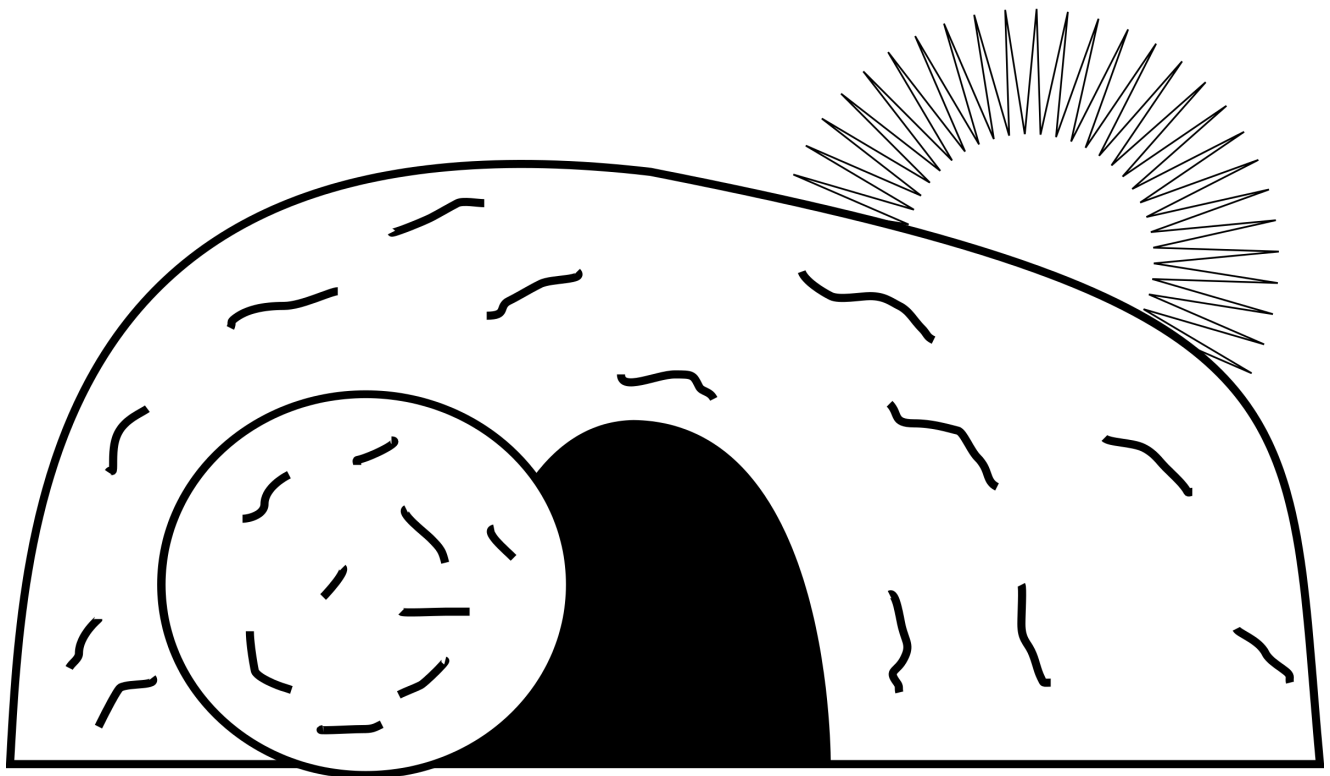




APRIL 2026

South & East Leicestershire Area United Reformed Churches



SAFFRON LANE, WIGSTON MAGNA, SOUTH WIGSTON,
WHETSTONE, ABBOTS ROAD

<http://selaunc.org.uk>

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Dear Friends,

In 2019, a fire took hold of Notre Dame cathedral causing thousands of Euros in damage. Before the restoration began people were collecting money to help to bring the Cathedral back to life again. It was on 7th. December 2024 following completion of the restoration work that the Cathedral was re-opened and the public allowed in again.

What happened to Notre Dame Cathedral is a great visual aid. From death to resurrection. From sadness to joy, from despair to hope. It's a modern-day parable of life itself. Life can hit us with a curve ball, we can be in a happy place but then things go wrong and leave us struggling with one thing after another, times when life can make us feel desolate - the death of a loved one, illness, the end of a relationship, loss of employment, leading to financial worries to name but a few.

We all have our dust and ashes days. Life is full of ups and downs, sometimes more downs than ups. Yet, we have a Saviour who gives us hope - real hope. In John's gospel, chapter 14, there are words spoken by Jesus to his disciples, just before he was arrested and condemned to death: 'Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me..... I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you. A little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also.'

Those words came true when Jesus rose from the dead, and they've gone on bringing hope and comfort to millions of people through the centuries. Easter Day reminds us of the power of God in raising Jesus to life. From death, darkness and despair, against all odds, Jesus rose from the dead. That same power that brought Christ to life is able to transform the most hopeless situations.

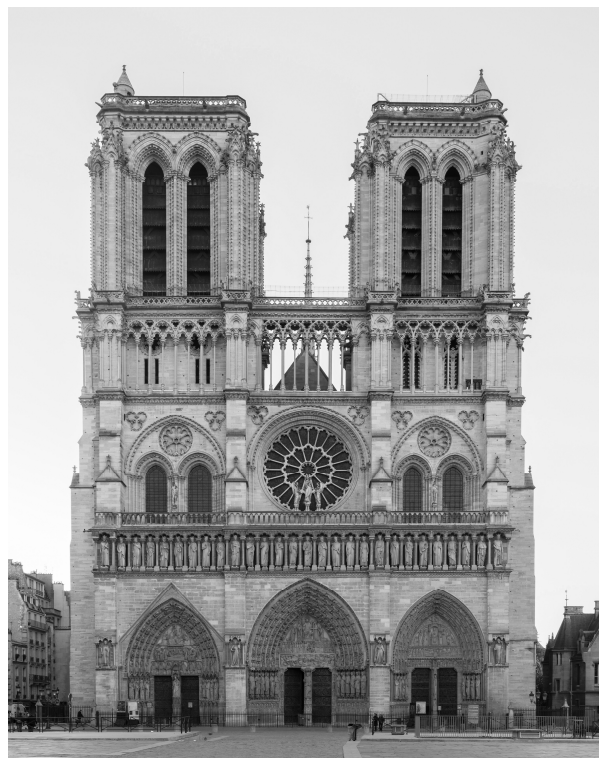
Christ's life is experienced in the world through his Holy Spirit, in spite of everything that has happened.

Notre Dame Cathedral has been brilliantly restored but that's nothing compared to what God can do in human lives, for you and for me. He can remake our lives, whatever mess we've got ourselves into. But we have to do our part stepping out in faith with him, co-operating with him as he transforms us, making us into new people.

In the words of Martin Luther King's prayer: 'And now to him who is able to keep us from falling, and to lift us from the dark valley of despair to the bright mountain of hope, from the midnight of desperation to the daybreak of joy. To him be power and authority for ever and ever. Amen'

Yours in the eternal love of Christ,

Pam.



SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES

Whetstone URC	10.00 am
South Wigston URC	10.30 am
Wigston Magna	10.30 am
Saffron Lane	11.00 am
Abbots Road	10.45 am

Please check with the relevant Church Secretaries to confirm when services are taking place at any of the Area Churches.

DEADLINE FOR MAY 26 MAGAZINE

Sunday 19 April 2026

Send your items to your church representative or direct to
di.statham@btinternet.com

If you do not have a computer a hand written copy can be accepted.
Contact Di Statham 0116 296 2847 for information

Worship Leaders for April 26

Saffron Lane	5 th	Eileen Williams	
	12 th	Julie Slatford	Communion
	19 th	Revd Les Gill	Communion
	26 th	Revd Martin Ferris	Family Service
South Wigston	5 th	Marion Bartholomew	
	12 th	David Miller	
	19 th	Revd Martin Ferris	
	26 th	Revd David Howlett	
Wigston Magna	5 th	Ray Green	Communion
	12 th	Revd Martin Ferris	
	19 th	Eileen Williams	Communion
	26 th	Eileen Williams	
Whetstone	5 th	Revd Martin Ferris	Communion
	12 th	David Todd	
	19 th	Mr & Mrs North	
	26 th	Revd Les Gill	
Abbots Road	5 th	Revd Martin Ferris - Communion	
	12 th	Elders	
	19 th	Mr Paul Hadley	
	26 th	Revd Pam Smith	

Regular Church Events

Whetstone URC Community Coffee Morning
Thursday 10.00 to 12.00

Saffron Lane URC Weekly 3T's (Tea, Toast & Talk)
Thursday 10.00 to 12.00

Wigston Magna Community Cinema
Alternate Months from February - 1.30 pm

Sit Sip and Social
2nd Wednesday of each month 2pm - 4 pm

Coffee Morning
Every Saturday 10.00 am to 12.00 pm

South Wigston Drop In with coffee / tea.
4th Wednesday of each month

Abbots Road Lunchbox every Tuesday from 12.30pm -
3 course meal £5.00

Quiz Thursday evenings from 7.15pm (on Zoom)

Thursday Stay and Play and Little Borrowers toy
library.

For children aged 0-4 years old and their
parents/carers 10.00 to 11.30 £1.50 per family

Saturday Coffee Morning including a raffle, on
Zoom from 10.30am. Raising funds for our chosen
charity - Rainbows Children's Hospice

Bible Bytes

Wednesday 1 April 2026

10.30 am

Saffron Lane URC

Come and enjoy a light and friendly discussion

No Need to be a " Bible Expert"

EVERYBODY welcome



Wigston Magna News

April Birthdays

22nd - Alan Simpson



Easter Celebrations



Easter Sunday Service

10.30 am

Led By Mr Ray Green

Everybody Welcome

Community Cinema

Monday 13th April 2026

The Keeper

Doors Open 1.30 pm

Film Starts - 2.00 pm

Free Tea and Coffee
plus

Movie Snacks £1 per item

(Hot Dogs / Ice Creams / Popcorn /
Sweets / Nuts / Crisps)

Entry FREE – (Donations Welcome)

The background of the poster is a stylized, light grey illustration of a spring landscape. It features rolling hills, a single tree on the right, and a field of daisies in the foreground. Two birds are shown in flight against a sky with soft, radiating lines suggesting a bright sun.

Spring Fayre

Sat 25th April

10am to 1pm

Cake Stall
Bric-a-brac
Stalls, Books
Raffle
Lunches

FREE Tea and Coffee
and a warm welcome!

RECIPE – APRIL: Congress Tarts

Shortcrust Pastry:

6 ozs super sifted flour, self-raising or plain

Pinch of salt

1 and a half ozs margarine) or any fats

1 and a half ozs lard) preferred

Approx. 1 and a half tablespoons cold water to mix

Filling:

3 ozs caster sugar

3 ozs butter or margarine

3ozs Ground Rice

Almond Essence (a few drops)

1 egg

Jam

Pastry:

1. Sieve flour and salt, rub in fats, bind to a pliable paste with cold water.
2. Roll out pastry to just under a quarter of an inch thick. Cut into 12 rounds with a pastry cutter. (Retain the trimmings)
3. Place the rounds into the bun tin, spread the pastry bases with a thin layer of jam.

Filling:

1. Cream fat until soft, add sugar, beat again until light in colour and fluffy in texture.
2. Add egg, essence and a tablespoon of ground rice, stir, then beat well.
3. Stir in the remainder of the ground rice.
4. Divide the mixture evenly between the lined tins and smooth level.
5. Re-roll pastry trimmings and cut into thin strips.
6. Arrange in the form of a cross over each tart, damping the pastry to keep the decoration in position.
7. Bake for 15 - 20 minutes on middle shelf of oven at 400 F, 200 C, Gas 6.

South Wigston News

GARDENING TIPS - APRIL

- 1 Remove faded flowers from rhododendrons and mulch with peat or garden compost.
- 2 Cut back early and winter-flowering shrubs after flowering.
- 3 Prepare seed bed for new lawns and sow seed.
- 4 Check all children's play equipment, tighten screws and, if necessary, replace the sand in the sandpit.
- 5 Prune dwarf and small varieties of trees and shrubs.
- 6 Finish planting lily bulbs.

BIRTHDAYS - APRIL

6th - Lauren Fretter - Happy Birthday Lauren!

DIARY: APRIL

- 1st Bible Bytes - Saffron Lane U.R.C. 10.30am. All welcome!
- 2nd Maundy Thursday Service 7.00pm at South Wigston U.R.C.
led by Rev Martin Ferris. All welcome!
- 3rd Churches Together in South Wigston "Good Friday Witness"
12.00 noon outside South Wigston Tesco Store -
Hymns accompanied by the Salvation Army Brass Band.
- 8th Elders' Meeting - 10.00 am & Church meeting at 10.30 am.
- 9th South Wigston Churches Together - meeting 2.00pm.
- 22nd Wednesday "Drop-in" Prayer meeting at 10.00am - all welcome!

A THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH AHEAD.

Can anything be sadder than work left unfinished?

Yes, work never begun.

Christina Rosetti

South Wigston News

Prayer List: April - Please pray for:

- 1 Those with power over war and peace, that they may use wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.
- 2 Christians everywhere as they share together to celebrate the Last Supper.
- 3 On Good Friday remember that Christ died for the sins of the whole world.
- 4 Re-dedicate your life to Christ.
- 5 **HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED! HALLELUJAH!**
Wishing everyone a happy and blessed Easter!
- 6 All who are travelling on this Bank Holiday.
- 7 That all Christians may seek to work together to bring the Kingdom of God on earth.
- 8 All those struggling from the effects of war.; the bereaved, the injured, the homeless.
- 9 All who are serving sentences in prison, and the members of staff seeking to help them.
- 10 Our friends from Oadby U.R.C. that they may find happiness, comfort and peace wherever they choose to worship.
- 11 All those taking food to the starving.
- 12 All who are preaching the Word of God in our churches today.
- 13 All who are sick.
- 14 Students and children starting a new school term, especially those facing important exams.
- 15 All who work for our Emergency Services.
- 16 Those living in poverty.
- 17 Give thanks for the beauty of Springtime.
- 18 The homeless.
- 19 All who are reading the Word of God in our churches today.
- 20 Missionaries taking the Good News to all parts of the world.
- 23 The people of England on St George's Day, that all may work together for a better society.
- 24 Our Elders working hard for all our churches.
- 25 All who give their time to work for charities.
- 26 All those worshipping in our churches today.
- 27 All who live in our Care Homes and those who work with them.
- 28 All those going through times of sorrow, and those whose gift is counselling.
- 29 Give thanks for some blessing in your life.
- 30 That God will help us all to live the Gospel.

South Wigston URC

Multi Faith Centre

North Warwickshire & South Leicestershire College

DROP IN

Wednesday 22 April 2026

10.00 to 11.30

PRAYER TIME

Come along and join us

Everybody Welcome

Tea / Coffee and Biscuits Available

Saffron Lane News

Preachers and Readers list for April - May 2026

	OT	NT	SER	COL	Preacher	
Apr 5 th	3	9	3	13	E Williams	Communion Easter & Baptism service
Apr 12 th	5	15	5	13	J Slatford	Communion
Apr 19 th	36	6	3	13	L Gill	Communion
Apr 26 th	7	8	#	13	M Ferris	Family Service
May 3 rd	10	11	10	13	E Williams	Communion
May 10 th	30	12	30	13	R Eastman	Communion
May 17 th	9	3	9	13	R Green	Communion
May 24 th	5	14=5	#	13	P Tiplady	Family Service
May 31 st	6	36	#	13	G Milnes	5 th Sunday

3.Kath T	8. Brian S	12 Elizabeth R	36 Dec B
5.Sue B	9. Terri D	13.Darren C	# No server
6.Pat S	10.Malvolia B	15. Samuel	
7.Angela S	11.Richard B	30 Sandra C	

Birthdays April

16th Peter Clay

Birthdays May

14th Mackenzie Bloxham

Happy Birthday

Swanwick 20 - 22nd February 2026

Friday

Thirteen ladies from the South and East Leicestershire Area travelled to The Hayes Conference centre to attend the Christian Woman's Fellowship in Swanwick. For me the journey was terrifying. It was alright on the Motorway but when we came off at junction 28 towards Swanwick the heavens opened. I have never driven in rain like it before, it was if we were under a fast waterfall and you could not see. There was nowhere to stop, and we had giant lorries side and rear. We missed the turn off we wanted because of the flow of the traffic so we took the next exit and drove along the country lane until I could find a shop to ask where we were. We pulled into a Tesco car park and as a man was about to exit I asked him if he could tell me the way to Swanwick. He said that he lived there and he would take us. So, we followed him through dozens of little lanes until we arrived at Swanwick. He was our "hero". We waved to him and off he went.

We were early so we had a drink and waited to go to our room. When it was dinner time, we all met up and had a very nice meal. Our "Welcome" was given in the hall we would meet up in later and after introduction's chat and Prayer we closed the evening with a simple worship. We all met in the lounge for an evening drink then made our way back to our bedrooms for a good night's sleep.

Saturday

In the morning, we had a lovely breakfast and then went into a short worship before we had a session talking about "What is Trauma." The lady who was planned to take this session was ill and one of her work colleges came to take it for her at the last minute.

After a coffee break we went into Bible study with Dr Karen Grey. talking about making sense of difficult texts in the Bible. Then it was lunch time - another great meal

Saffron Lane News

Cont.....

In the afternoon we had a couple of hours free so I sat and crafted with Eileen who was sewing.

After coffee we had another session talking about reading the bible through trauma lens. Then after that we had our business meeting to talk about next year which will be the conference's 100th year.

After another good meal we meet up again later for our evening concert. Elizabeth and I had arranged to do "Windmill in Old Amsterdam" dressed as mice and Mackenzie from our Church had made us a big Wooden Windmill to go on stage - so a BIG thank you to him. We encouraged 8 ladies from our group to pin on a tail and where mice ears aswell. It all went off well and I thank Charlotte for recording it for me. The video has gone to London, Hawaii, Australia and back to family in Leicester. We gave a Card gift to the person who had the lucky number on the back of their song sheet so that they could send it to a friend in need.

The evening finished in the lounge with a drink then bed time.

Sunday

We started with a good breakfast then a short time of worship. Then over to Dr Alison Gray for Bible study. After coffee we went up to the Chapel to have our communion service. There was some nice singing and it was lovely to have Charlotte playing the piano for us.

After Lunch we all made our way back home with not a drop of rain anywhere

The evening Concert collected £310 for the Methodist Home for the Aged which was our Charity this year and our overseas Charity was going to Sierre Leone to a girl's home.

We want to encourage any ladies who have been to Swanwick before to attend next year as it's our 100 birthday. I write all this about us to encourage new Ladies to come along to try it.

Saffron Lane News

The Mice from the "Windmill in Old Amsterdam"



Sandra

Forthcoming Event Next Month

Easter Sunday April 5th 2026

This Easter is special for Elizabeth and Sandra as it is 65 years since they were baptized together by full emersion at Saffron Lane on April 2nd 1961.

This year we are looking forward to Dominique and Kobe being baptized and also Dominique is being made a member of Saffron Lane.

So there will be plenty of cake at church that day.



Whetstone News

World Day of Prayer Services

On Friday 6th March, Shirley, Jean, Aldyth and Kevin joined with our friends from Blaby All Saints Church and Blaby Congregational Church for the World Day of Prayer Service. Shirley was one of the leaders and Kevin was the organist.

It was a very thought provoking service, prepared by women from Nigeria.

Kevin also played for the West Leicester Area Churches Service at Enderby URC, in the afternoon.

Our Other March Activities

On Saturday 7th March, we held a Charity Coffee Morning in aid of EMICS. Thanks to all who helped and supported us. A fantastic £251 was raised.

On Saturday 14th March, Kevin led an Emergency First Aid Training course for the area. It was very informative and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

90th Anniversary Afternoon Tea

On Saturday 21st March, we held a Luxury Afternoon Tea. The hall had been decorated beautifully and was soon filled with the chatter and laughter of the 70+ people who came.

It was a wonderful afternoon of friendship and fellowship and delicious food! There were sandwiches, scones, trifles and a large selection of cakes to enjoy, all washed down with tea and coffee. There was also a raffle to win large hampers filled with all sorts of goodies! The proceeds from the raffle, amounting to £390, was sent to Leicestershire Air Ambulance.

Thanks to all who helped set up, clear up, wash up and all the other things that made the afternoon such a special event.

Particular thanks to Joan and her team for preparing and serving all the food and drinks.

90th Anniversary Celebration Service

On Sunday 22nd, we held a special service to celebrate 90 years of our Church building.

Jean opened our worship and told the congregation that she was one of the first babies to be baptised here and so has been part of this church for 89 of its 90 years!

Bernard told us about his life in the church and some of the mischief he got up to and Kevin talked about his family connections with the church and how he became part of our Church Family.

Shirley led our opening prayers, Les gave the main address, Martin led the prayers of Intercession and Jan, Aldyth and Adele read.

Richard rededicated the church to God and to the community which we serve, giving thanks for all people, past and present, who have come to worship God and have worked so hard to ensure that all who come through our doors feel welcome.

Following the service, we joined together in a further time of friendship and fellowship as we enjoyed a "bring and share lunch", accompanied by a beautiful celebration cake, made by Joan.

Thanks to all who joined us for a lovely and truly fitting tribute to the last 90 years: here's to the next 90!

Whetstone News



90th Anniversary Cake

Easter Services at Whetstone URC

On Friday 3rd April, Richard will lead our Good Friday Service, beginning at 10am.

Our Easter Sunday Worship will be led by Rev. David Howlett.

THE ALTOS LAMENT

It's tough being an alto when you're singing in the choir;
The sopranos get the twiddly bits that people all admire;
The basses boom like loud trombones, the tenors shout with glee,
But the alto part is on two notes (or if you're lucky, three).
And when we sing an anthem and we lift our hearts in praises
The men get all the juicy bits and telling little phrases.
Of course, the trebles sing the tune, they always come off best -
While the altos only get three notes - and twenty bars rest.
We practice very hard each week from hymn book and from psalter,
But when the conductor looks at us our voices start to falter:
"Too High! Too low! Too fast! Too slow! - you held that note too long!"
It doesn't matter what we do - it's certain to be wrong!
Oh! Shed a tear for altos, they're the Martha's and they know,
In ranks of choral singers, they're considered very low.
They are so very 'umble that a lot of folk forget 'em;
How they'd love to be sopranos, but their vocal chords won't let 'em!
And when the final trumpet sounds and we are wafted higher,
Sopranos, basses, tenors - they'll be in the Heavenly Choir;
While they sing "Alleluia" to celestial flats and sharps,
The altos will be occupied with polishing the harps.

(This piece was discovered behind the vestry door of All Saints Church, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield).



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Peace in our broken world.

An end to the attacks on Iran, Lebanon, The United Arab Emirates.

Peace in other places of war - Ukraine, Sudan, Yemen, Gaza.

Aid workers.

Doctors, nurses, who are in places of conflict trying to help the injured.

The young people affected by the Meningitis outbreak. And for the families of those who have died.

Those who are worried about rising prices because they are barely able to pay their bills now.

Those who are homeless.

The family of the Mexican teen while being held in U.S. immigration custody.

The people of drought- stricken Kenya who are desperate for food .
Children who are or have been abused.

All those who are ill physically or mentally, those who are awaiting the results of medical tests, those recovering from surgery or who are awaiting surgery.

Those who need care at home and for their carers.

Anne and John

Mickala

Laura

Brian and Dorothy

Mary

Willow

June and Andrew

Joyce and David.

Chris W

Anne and Rob

Our Ministry Team, Martin and Eileen and the Mission of SELA churches.

YOU'RE HAVING A LAUGH

A little elderly lady called her neighbour and says, 'Please come over here and help me. I have a killer jigsaw puzzle, and I can't figure out how to get started.'

Her neighbour asks, 'What is it supposed to be when it's finished?'

The little lady says, 'According to the box, it's a rooster.'

Her neighbour decides to go over and help with the puzzle. She lets him in and shows him where she has the puzzle spread over all the table.

He studies the pieces for a moment, then looks at the box, then turns to her and says, 'First of all, no matter what we do, we're not going to be able to assemble these pieces into anything resembling a rooster.'

He takes her hand and says, Secondly, I want you to relax. Let's have a nice cup of tea, and then,' he said with a deep sigh, 'Let's put all the Corn Flakes back in the box.'



The Pastor stood before the congregation and said, 'I have some bad news, I have good news, and I have more bad news.'

The congregation went quiet.

'The bad news is: the church needs a new roof!'

The congregation groaned.

'The good news is: we have enough money for the new roof.'

A sigh of relief was heard rippling through the gathered group.

'The bad news is: it's still in your pockets!'

Abbots Road News

More Laugh's

1. If anyone needs an ark, I happen to Noah a guy.
2. What do we have that Adam never had? Ancestors.
3. Spotted on a church marquee, 'Love your enemies;
After all, you made them.
4. Why are atoms Catholic? Because they have mass.
5. What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth?
Ruthless.
6. Why do they say 'Amen' at the end of a prayer instead of 'Awoman?' The same reason they sing hymns instead of Hers!
7. Why did God create man before woman? Because he didn't want any advice on how to do it.
8. How long did Cain hate his brother? As long as he was Abel.
9. Did Eve ever have a date with Adam? No, just an apple.
10. A Minister told his congregation, 'Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark 17.'
The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the Minister asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had read Mark 17.
Several hands went up.
The Minister smiled and said, 'Mark has only 16 chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying.'

Lectionary Readings

Sunday 5 April

Acts 10 v 34 - 43 or Jeremiah 31 v 1 - 6

Psalms 118 v 1 - 2 & 14 - 24

Colossians 3 v 1 - 4 or Acts 10 v 34 - 43

John 20 v 1 - 18 or Matthew 28 v 1 - 10

Sunday 12 April

Acts 2 v 14a & 22 - 32

Psalms 16

1 Peter 1 v 3 - 9

John 20 v 19 - 31

Sunday 19 April

Acts 2 v 14a & 36 - 41

Psalms 116 v 1 - 4 & 12 - 19

1 Peter 1 v 17 - 23

Luke 24 v 13 - 35

Sunday 26 April

Acts 2 v 42 - 47

Psalms 23

1 Peter 2 v 19 - 25

John 10 v 1 - 10