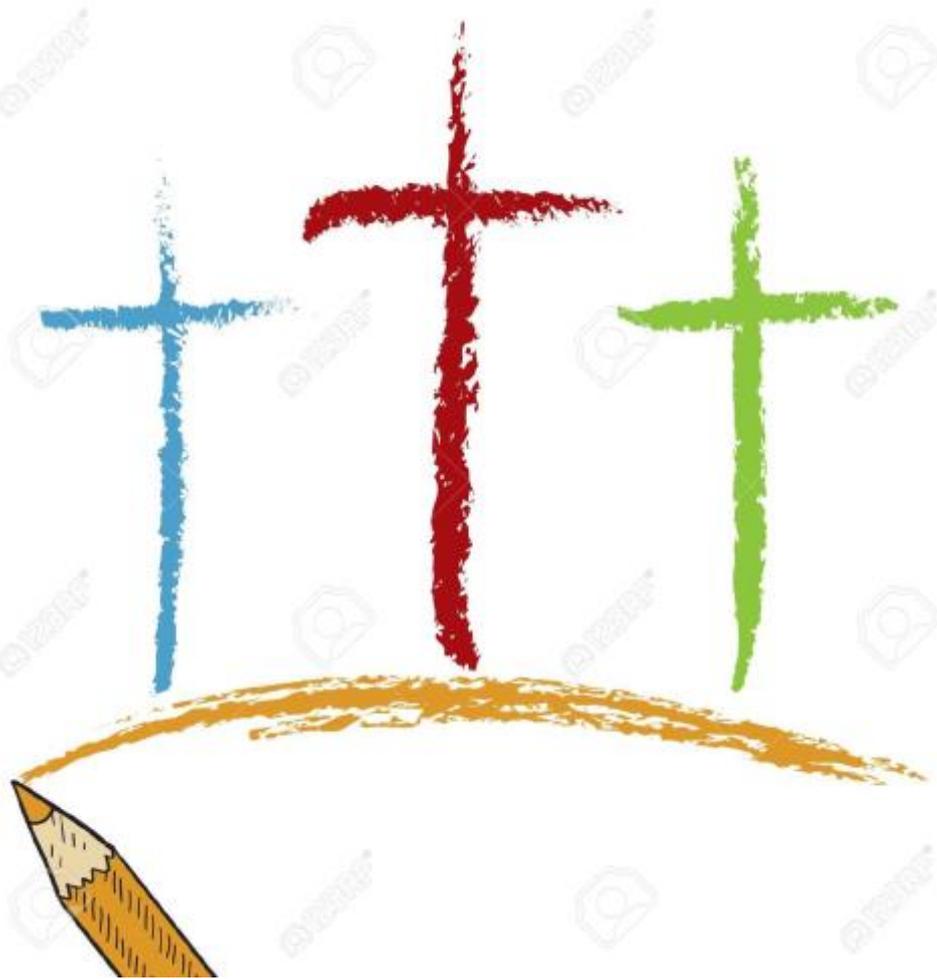


Stainbeck Church (United Reformed)

OUTLOOK

APRIL 2017



**Please worship with us:
Sunday Morning at 10.45am
Thursday Evening at 7.30pm**



APRIL 2017

Dear Friends,

It seems a long time since the first Easter eggs appeared in the shops – with cute little chicks and flowers popping up everywhere. And now, at the start of our school holidays, at every turn it seems, we are wished a ‘HAPPY EASTER’.

And I wonder: just what makes an Easter ‘HAPPY’? Sunshine? Family? Friends? Good health? Love for one another? And yes – these are all things that make us happy. And yet we all know that life can be tough in ways that go far deeper than the rainy days we have come to expect.

And I wonder then about these words shared so glibly. What does ‘HAPPY EASTER’ mean to you and to me?

It is at this point that I thank God for the faith that I hold and for the God that I know in Jesus Christ. The God who came to live among us, as one of us, ‘The Word made flesh’. The God whose life and love for us led to death on a Roman Cross - but whose love was stronger than death and who offers us resurrection life and that deep Christian HOPE at the very heart of our life and faith.



Here is a God who speaks to our human need, who suffers with us, who rejoices with us and who walks with us – every step of the way. This journey from Palm Sunday through the pain of Holy Week to the joy of EASTER morning is a journey that mirrors our own lives and indeed the life of the world.

How important then that we walk it together. The different opportunities to do this are listed on pages 8 and 9. You may also like to use our Holy Week booklet (copies on the window-ledge in church).

So that this Easter we may we proclaim in confidence and in faith the words that give us life:

CHRIST IS RISEN! He is risen indeed! Alleluia

Love and peace, *Angela*

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Where there is tender care and love, God is present

We think of all those who have on-going health issues or who are struggling in other ways, who come and go through our building: you are remembered – **God loves you all.**

Congratulations are also due to **Maureen Lillywhite**, our sessional Community Development Worker. One of Maureen's roles is her work with Stainbeck through the Family Solutions Team at our Community Café, as well as running other family events.

At a gathering in **Leeds Town Hall** on International Women's Day, Maureen was declared the winner of the **'Inspirational Women of the Year Community Award'**.



As a further source of encouragement for us all, our Minister was one of this year's finalists – see the photo – and is now the proud owner of an owl trophy!

Angela says,

'This award may have my name on it but really it belongs to us all – the work we do together at Stainbeck is the outcome of many gifts – not least that of hospitality and welcome. So well done! And thank you!'

HERE AND THERE

Looking back.....

Brian and Avril thank everyone who came to the music event that we organised to raise money for Martin House and the work of Stainbeck in the community. A special thank you must go to Sandra Smith and her team for the wonderful supper that we all tucked into. The band *'Limited Edition'* were on top form playing a mixture of bluegrass, blues and pop music – something for everyone. After expenses and the inclusion of a raffle we sent £174 to Martin House and £168 for the Church. From the comments received a great time was had by all!

Leeds Mission and Care Group met at the **URC in South Leeds** at the beginning of March where more news of the **Partnership** was shared. Please do take advantage of the MICA newsletter which is available in church (and on our web-site) immediately after each meeting and keeps you up to date with the progress of the Partnership and also tells of items of interest from the different churches.

The next meeting of the Group is at **Stainbeck on Monday May 11th**.... a date for your diary!

The **Yorkshire Synod** met at the Bridge Church, Otley on Saturday 11th March. Much of the morning session was taken up in worship led by the Moderator, Revd Kevin Watson, who spoke of a future of change for the church. Change which will challenge us all, change for which we must be ready, trusting in the words of Jesus, *“Strive first for the kingdom of God and God’s righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well”*.

We heard from **Katherine Hogg**, the new regional co-ordinator of **Christian Aid** and viewed a moving and inspiring video.

The story of the first woman, **Constance Coltman**, to be ordained into the ministry of the Congregational Union of England and Wales was told. Another inspiring story. Constance Colman of course, was soon followed by **Margaret Fullerton** and **Constance Clark**.

In the afternoon of SYNOD, there was a lively, informative and encouraging presentation by **Emmanuelle Wilson** and the Synod Team exploring *Appreciative Inquiry*. Some of us now have also shared some of these ideas during worship on 26th March.

TOGETHER WE CAN!

On Thursday 23rd March we joined with our friends from **Churches Together in Chapel Allerton and Meanwood** for another **Lent Soup Evening**. Once again it lived up to its reputation – as an evening for conversation, friendship and good food. Thanks again are due to Helen Inglis who coordinated the catering, to her team of helpers and to the four great home-made soup makers of Stainbeck.

This year we focused on all that we do together under the banner ‘**Together we can**’ and what a variety of undertakings we heard of. We had so many great initiatives to celebrate, to share with each other ...a few among which were **InterACT**, Chapel Allerton Youth Project and Messy Church, Chill and Chat, Leeds Citizens, the WYDAN Night Shelter, the Food-bank, the plans to workshop ways of making our churches dementia friendly. Opportunities to pray together at Taizé services and monthly Community Prayers were shared.

Gratitude was expressed to David Keighley who, keeps all the contacts flowing between our churches. At the close of the meeting we shared in a circle of grace giving thanks to God for all that we have done, are doing and will continue to do TOGETHER. ‘

Together we can’!

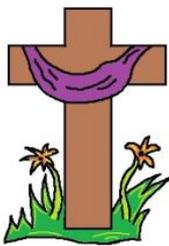
The March meeting of the **After 8’s** was our **Country Dance Evening**. Ten members came and had fun dancing the old Country Dances. It was an energetic evening and most After 8’s danced every dance. The dancing is held at Moortown Baptist Church every Wednesday from 7.30 - 9.30 pm, and is a friendly, lively group. New people are made really welcome and it is a nice way of getting some exercise.

Sandra Smith

Looking forward....

April, Easter, Spring, lighter nights, and holidays – so much to look forward to beginning with two holiday Fun Days. The first on **Wednesday 5th April at Woodhouse Cricket Club** with games, activities and fun for all the family.

Then the **Beckhill Fun Day on Thursday 6th April** to celebrate the start of the work on the steps and pavements – this time at Stainbeck (2.30pm start), following the Community Café. Come and celebrate with **TEAM BECKHILL**.



EASTER SERVICES

Please do take note of our **EASTER SERVICES**: We begin on **Palm Sunday** (9th April) with waving palms and a cheering crowd then start the walk with Jesus through the dark days of **Holy Week** until we come from the darkness to celebrate the glory and light of **Resurrection on Easter morning**.

You are invited to bring a **single flower** to place in the empty cross at our Easter morning service. The cross will then be carried out, through our doors into the street, into the world as we sing ‘Thine be the Glory’. Do share with us.

All the Services are listed at the end of this file.

The **After Eight's** invite you to a **Darts and Dominoes** evening on Wednesday 19th April at 7.30 p.m., in the Café Room. Bring your own drinks. Nibbles will be provided. If anyone has some darts I would appreciate the loan of them for the evening. Everyone is invited to this evening, you do not have to be an Eric Bristow (or the modern equivalent). Please let me know if you are coming to have fun.

Sandra Smith



**CHRISTIAN AID WEEK:
14th to 20th May**

As **Christian Aid Week** draws nearer, we will as usual be asking for volunteers to deliver and/or collect the red envelopes from houses in local streets.

We have a willing team of helpers who offer their time every year, but it is always good to welcome new people to work alongside the more experienced. After all, many hands make light work and it is important to cover as many streets as we possibly can. If you feel able to spare an hour or so on one or two evenings during the week, we would be very grateful to hear from you.

June Mawson Tel: 2938941

Christine Robson is busy selling **Easter Eggs** on behalf of **Fairtrade** and will have them available for purchase every Sunday morning for the next few weeks. Please speak to Christine if you would like to purchase one or even maybe two!

And finally our thanks to the faithful four who continued with the **Church Spring Cleaning** on 26th March and also our appreciation for repainted church walls and the on-going commitment by **Property and Management** to keep our building both safe and attractive.

***Transport:** if you require any transport to church or for any other event, please contact John Mawson (2938941). Alternatively, contact your elder or Angela or, on a Sunday morning, telephone the church (2370251) and leave a message.*

REFLECTIONS

26th February 1.33pm ‘Riches I heed not, Nor man’s empty praise’. Singing that this morning made me wonder, is that true of me??

1st March 5.16pm Pat van Lemmen spoke on Sunday of how we can find out what God wants us to do: ask, through prayer. What is it like, to ‘ask God’? When I have a problem with my new iPhone, I ask Keziah. Even as I text the message, an image of her momentarily passes through my mind. But God?... ‘no one shall see me and live’ (Exodus 33:20). For a thousand years there were no images of God in the Christian church, but by 1511 Michelangelo was painting a muscular man, with grey hair and beard (Creation of the Sun and Moon), and why not, since ‘God created man in his own image’ (Genesis 1:27), presumably God looks like man (or woman, since the NRSV has ‘humankind’).

Hans Kung, relatively early in his monumental ‘Does God Exist?’ writes that God is not, ‘above the clouds, in the physical heaven’. Nor is God “outside” the world. ‘God is in this world, and this world is in God’. As Bonhoeffer puts it ‘God is beyond in the midst of our life’. No images then, but perhaps we just ‘open ourselves to the God we know in Jesus Christ’ (Lent Prayer Diary 2nd March).....and ask.

4th March 5.01pm A poem, written by Raymond Carver, and read on Poetry Please, observes two boys delivering papers in the early morning. This is no place for thoughts of death, ambition, or love, even. Just happiness, which comes on unexpectedly.

5th March 3pm Rain. Peaceful. Loudly, I said ‘in Christ alone’, and a flock of geese rose from the field, fluttered around a little, then settled in the next field, thinking as one, no doubt, ‘I hope that nutter is going on up and over the hill’, which I surely am. The walk becomes a metaphor for life as I walk down the country lane through open green fields to stop at a farm gate, and listen to the bird song. Then, as I walk back up the hill, the view narrows to the lane ahead, enclosed by hedgerows, and, at the end, nothing.

How can we hold on to a life-changing faith in Jesus Christ when, in 2000 years, the world has fundamentally changed? Like the world beyond life, the world outside scientific understanding is impossible for us to conceive.

Even when someone demonstrates that it is possible to walk on water, we know that it is an illusion and we want to know how the magician did it.

14th March 8am Reading the translation of Isaiah 58:1-12 from The Message, part of the service for the beginning of Lent. ‘This is the kind of fast day I’m after: to break the chains of injustice’. The verses ring out, reminding me of Bob Dylan’s ‘Chimes of Freedom flashing...tolling for the countless confused, accused, misused, strung-out ones an’ worse’. Both poems, separated by centuries, have a passion which stirs us to action, to live a life inspired by what surely is the practice of Christianity. (note: Isaiah 58:7 ‘being available to your own families’. At least I’m OK on that one....)

22nd March 10.30pm The Sun and The Daily Mail echo bitter Norman Tebbit’s reaction to the death of Martin McGuinness. The Sun’s headline is UNFORGIVEN. There is a different headline in the Irish edition: ‘It’s not how you begin, it’s how you end’. Whatever sells. Regardless. And in London today.....

23rd March 7.22am On Radio 4, I listened to the story of William of Norwich, an example of fake news in the twelfth century. A young boy is murdered and local Jews are blamed by a man called Thomas of Monmouth, a one man tabloid of the time, who began writing about the murder six years after it happened. He devoted his life to the story, to the point where William becomes a martyr, and miracles of healing take place. Verses in the Canterbury Tales, years later, helped to develop the story into an example of ‘blood libel’, the idea that Jews kill Christian children. This was fake news which became something believed for centuries.

The discussion of the case was paralleled by a discussion on examples of fake news today; in particular, the way hatred of Muslims and immigrants can spread, in turn, provoking the actions of the disturbed and rootless.

Back to Isaiah: ‘quit gossiping about other people’s sins’, or, as in the NRSV, ‘the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil’. We dream of a better world, but unless our dreams include the outcast, then we will live out their dreams, which will become our nightmare.

PLC

Our Easter Journey

Palm Sunday

9th April

10:45 am

Worship

Maundy Thursday

13th April

7:30 pm

Communion around
the Table

Good Friday

14th April

9:00 pm

Tenebrae,
Service of Shadows

Easter Sunday

16th April

9:00 am

Early Communion
followed by
Easter breakfast

10:45 am

Celebration

All are welcome

Views expressed by individuals are personal and not necessarily those of Stainbeck Church.

Revd Angela Hughes, Minister: 0113 225 3766

Avril and Brian Bellwood, Church Secretaries: 0113 293 5847