



Newsletter
April 2018



Welcome to the April Newsletter

Contents

A Message from our Minister	3
Church Family News	4
Church Flowers in April	4
Christian Aid News	5
Coming Soon	6
Dates for your diary	7
Easter Offering	7
1 st Flitwick Boys' Brigade	8
Prayer Leaflet for April	9-12
The Upper Room	13
Amphill Ladies Group	13
Clophill News	13
Circuit Prayer Meetings	13
Flitwick Singers Concert	14
Flitwick Market 'Tea' Charities	14
News from Paraguay	15
The Newsletter	20



A Message from our Minister

Alive!

Churches exist. And churches started as a new thing only because of Jesus. Churches wouldn't exist otherwise. Are churches proof of Jesus? No. Are they evidence of Jesus? yes!

Jesus was a real historical person, and Roman history gives us evidence of his life and work and death. But other sources, preserved by the church over time, give us evidence of something completely strange: Jesus is alive!



This evidence isn't fabricated. If it was, it would be neater, better explained, fit together better. More startling, it would match the norms and culture of the times. But it doesn't. It starts with the eye witness evidence of women, in a time when women were not highly regarded. It finishes with the eye witness reports of St Paul, who was a very unpopular man. It's messy, but authentic.

But actually, there's more evidence. It's Church. You and me. For though few of us claim to be eye witnesses of the living Jesus, there's plenty who will testify to his living presence in their lives. That was enough for me. And maybe you too. Happy Easter!

Graham

Church Family News

Janet and John would like to thank everyone in the church for their prayers, the lovely messages, and the beautiful cards and flowers. Emma's funeral was full of love. You could feel it. And well over 200 people were there. Thank you.

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We have learned of the death of Connie Kilpin, and we remember her family in our prayers.

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Please continue to remember in your prayers members of our Church family, especially those who have particular need of our prayers. May God surround all with his love and care.

Church Flowers in April

We thank those who have agreed to donate the flowers this month.

1st April	Amy Kay
8th April	Sabina Ofori-Quaah
15th April	Frances Impey
22nd April	Margaret Olney
29th April	Beryl and Roger Cooper

The flowers enhance our worship and remind us of the wonderful variety of colour and form in God's creation.

Christian Aid News

The theme for this year's Christian Aid Week is *Together we're stronger than the storms*. We are asked to stand together with the thousands of people of Haiti who lost everything when Hurricane Matthew tore through the island in 2016. This, of course, following the earthquake of 2010. So many people are living in appalling conditions, refugees in their own country. Our donations will help to build disaster proof homes for vulnerable people so that they are more prepared when the next storms come.

Last month, I told you that the Ampthill Christian Aid group was considering other ways to raise money during May this year as we are no longer able to hold the house to house collection. Each church in our Churches Together group is thinking of a way in which they can hold a money raising event. Dates for you diary so far are:

Wednesday May 2nd Soup Lunch in the Chapter House, St Peter and St Paul.

Saturday May 12th Second Big Brekkie at Flitwick Methodist Church – Our chefs, David, John and Linda are all booked as are some of our waiting staff!

Sunday May 13th 6.30 pm Christian Aid Week service at Ampthill Methodist Church.

Monday May 14th 12.00 – 2.00 pm Soup Lunch at St Andrew's Church Ampthill.

Thursday May 17th Christian Aid lunch at The Upper Room at Ampthill Methodist Church.

In addition, each church is going to ask its members to take a small number of Christian Aid envelopes at the morning service on Sunday May 12th and ask family, friends and known neighbours to make a

donation. You will be asked to return these on the following Sunday. I hope that you all feel willing to take part in this activity.

Please continue to pray for the work of Christian Aid and its partners whose aim is to help change the lives of people of all faiths and none living in poverty around the world.

Ann Blair



Coming Soon

It has taken us a while but the 'Forward Looking Group' have now started to plan some new outreach as set out below. At the Church General meeting you will hear how our thoughts have progressed and how we have got to this point.

The Forward Looking group are planning to have Wednesday afternoon 'Tea and Chat' sessions 2.30 - 4.30 starting on May 9th. This will be an outreach to attract the elderly, lonely and perhaps mums on the way to or coming back from fetching youngsters from school and of course our own members and friends of the church. If you could offer a Wednesday afternoon to help (this may be helping to set up, working in the kitchen, donating cakes or just chatting with visitors) perhaps once a month please speak to either John Washington or Maryan Pateman. This is an exciting new venture which we hope will gradually build up and we don't know quite where it will lead us.

We are also planning to have regular Saturday fundraising coffee mornings which will help to finance the above venture and other outreach we already do. The first of these will be: May 5th, June 2nd and July 14th. Again if you would like to help by being on a rota or providing refreshments please ask John or Maryan.

Let's all look forward together.

Maryan Pateman

Dates for your Diary

Circuit Farewell Service – Sunday 7th July 2018 at 3 pm. Venue to be announced later.

Circuit Welcome Service – Sunday 2nd September at 6pm at Putnoe Heights. Refreshments will be served before the service.

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Easter Offering

On Palm Sunday you will have received an envelope in which to place your Easter Offering. If you have not already done so, please return the envelope containing your Easter gift as soon as possible. Thank you to all those who have made or will make a contribution. Envelopes are still available in the foyer if you have not received one.

This is an opportunity to give to the World Mission Fund, which enables the Methodist Church to encourage, build and maintain long-term mission partnerships with countries across the world.

The Circuit Easter Offering dedication service will be held on



Thursday 26th April at Wilstead at 2.30 pm. The theme of the service is ‘Seek Peace and Pursue It’ (Psalm 34:14). It will feature stories from Mission Partners in Sri Lanka, Japan and Israel/Palestine supported by the World Mission Fund, working towards peace and

reconciliation in their own situation.

All are welcome to attend this service.

1st Flitwick Boys' Brigade



Well the beginning of March was heavily influenced by the cold weather and one Thursday evening was cancelled and Battalion 10 Pin Bowling for Anchors and Juniors postponed.

But the snow soon cleared and we were back to our Thursday night activities and also Battalion Competitions. Company and Senior Section have been busy with Competitions and winning the Seniors Unihoc Competition so another trophy to go in the cabinet. They also had Table Tennis with Company Section finishing 5th and Seniors 3rd. Juniors took part in the Bible Competition and finished 4th.

Anchor Boy and Junior Section Bowling has been rescheduled for 28th April with the result especially important for Anchor Boys who are currently equal 1st with 23rd Luton in the Battalion!

Back at Flitwick our Thursday Evenings have included preparing for the competitions but also looking ahead to the Carnival in June! Yes we have started our preparations early this year, the theme for our float will be Dr Seuss – and a number of BB families have taken giant book covers to colour over the Easter Break.

The older lads have had some meaningful discussions around gambling and mental health.

Anchors and Juniors had a Messy BB for Easter to finish the term with craft celebration and cake! Every boy received a “Real Easter Egg” and those eggs we had over we put in the Need Basket so hopefully they will brighten up someone’s Easter.

Thank you for your continued support for BB.

Angela Brydon



Prayer Leaflet

April 2018



*He lives, all glory to his name;
he lives, my Saviour, still the same;
what joy the blest assurance gives,
I know that my Redeemer lives!*

*Samuel Medley
Singing the Faith 303 verse 4*

Prayer Suggestions for April

The day of resurrection, earth, tell it our abroad!
The passover of gladness, the passover of God!
From death to life eternal, from earth unto the sky,
Our Christ has brought us over with hymns of victory.
Singing the Faith 311 verse 1

Week beginning 1st April - Easter

Sunday	Rejoice as we celebrate the risen Christ.
Monday	Thank God that Jesus defeated death and is alive.
Tuesday	Praise God that the risen Jesus is with us each day.
Wednesday	Thank God that Jesus is willing to meet with us and assure us of his help.
Thursday	Pray that we will recognise Jesus as he comes to us.
Friday	Pray for those who do not know that joy of the risen Jesus.
Saturday	Pray for those for whom Easter is just another holiday.

Week beginning 8th April - Hope

Sunday	Thank God that because Jesus rose from the dead we have the 'living hope' (1 Peter 1:3) of eternal life.
Monday	Thank God that we have 'hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.' (Hebrews 6:19)
Tuesday	'Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.' (Romans 5:5) Praise God!
Wednesday	'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.' (Romans 15:13)
Thursday	Pray for those without the hope that Jesus gives.
Friday	Pray for those who feel they are in a hopeless situation.

Saturday Pray that the hope we have will shine through in our lives.

Week beginning 15th April - People in Public Life

Sunday Pray for Church leaders including the President and Vice President of Conference.
Monday Pray for Christian people in Sport.
Tuesday Pray for the Prime Minister, Theresa May, and the Government.
Wednesday Pray for Christians in Parliament.
Thursday Pray for our local MP, Nadine Dorries.
Friday Thank God for the Royal Family.
Saturday Pray for the Queen on her 92nd birthday.

Week beginning 22nd April - Vocations and Work

Sunday On this Vocations Sunday we pray for guidance for those seeking to discern God's will for their vocation.
Monday Pray for those who are actively exploring their vocation.
Tuesday Pray for those who have been made redundant and who need to retrain for a different job.
Wednesday Pray for those unable to get a job, that they may not become discouraged.
Thursday Pray for those who need confirmation of God's help in their vocation.
Friday Pray that we may all listen to God's call to us and respond.
Saturday Pray that we will be willing to serve God in whatever task he calls us to.

2 days beginning 29th April - Wesley Guild

Sunday Pray for our Wesley Guild as we hold our annual Guild Service this morning.
Monday Pray for the Wesley Guild nationally and overseas.



Services in April

Please remember in your prayers those leading our worship this month, especially during the week prior to the service.

1st April	10.30am	Rev. Graham Claydon-Knights All Age/Holy Communion
	6.00 pm	Bob Heley
8th April	10.30 am	Local Worship
	6.00 pm	Rev. Graham Claydon-Knights Holy Communion
15th April	10.30 am	Chris Fox
	6.00 pm	Thea Lee
22nd April	10.30 am	Jim Ragless
	6.00 pm	Circuit Youth Service
29th April	10.30 am	Jenny Benfield – Guild Service
	6.00 pm	Circuit Healing Service at Kempston East

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### **Monday 30th April 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm**

Refreshments, craft, stories, fun, singing, and a cooked tea.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Please contact Graham on 01525 713468 for more information.

Donations welcome to cover costs.

**Future Dates: 21st May, 18th June.**

*The Upper Room*

At Ampthill Methodist Church on alternate Thursdays

Dates in April – 12th and 26th

Coffee or tea and cakes from 10.00am

Light Lunches from 11.30 am – 1.00 pm

Proceeds after expenses for local charities.

All are welcome



*Ampthill Ladies Group*

Meetings on alternate Thursdays at 7.30 pm

5th April – Steve McNay

MIND

19th April – Dr. Margaret Stockham-Turner

South America

All Ladies Welcome



*Clophill News*

**Tea and Chat**

Every Wednesday 10.00 am to 12 noon

**Messy Church**

Saturday 14th April 4 pm – 6 pm



*Circuit Prayer Meetings*

You will be welcome at the Circuit Prayer Meetings.

Monday 9th April at 4.15 pm

at the Putnoe Manse, 12 Hartop Close Bedford MK41 8HE

Monday 23rd April at 10.30 am at Willington.



*Flitwick Singers*  
*in Concert*

Saturday 12th May at 2.30 pm  
at Parkside Community Hall, Ampthill  
in support of Tibbs Dementia Foundation



Tickets £5

Contact Linda on 01525 714060

The concert will be followed by refreshments  
and a raffle.



*Friday Market 'Tea' Charities*

Teas and coffees are available on Fridays in the Village Hall from 9 am to 12 noon, supporting these charities.

20th April

Flitwick Town Council

27th April

HULA (Animal Rescue)



## *News from Paraguay*

15th February 2018

Hot and sunny here just for a change. It is supposed once again to be a wet weekend, but until then warm and sunny.

After the rain it has been a little cooler so I have been able to spend a couple of days working out in the garden. I had a good size bonfire yesterday and there is now plenty of more dry grass for another one today. It will take a few weeks before everything is back to how it should be.

I went into Piribebuy with Colin earlier today. After he had taken his car to the car wash we went for some lunch - which was far better than cooking.

Later today I will probably go down to see Evangelina again. I went down there yesterday and she was very pleased to have someone to play with for a few hours. As ever she was not keen on the idea of me going home, but was very tired by then. She has a favourite new word. No one seems to know where she has got it from but at the moment everything is "never" which I think she has decided is a far better word than "No".

17th February 2018

Perhaps your winter is on the way out. That would be good as it is almost time for your spring. Here it is as ever warm and sunny. There is rain forecast - it was forecast for yesterday but despite the sky going back the wind picking up and there being a bit of thunder and lightning nothing happened.

I had a good time entertaining Evangelina the other day. When I got round there she was not a happy thing - I think from being told off a million times for being in the way! She soon forgot all about that and was good as ever with me for the rest of the afternoon. I do try to talk to her in English.

22nd February 2018

I am glad you like all my photos on facebook. That bird of paradise is a bush in town outside the supermarket. Quite a large bush with lots of flowers and they appear every year.

Yes - work is now going on properly with my book. Now that I have a computer that works I have started from the beginning putting it onto the computer rather than bits of paper which would need typing up later anyway! I've put a note on the fridge to make sure I remember to work on it every day.

I think I had forgotten to mention that Emilica is currently working away - in a clothing factory in Sao Paulo. Her brother is over there but I have no idea how they found the work. No doubt she is being kept busy day in day out. Probably better for building up some money that being a maid in Asuncion but I suspect far harder to get away from it if she finds it doesn't agree with her.

Schools finally went back this week so they can get back to learning not very much. On the radio recently they were talking about a report that had come out on the standard of education around the world. There were 139 countries involved - so obviously some were missed out. Of those 139 Paraguay came out at 136 with just a few places like Fiji and Samoa below them.

Yesterday the water was off all day - broken pipe somewhere up the line I heard. It was good to find it back on this morning and I had a busy morning doing all yesterday's jobs and then today's jobs!

27th February 2018

I have sent you a photograph of Evangelina on her way to school this afternoon. It seems the plan is her to go a couple of times a week. However, rather than either nursery or pre-school it seems she is sitting in with Year 1 - at least that is what she did last week. It is all very exciting for her but I'm not sure how much of a help to the others in the class she will be.

Emilica seems to be quite happy at the moment. I suspect it is far less that like slave labour than being a maid is where the hours depend on how much employers feel like paying from day to day, never as much as they say they will. I understand the idea is to earn money towards getting home for herself.

On this hot and sunny day I had a slightly unsuccessful trip out today. I went to the big council office in Caacupe. but it turned out that in addition to all the paperwork in my name they also needed the receipt from the shop where I bought my bike before they would give me its ID card thing. So I will have to go back and try again another day! But not a complete waste of time as I had lunch over there and visited the big supermarket.

### 2nd March 2018

Well I now have all the documents needed for my new motorbike, but as ever it was quite a performance.

I went into Caacupe on Monday to get the registration card but they would not even look into it until they have every single piece of paper they wanted in front of them. So knowing I was not going to get anywhere I went home to try again another day.

The weather looked fine on Tuesday morning so I decided to try again. This time they were a little more helpful and looked it up on their computer. Yes they said it was ready but no they did not have it. Apparently motorbike cards are now all dealt with in another town - Caaguazu. I could see that discussing getting the card to Caacupe would only be a circular argument that would waste time and get me nowhere.

So I decided that as it was only mid-morning I would go to Caaguaza and sort it out for myself. I have never been there before but I knew where it was. Unfortunately that was 100 miles away from Caacupe and halfway to Brazil. It took a while to get all the way over there but I did not stop along the way and got there as soon as I could, having no idea when the office would shut. It was just after mid-day

by the time I got there and after asking around for a bit I found where I was looking for.

It was still open and as I had been told my card was there. In fact not just my card they looked to have a pile of things waiting for collection. I had to ask directions back to the main road and then headed straight back to Piribebuy, stopping for a couple of empanadas as I had had nothing to eat all day before finally heading back home. So something that should not have taken long meant leaving home at 8.30 am and getting home at 4.00 pm and spending most of the day travelling.

After doing all that I went to Piribebuy today where I could now sort out the road tax. So after lots of messing around I now have all the documents I need to be able to travel anywhere without worrying about police check points.

On the way back from Piribebuy I stopped off to visit Evangelina who was heading off to school for the afternoon. As far as I understand being a year too young for even nursery she just plays for an hour or two, but does find it all very exciting, insisting on taking a backpack like everyone else although all that is inside is just a little packet of biscuits I got her for play time.

I understand you have had a little bit of winter. None of that with me but there is very heavy rain forecast for tomorrow and this afternoon it was raining pretty heavily for an hour or two.

### 6th March 2018

It was quite an adventure to get all the paperwork and the like sorted out for my motorbike. Good they are all now done so that I can go anywhere without worrying about coming across one of the police check points. It was all quite illegal before. The system here is that if you buy a vehicle you then have 90 days to get all the papers in order, which is really quite a long time. However before that is done I had to carry a folder of bits of paper around with me which was a bit of a pain. So as for my stolen motorbike - not holding my breath. It depends on the police stumbling across it.

Emilica is planning to earn enough money while she is away. But I will wait and see if that happens rather than all being spent as she is earning it. If she does manage I doubt she would move any more than a few footsteps away from her house - so Evangelina will be going nowhere.

School here, which has only just started again, is bit more flexible about ages. This is because everyone has to finish each year so by the time they get to the last years it can be a mixture of ages with people who have had to repeat years. I think they have to start year 1 by age 7. They can go to nursery at 4 and pre-school at 5, but those are optional.

### 11th March 2018

It was a right messing around to get all in order for my new motorbike. The system has changed since I last bought one and thing should be simpler - but as ever things are no thought through properly so it is not! Previously vehicles came without a number plate and to get one you needed to go to a solicitor who then needed to communicate with the transport ministry in Asuncion to get one issued - so far more expensive and complicated than necessary. Now vehicles are sold with a number plate and all that is needed is a small payment to register it and then wait a few weeks for things to be processed, except of course it is not.....

Evangelina is still at school, but I get the feeling that the game of going to school when you are three will soon come to an end. She really can't be much help to the 7 year olds she is sitting in with.

Rather than having to drive through waist high grass I can now get to and from the track. Marcelo was desperate for some money to go to a football tournament so I had him clear it for me and it should stay clear for a few months.

### 18th March 2018

Thanks for the greetings from the Arctic! I hope you are all enjoying the ice age - you will have Polar Bears on Flitwick Moor soon. I've

seen quite a collection of snowy photos. Here it is quite the opposite - very hot. It normally starts to cool down once March arrives but not so far this year. This week there has not been much gardening going on, just one day when it was not quite so warm.

I improved on my cakes. I managed to get some icing sugar so they ended up looking like real cakes. Evangelina came round for a little while one afternoon and I gave her one. It must have been liked because as soon as it was gone she was back to the fridge searching for another one.

It is Ramona's birthday soon and all she wants for her birthday is to be taken to Burger King. There is one in Caacupe which she sees every time she goes to the hospital but has never had the money to visit.

Must away now as it is far too hot to be sitting here writing on the computer!!

Best wishes to all - keep warm while I try to cool down!

Simon

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## *The Newsletter*

Thank you for reading this newsletter and thank you to those who have contributed items.

The last date for items for the May newsletter is **Sunday 22nd April**. I need your contributions and I look forward to hearing from you.

Janet Watts                      telephone: 717492                      email:  
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