



CHRIST CHURCH  
BIRKENHEAD



**Parish Magazine**  
**Spring 2023**

# Our Coming Services

***Weekly until 2nd April, then 1st & 3rd Sundays only***

9.00am Holy Communion

***Weekly at 10.30am and as listed***

**5th March: Lent 2**

'First Sunday' morning prayers

**12th March: Lent 3**

Holy Communion

**19th March: Lent 4/Mothering Sunday**

Morning Prayer

**26 March: Lent 5**

Morning Prayer with Baptism

**2nd April: Palm Sunday**

'First Sunday' morning prayers

**6th April: Maundy Thursday**

6pm Agape meal

**7th April: Good Friday**

2pm An hour at the Cross

**9th April: Easter Day**

Holy Communion

**16th April: Easter 2**

Morning Prayer followed by Baptism

**23rd April: Easter 3**

*Holy Communion* followed by APCM

**30th April: Easter 4**

Holy Communion

**7th May: Easter 5**

'First Sunday' morning prayers

**14th May: Easter 6**

Holy Communion

**21st May: Easter 7, Sunday after Ascension Day**

Morning Prayer

**28th May: Pentecost**

Holy Communion

## Rev writes ...

Dear Friends,

I do hope that the worst of the winter weather is over, warmer temperatures will be a relief to us all in one way or another - physically of course but also from the worries around managing our bills. As we are already in the season of Lent - a time when lots of people give things up in order to focus our minds and hearts on some self-examination - maybe this year we would rather take on some warmth and comfort than give up anything! It hasn't been an easy time for many and whether comfortable or in need, everyone has felt the pressure of rising costs. We have perhaps already been in a 'Lenten' period if self-sacrifice is our focus.

However, good things have happened too and we hope will continue to do so - lots of people have given more, because they have more, others have given sacrificially in order that others can eat well and feel well. During this time of Lent as a church we are looking at the Church of England Lent material called **Dust and Glory** by Emma Ineson - described as 'A Lent journey of faith, failure and forgiveness'. It's about living well in the mess of everyday life. We have booklets that give 40 daily reflections and will be coming together each Wednesday during March at 12.30pm for a soup, bread and cheese lunch followed by a Bible reading, reflection, discussion and prayer - no pressure for 'right' answers, rather an opportunity to be honest about our daily lives and in this series, how we cope and learn from failure; all with a few laughs thrown in too. Do join us if you are able, we would love to see you.

All of this is to help us in our spiritual journey that Lent can enable us to focus on - a bit of self-examination, reflection and time, seeking God will always draw us deeper into relationship with the Lord and may enable us to let go of or recognize those areas of our character that we might prefer to ignore.

Towards the end of our 40 days of Lent we will enter into Holy Week and walk that journey together from Palm Sunday through Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and to Easter Day. Then comes the joy of Easter morning, the risen Christ, witnessed two thousand years ago and still rising to meet us today. He is our reason for being, our reason for making community together and our reason for extending that community wider and deeper as we connect with the Lord and with one another. Using all that we have and are to further that connectedness and to become more Christ-like.

Following Easter, we will be experiencing the joys(!) of our Annual Parochial Church Meeting to look back on the year (2022) and to reach forward. That will come on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April, following the 10.30am service. This now leaves me only to mention my leaving the parish to retire at the end of April, Mike and I will have our last day on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April when we shall have a gathering at 10.30am followed by a bit of a do after, downstairs in the hall with a 'bring and share' lunch. Everyone very welcome! I don't want, at this point to write a goodbye piece for you - it really feels a bit too soon, but I will prepare something for the next edition of the magazine.

Blessings in Christ ,  
Revd Gerri

*Due to the coming vacancy in the parish, when Gerri retires, the 9.00am Holy Communion service from April will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays in each month. On the other Sundays there will be a service of Holy Communion at 10.30am. This has been felt necessary in order to maintain a good level of services and to ensure that those responsible for leading them are able to manage the vacancy well.*

## **Funerals in the last three months**

Gerald (Gerry) Arthur Goat  
Leigh Hammon  
Joyce Margaret Hamilton  
Robert Burton Hamilton  
Jeanette Laura Salisbury

*No baptisms or weddings!*

# So where are we going? And how will we know when we have got there?

So Gerri is leaving? Among the many questions, “where”, we might be asking, “Where do we go from here?” One answer might helpfully focus on a vision recently agreed by the PCC when it met in November 2022. Three meetings – the first in May 2022 – were facilitated by Revd Peter Froggatt, Director of Outreach, based at Diocesan House. Informal and relaxed, mainly conversational in tone, these meetings involved the members of the PCC identifying Purpose, Values and Vision. It’s probably best to see each of them as markers on the journey; waypoints to make sure we are on track. Decidedly not a blueprint or master plan prescribing what we do.

We have identified specific actions for the next six months, tangible and to be reviewed. As we review these at the PCC, we will then set further specific actions – all within this simple framework of Purpose, Values and Vision. It’s not imposed. It’s something that as a Church it is intended, we can all agree and commit to. It is hoped that it would enable our flourishing as a Church. But for that to happen we all need to be travelling in the same direction. This framework is an assist. We know – and finally trust – that Christ is the Head of the Church. And it is on him we must always focus if we are to stay on track (John 14. 5-6). If you have thoughts, questions or comments please speak to one of the wardens, Andrea or Rita, or to Allan - or Gerri before she goes.

**Our purpose** is to worship God,  
to grow disciples of all ages and  
to show his love in our communities.

**Values** We aim to be:  
Prayerfully dependant on God  
Genuine, respectful, generous and kind  
Welcoming, available and engaged.

**Our vision** as a church is:  
To be growing and spiritually alive  
To have strengthened links with our school and community  
To be a building that is welcoming, warm and flexible  
To make the church grounds attractive and of service to the community  
To be committed to deeper and more genuine relationships.

# The Bible at a Glance

Many of us at Christ Church, have fondest memories of the **Rev. Canon Roy Lawrence** and his wife Eira, who regularly attended services even though they travelled to many places leading conferences, missions and ‘days away’ both in the UK and overseas. We especially remember Roy as key advisor to the Christian Healing Ministry whose denominations of Churches cover the entire UK.



Roy read classics and theology at Oxford and Cambridge before his ordination in 1959. Roy was a very popular Christian writer and broadcaster and during his life published 14 books on the subject of divine healing and prayer. He worked tirelessly right up to his death on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 aged 86.

Roy certainly had a genius for classics and theology. One Sunday service about ten years ago, Roy gave all of us in the congregation a single sheet of paper and just on one side he had explained the entire Bible; Roy’s notes are priceless and I treasure them always, here is what he said...

## **The Bible at a glance – notes by Canon Roy Lawrence**

As you read this page, have the contents table of a Bible open in front of you (in the Good News Bible it follows the preface).

There are 66 books (39 Old Testament, 27 New Testament) so it is a library rather than a single book, and yet it has a unity and a pattern. As I see it, there are 5 major sections, preceded by a prologue and followed by an epilogue.

**PROLOGUE Genesis 1 – 11** A glimpse of “Pre-History” sets the scene.

Important truths about the Nature of God, the Nature of man, God’s purpose in creation and what has gone wrong.

**SECTION ONE — From Genesis 12 to Esther**, the STORY of ISRAEL (in Genesis the family of Israel, in Exodus onwards the Nation of Israel).

Main Events and dates: Abraham comes to Palestine **c 1900 BC**. The Israelites are enslaved in Egypt **c 1700-1250 BC**, Exodus back to Palestine **c 1250-1210 BC**, **180** years of “Judges”, **100** years of United Monarchy (**Saul c 1030 -1010 BC**, **David c 1010 – 970 BC**, **Solomon c 970 – 931 BC**), followed by a Divided

Monarchy (Reheboam and his successors in the South, Jereboam and his successors in the North), The Northern Kingdom is conquered by Syria **c 722 BC** and scattered throughout the world. The Southern Kingdom (Judea) is conquered by Babylon **c 587 – 586 BC** and its people go into exile. The exiles are allowed back to Jerusalem **c 538** where they live mainly under Persian rule till **c 333 BC**. Followed by Greek rule to **c 166 BC**, Jewish rule till **c 63 BC**, and Roman rule up to and into New Testament times.

The Jews have a wide experience during this time (power / helplessness, victory / defeat, faith / faithlessness, suffering / deliverance).

## **SECTION TWO — Five Theme Books**

**Job** (suffering), **Psalms** (worship), **Proverbs** (practical wisdom), **Ecclesiastes** (doubt), **Song of Songs** (sexual love).

**SECTION THREE — THE PROPHETS** foretelling the significance of national and international events.

Four major Prophets, Isiah, Jeremiah (Lamentations), Ezekiel, Daniel, and twelve minor Prophets from Hosea to Malachi.

The Prophets all teach that God's purpose is not yet complete. There is more divine action to come. So they point the way to the New Testament.

## **SECTION FOUR — the story of the New Israel - CHRIST AND HIS FOLLOWERS.**

The four Gospels and the book of Acts

## **SECTION FIVE — Personal Christianity**

Letters by St. Paul and others (from Romans to Jude). The application of the Bible truths for those who are trying and testing it for themselves. [A practical aid for US!](#)

## **EPILOGUE – Revelation**

A glimpse of “Post-History”, which looks into the future to the intersection of time and eternity. In spite of the destructive power of evil, God's purpose will ultimately triumph.

I have several books written by Roy and certainly one for your library is Plain Truths about Life, Faith and Healing – A collection of inspirational articles by Roy Lawrence; ISBN 978-1 912804-95-5 or go to [www.plain-truth.org.uk](http://www.plain-truth.org.uk)

*Colin Dooley*

## A little music goes a long way

As I mentioned in an earlier magazine, our Father Willis organ has its own YouTube channel. We now have some 140 videos on the channel, ranging from hymn tunes and meditative music right through to film themes and even Bohemian Rhapsody! We hit the watershed of 100,000 “hits” just before Christmas and have since climbed to 118,000. It’s wonderful to receive comments on these videos from literally all over the world. They’ve come from the Amazon, the southern tip of India and South Korea as well as from people in countries much closer to home, particularly Germany and the USA. The overwhelming message is that people from all sorts of places and backgrounds love the many beautiful sounds of our vintage Willis organ.

Soon after Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February 2022 a young German composer, Paul Fey, wrote a very moving piece of music called ‘Prayer for Peace’ in response to the invasion. I immediately got hold of a copy of the sheet music (in just a few clicks, thanks to the internet) and played it as a reflection piece during a service in March 2022. I later uploaded a video of it to YouTube, not expecting the situation in Ukraine to run on like it has done.

One particular comment I received In December 2022 really stood out. A lady called Tatiana was thanking me for a video of the love theme from ‘Cinema Paradiso’ which I’d recently uploaded. She’d previously sent me a message about another video but I noticed that, unusually, she’d since changed her YouTube “handle”. I hadn’t previously known where in the world she was but, in this latest message, she revealed that she was messaging me from Odessa in Ukraine. She’d been taking some comfort from the music during that night’s blackout of the city, under continuing threat of missile attack. I was amazed and humbled that a little part of Christ Church had penetrated such a dark corner of the world at such a dark time. I was even more amazed that, with so much else for her to worry about, Tatiana had taken the trouble to send me a “thank you”.

Since then I’ve joined other organists from around the world in offering our own versions of the Ukrainian National Anthem via YouTube. The recording from Christ Church was done by candlelight, in solidarity with those many people throughout Ukraine, like Tatiana, who continue to endure blackouts and the constant threat of attack. A little music can indeed go a long way ... emotionally, spiritually, and (thanks to the internet) physically as well.

*Paul Broadhurst*

## Ukrainian refugees in Wirral receive free English classes

The 24th February 2023, marked the anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in a major escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian War, which began in 2014. The invasion has caused tens of thousands of deaths and instigated Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II.

Abi Williams is qualified as a CELTA teacher (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults), who noticed there were a number of Ukrainian people locally who wanted to learn English. Abi said, "Following on from the start of the war in February 2022, and the homes for Ukraine scheme, I realised



there was a lack of immediate English language provision for refugees arriving in Wirral. Having recently completed my CELTA qualification; at the beginning of May, I set up a free English language class for Ukrainian refugees, initially in the Green Community Shop and Centre in Oxton Village."

As more Ukrainian refugees arrived in Wirral and word spread of these classes, the numbers began to grow. Abi was put in touch with Christ Church, who were willing and able to provide a more suitable space for the growing group. Most of the student also attend other ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) classes. However, many are still on waiting lists for accredited courses, due to limited class numbers and despite living here for around six months.

Abi continued, "Our group is a safe space to come and meet others while learning some essential English language skills. Some of the students have now found work here thanks to their dedication to learning the language. Some have also moved on from their host families into their own accommodation. Lessons are completely free and unfunded. They are provided voluntarily by a CELTA-qualified teacher and take place every Tuesday morning at Christ Church via the community entrance.

Some of the students spoke of their experience of learning English with Abi. One said, “I really appreciate the teacher’s help and support in the UK! It’s more than just lessons: it’s communication and lovely spending time together.”

Another said, “These are not just lessons, Abi knows how to create such a warm, kind atmosphere. The lessons are highly professional, I look forward to every Tuesday. I spoke about our lessons in the Job Centre, our council, our re-settlement social worker – they all wrote down this information. Abi, thank you so much for your work and your wonderful heart.”

And a third said, “Now i feel more familiar with English life and I’m not afraid to speak with native speakers. In your classes, Abi, I found new Ukrainian friends. I learned a lot in warm and good company.”

*Adapted from the Birkenhead News, 24th February 2023*

*Image: www.fotopiaimages.com*



## **Spring is sprung!**

**It was a grey day, but the daffodils are coming up in Birkenhead Park.  
Do go down and see them!**

# Darkside ...

## A Musical Introduction to Ethics and Philosophy



I was a teenager/student from the 60's into the 70's and music was always an important part of my life. One genre, progressive rock, was often dismissed by the majority. In 1973, the band Pink Floyd released the LP "Dark Side of the Moon". It broke many boundaries with massive sales, becoming the fifth most popular album in history and still appearing in Album Charts.

I remember being a student and often listening in a dark room, trying to understand the imagery within this music. I was therefore very pleased to learn in 2013 that the BBC had produced a radio drama, Darkside, written by Tom Stoppard which was based on and used the music from the album.

It was a real surprise when I listened and discovered that Stoppard had written the story around a philosophy student, Emily. It follows her emotional journey in a "dream" state where she encounters several ethical and philosophical questions. Along the way she is guided, and at times maybe mis-guided, by her teacher and doctor (Bill Nighy).

The drama develops in an almost humorous manner, including many standard ethical scenario. As the story reaches its conclusion, Emily focuses on "What is the Good?". An interesting question for us all, but hopefully we will not experience the same journey as Emily. My wife, Gill, always looking for new media to teach her "A" level Philosophy students used it on occasions to help their studies.

If you are interested in listening, the play is available on-line, but I do have the CD and Script if you would like to borrow them. There is the very infrequent expletive, but it can be overlooked and does not distract from the story.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z06tu58oePA>

*Rob Perry*



**To worship God, to share Jesus,  
and to serve the community**

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**Our next magazine will be published  
at the beginning of June.**

**Contributions  
by the middle of May please.**

***Paul Rees, Editor,  
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