

St Olave's Church, Gatcombe

April 2024



Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia

Isn't that a wonderful statement and response? It sums up the excitement and hope of Easter morning after the despair of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Each year it seems just as exciting as it was last year and the year before. He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

There are lots of inspiration phrases that are repeated both in the church and in ordinary life. Some are very simple and often repeated as everyday phrases and some deserve a little more thought.

How nice is it when you are struggling with something, if a friend, or even a teacher or maybe a supervisor says, "You can do this" or even "You've got this." How encouraging when someone has faith in your efforts. I must say, I have even been know to say this to myself!!!! "Come on, you can do this!" Self encouragement, probably no bad thing. So much better than my school reports that often read "Can do better." A depressing and trite phrase that immediately makes you feel you can't be bothered as you were doing your best anyway.

When my husband died many cards and letters said, "You and your family are in our thoughts and prayers." A phrase that is often used and can be a bit trite, but when it is truly meant is comforting and helpful to read.

Another phrase that people often use is "He (or she) means well." How condemning is that? So critical and one not to be used again, I think. Not encouraging at all.

So, what other phrases can we use that are better and more inspirational and cause our hearts to be lifted? I was interested to read that the Welsh Processional Cross, specially made for the Coronation, had three little phrases engraved on the back of the cross, taken from the last sermon of Saint David, Patron Saint of Wales. This cross was special as it was multi denominational and would be used by all churches in Wales. The engraving said three things:-

Be Joyful.
Keep the faith.
Do the little things.

How wonderful. Three phrases that are a blueprint for a happy and fulfilled life.

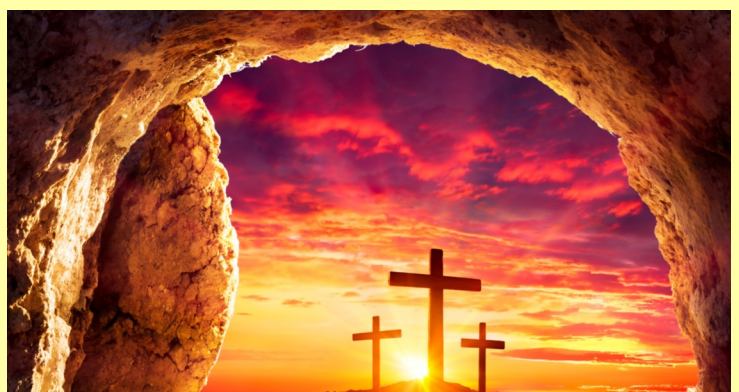
I loved the fact that Saint David put 'Be joyful' first. Perfect.

Second... 'Keep the faith' An instruction to live a life with and for Jesus, who is risen so we can all reply, "He is risen indeed."

Lastly.... "Do the little things." Don't worry about *where to start* and *what comes next* and *shall we ever manage it* and *isn't life overwhelming*. Just start small. Jesus started in Bethlehem, very small, as a little baby.
What a brilliant life lesson to start small.

We started small on Easter morning, in our small parish church on the small Isle of Wight, but when we loudly replied, "He is risen indeed. Alleluia" it was echoed the whole world over.

Harriet Robinson



In Your Prayers...

Dear Lord as spring approaches, the mornings are getting lighter. We appreciate how wonderful it is to greet another morning full of hope for the coming day.

We pray for all the people in war torn countries throughout the world and who must be waking up each day with dread and fear. We should all count our blessings.

Maggie Puckett



Services at St Olave's in April

Sunday 7 April	11am	Holy Communion
Sunday 14 April	11am	Morning Worship (Please stay for coffee and cake.)
Sunday 21 April	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 28 April	11am	Holy Communion

Mothering Sunday

All Mothers, present and past, those caring as Mothers, Mothers in difficulties or sad and in war zones were celebrated at St Olave's Mothering Sunday Service.

The congregation were few in number and, sadly, no children were present which was a shame as Richard Smout, Lay Reader in our Benefice, conducted a beautiful, thoughtful and sensitive Morning Worship. His talk, as always, was well considered, informative and pertinent in a relaxed way.

After being blessed, little posies of camellias and daffodils were distributed to everyone and all were invited to stay, after the Service, for coffee, chat and Maggie's delicious cakes.

What a lovely way to celebrate Mothering Sunday.

Hilary Jones



Easter Palm Sunday

It was so lovely to see the sun shining on Palm Sunday for the walk with a donkey.

We all assembled in the chapel at Carisbrooke Castle and as there were so many people there it was a squeeze. I was lucky enough to have a seat in the back row where the seats are individual with curved backs and you felt a little like a monk - although thank goodness it wasn't a misericord. The combined choir was in the balcony. Some of the children had home-made palm staves to wave and all had palm crosses.

After a short service and some great hymns, the crosses were blessed and we all filed out into the courtyard, and there was Jack, the donkey. A cross and St Mary's Church Banner were held aloft and Revd Emma, Revd Steve and Jack led us down the hill and up Carisbrooke High Street to cross over to the church where we joined the rest of the congregation. Jack made a brief appearance in the church and received a round of applause.

The Holy Communion service now continued in the church, with Ann and Richard Smout reading the very long, but interesting, Lesson. Steve Brett-Hill give us a homily which he had written from the view point of the donkey, what the donkey felt about Palm Sunday and about being ridden by Jesus, and how, when he was walking past just a few days later and saw Jesus on the cross. It was beautifully written and was very special for Palm Sunday.

The sun was still shining when we left the church and I thumbed a lift back up the very steep hill to the castle and my car.

A happy and joyous service before the sadness of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Harriet Robinson



Maundy Thursday

As we gathered on Maundy Thursday evening, we first shared a simple soup, bread, and cheese supper, setting the tone for our reflective communion service. Seated around the tables, we savoured nourishment and fellowship, mindful of the solemnity.

Transitioning from sustenance to spirituality, and led by Reverends Emma and Steve, we washed each other's hands during the service—a symbolic act mirroring Christ's humility at the Last Supper. With gentle touches and quiet reverence, we embraced the essence of service and love.

As the communion service commenced, each element—the bread, the wine—symbolized Christ's sacrifice and unwavering love. Some stayed on for a quiet vigil but as we all left St Olave's uplifted, we carried with us the profound message of Maundy Thursday—love, humility, and the transformative power of Christ's selfless service. *Leonie Terry*



Easter Day

What an early start we had for the Dawn Service on Easter Sunday morning. With the clock change to British Summer Time the 6.30am service felt, of course, like 5.30.

There was no rain however and we sat round the fire bowl in the churchyard and listened to the dawn chorus as our service began. The birds excelled themselves especially, I think, for Easter Sunday.



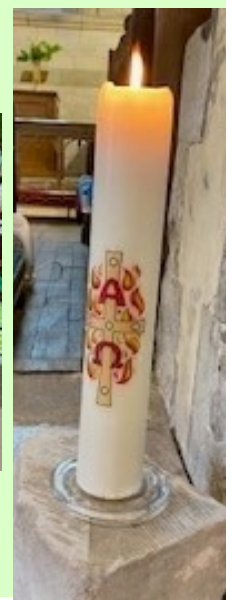
The Pascal Candle was lit from the fire bowl - I remembered the spills this year to do this - and we processed into the church for the rest of the service with Revd Steve putting on his white surplice and embroidered stole over his black cassock as the Easter Story progressed, from the despair of Good Friday to the joy of Easter Day. As the congregation left, we shared lovely little Easter eggs so those of us who gave up chocolate for Lent could enjoy it again.

Later we met again for the 11am service. The church looked amazing with all the wonderful flower arrangements after the austerity of Lent. A special thank you to all the flower arrangers who made it look so beautiful. An Easter sermon reminded us that although there were wars in the world at the moment, although global warming and the environment was a worry and although the Sycamore Gap Tree had been felled in an act of vandalism, there were green shoots of hope and recovery in the world, just as the sycamore tree put out small shoots again. The blessing of our Lord's Resurrection on Easter Sunday was a sign of his love and care for the world in these troubled times. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.



After more chocolate, the congregation departed for home having enjoyed a hopeful and heart-warming Easter Sunday service.

Harriet Robinson



Memories of Canon Fuller.

It is with sadness that we have learned of the death of Canon Graham Fuller after a short illness.

Graham and his wife, Rachel have been great supporters of St Olave's Church for many years, occasionally as members of the congregation and often attending other social events such as coffee mornings, Christmas markets and 'Tea at the Ritz', to name but a few.

Canon Fuller was particularly helpful during our interregnum when the Revd John Russell moved to a parish in Northumberland. He was always happy to take services, and it was a joy to listen to his thought-provoking sermons. I for one always left his services feeling uplifted and spiritually refreshed.

His links with St Olaves go back even further to when he kept bees and, as a member of the of the IOW Beekeepers' Association, he and Rachel attended meetings often involving afternoon tea with Rob Marshall and David Belben (both members of the church). Their friendships with both families continued for many years.

Canon Fuller was a gentle and extremely kind person who will be missed. Our thoughts are with Rachel, his children and grandchildren at this time.

Carolyn Hoyle

A photo of Canon Fuller baptising my granddaughter Polly, using the original font at the back of the church.



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