of Christian literature, but these are in English and are written from a western perspective—that is, the outworking of Bible truths reflects the issues faced in western countries, not necessarily those faced by people in the Majority World. Today Langham Literature helps develop ground-breaking commentaries written in local languages and

relevant to local contexts. It also distributes biblical resources to churches, pastors, and Bible colleges, and supports writers and publishers who translate and write books for the local context. From July 2019—June 2020 Langham Literature supplied 49,122 Bible-centred books to pastors and colleges in the Majority World. 18,740 of these books were supplied free of charge.

In 2002 a third initiative was begun. Langham Preaching partners with Majority World church leaders to nurture indigenous biblical preaching movements for pastors and lay preachers. With the support of a team of trainers from many countries, they provide seminars focusing on practical, biblically-based training. In the 12 months up to June 2020, 610 local trainers led Langham Preaching training seminars in 69 countries, equipping 9,661 pastors and lay leaders to teach God's Word.

So, I hope you can see why this strategic ministry is supported by St Paul's Church here in Little Eaton. Our small local church really can influence things worldwide.

2021 will mark the 100th anniversary since John Stott's birth. Langham and others will be running several events to celebrate this, and to thank God for his life. Billy Graham called him "the most respected clergyman in the world today". In 2005 he was listed in *Time* magazine's "100 Most Influential People" and was named in the Queen's New Year's Honours list as Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE).



A New Beginning

**We've emerged from the shadows of winter
amidst doubt and misgiving,
into a welcome chaos of sunlight and promise.
The countryside no longer in its cloak of silence,
the heartening sounds of birds singing.**

**Now rows of daffodils target the ground
with a fragrance that lingers.
The bright camellia opens its exquisite blooms
and young trees find their feet,
pointing skywards with eager fingers.**

**Sheep with new born, scatter hills and dales
green-lit in the sunshine.
Rugged landscapes shape villages into pictures.
Buildings colour-washed and repaired,
no longer drab under weather so fine.**

**It is a tapestry of life embraced,
the joy of a new beginning wherever.
And as we reflect on the Easter story,
it is the centrepiece
that holds the picture together.**

Anne Palmer



St Paul's Little Eaton Church

Vicarage Lane, Little Eaton, Derby DE21 5EA

You are very welcome to join us for our 4.30pm afternoon services, either in the church building, or alternatively online, via our Benefice YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheUnitedBeneficeofDuffieldLittleEaton>

Contact St Paul's at:

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www.littleeatonchurch.co.uk



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