

Issue 486 • SPRING 2026

St Barbara's Newsletter



stbarbaras.com

Holy Week and Easter

You are warmly invited to join us for this special time in the Church Year.

29 MARCH

10.00am Palm Sunday Service - we recall the day, a week before his death, when crowds celebrated Jesus's entry into Jerusalem.

4.00pm Buzz at St B's - a service for families with young children that tells the Easter story.

30 MARCH, 31 MARCH, 1 APRIL

7.30pm Holy Week Compline - a short, reflective service to end the day (in the Lady Chapel).

2 APRIL

7.30pm Maundy Thursday Service - a service when we remember Jesus's final evening before his death.

3 APRIL

2.00pm Good Friday Meditation at the Cross - a reflective service recalling the day of Jesus's crucifixion and death.

5 APRIL

10.00am Easter Sunday Celebration Service - a celebration of God's raising of Jesus from the dead to new life. Followed by an Easter bonnet parade!

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Thought for the season - Easter and the darkness 'just before dawn'

by Rev'd Jeremy Bevan

There's a saying (perhaps first used by the 17th century English poet Thomas Fuller) that the night is always darkest just before dawn. Looking at the dark headlines on our phones and news feeds over recent weeks and months, you could be forgiven for thinking we're living through a 'day' when the time is indeed 'just before dawn'.

It struck me recently how much of what happens in Jesus's last week before the Romans crucify him takes place at night. As Judas Iscariot steps outside, leaving Jesus's farewell meal determined to betray him, John's Gospel remarks ominously: "And it was night." Jesus is praying at night in the garden at Gethsemane when soldiers come to arrest him: "This is your hour", he says, "and the power of darkness." Devastated at Jesus's death, Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb on that first Easter morning, "while it was still dark."



The constant flow of bad news in our lives and from around the world can seduce us into thinking dawn will never come. But Easter marks a turning point. The 'light' symbolism in the gospels makes this abundantly clear: angelic visitors "in dazzling white" (Luke) or with an appearance "like lightning and... clothing white as snow" (Matthew) appear in the empty tomb. A new day has dawned, and with it, new hope.

But Easter doesn't put bad news on mute or lessen its impact. The suffering of displaced people in Gaza's camps, or of residents in Kyiv's bombed apartment blocks, hasn't disappeared with Easter's dawning. So what difference does it make?

It draws a line in the sand. God's raising of Jesus from the dead to new life declares that everything in our world that seeks to frustrate life, degrades the image of God in us, spoils God's good creation, is on borrowed time. Evil cannot win - God is irrepressibly on the side of life and will ultimately triumph.

The resurrection has galvanised hope down the centuries. The apostle Paul says of it, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" The truth of the resurrection can galvanise us, too, as, with God's grace, our words and actions shine resurrection's powerful light into that deep, pre-dawn darkness looming around us. May that resurrection hope, and the light of the resurrected Christ, illuminate our lives and our world once again this Easter season.

St Barbara's contact details

General enquiries: admin@stbarbaras.com

Hall bookings: contact Elaine Parnell by phone at 024 7671 5583 or email stbarbarashallbookings@outlook.com

Church Services

Every Sunday

8.00am - Holy Communion - a quiet, simple service.

10.00am - Parish Communion - hymns, choir, Sunday school (also livestreamed at stbarbaras.com)

Every Wednesday

9.30am - Prayers and Bears at Earlsdon Methodist Church - songs, activities, crafts & prayers for the under 5s and their parents/carers

11.30am - Midweek service - a pause for prayer and reflection in the middle of the week

Once a month

29 March, 17 May, 21 June

5.00pm - Buzz at St B's for young families - crafts, drama, songs and a bring-and-share tea

NB On 29 March, Buzz at St B's will start at the earlier time of **4pm**.

Special services and events

See page one for all of our Holy Week and Easter services

12 April - Litter picking in local streets (after the 10.00am service), returning for coffee and cake in the Hall

4 May - Church Fête (11.00am-4.00pm)

6 June - CTEC Prayer Breakfast at St Barbara's (8.00am)

6 June - Quiz and Fish & Chip Supper in support of Christian Aid (6.15pm for a 6.30pm start)

5 July - Barbecue and Sports Day (after the 10.00am service)



Pilgrim - join us!

Coming soon to a church (very) near you: the Pilgrim course.

Pilgrim is a course that helps people explore the Christian faith together and how it can be lived out each day. It approaches the great issues of faith not through seeking to persuade, but through participation in a pattern of contemplation and discussion with a group of fellow travellers. It's for those wanting to understand more of the Christian faith, including those who have felt 'on the edge' of church and now want to go deeper.

To begin with, we'll explore what Christians believe, taking as our starting point the promises made by people when they're baptised.

Look and listen out for more details of the course, which we're aiming to start in May. For more information now, speak to our curate, Revd Jeremy Bevan, or email admin@stbarbaras.com

Growing in love

At the start of Lent this year the children in HIVE, our Sunday school that meets during our 10am service, took part in a planting activity. The children decorated a pot and got to pick which seeds they planted in it, choosing from a range of cress, broccoli, radishes and tomatoes. We looked at the story of Adam and Eve from the bible and thought about truth and lies. We discussed how, in order to grow strong roots in God we must sow his seeds of truth in our lives. As the children (hopefully) watch their seeds grow over the coming weeks of Lent this will help them reflect on how they can grow in love for God, each other, our community and the world, in line with St Barbara's mission statement.

To find out more about upcoming children's activities at St Barbara's, see page 3.



Reflections on the Easter story

We asked St. Barbara's people to tell us about their favourite part of the Easter story as the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell it. We had some thought-provoking responses:

Keith grew up in a Suffolk market town in the 1950s. He remembers one particular Easter Sunday when the silence had a solemn feel, perhaps like the moment when the women went to the tomb that first Easter morning. He recounts: "Sundays were generally quiet, with not much open other than churches. Market Hill was much quieter even than a normal Sunday. God has kept that day in my memory when so much else has disappeared. It was a profound sense of silent witness to the events of Easter – and in hindsight, probably one of the first steps on my journey to faith."

John chooses the moment when Jesus, declared dead yet still nailed to the cross, is recognised as Son of God by the centurion. John observes: "This is the first public proclamation of our Lord's divinity - and that from the lips of an alien, an officer of the occupying force that had just crucified him. Had these two met before? Jesus, while visiting Capernaum earlier in his ministry, had been approached by a centurion asking him to come and heal his servant. Jesus did so, commending the centurion for his faith when Jesus's own people were lukewarm in theirs."

Anne explains: "The person I relate to most in the Easter story is Peter – a passionate follower and trusted friend of Jesus, who nevertheless denied knowing Jesus when challenged by a servant girl. Perhaps he was afraid of the repercussions, or just not thinking straight in the stress of those traumatic Thursday night events. But I can imagine the crushing sense of disappointment in himself, as well as the shame, Peter must have felt afterwards. How amazing, then, that Jesus forgave Peter's betrayal and that Peter went on to become a key figure in establishing the early church."