



# The Edgehill Churches

## Parish Link

Loving  
God,  
Serving  
People,  
Growing  
Community

### “Good Friday Just Got Better!”

May 2017

“Good Friday Just Got Better!” was the Tesco Bank Holiday slogan which went with their ‘Great Offers on Beer and Cider’, on the day when Christians remember the crucifixion of Jesus. After complaints, including an influential one describing it as ‘unnecessarily ignorant’ and an ‘RE fail’ from the vicar, broadcaster and tweeter the Reverend Richard Coles, Tesco quickly apologised and withdrew it. The slogan reminded me of the ancient pagan motto: ‘Eat, drink and be merry – for tomorrow we die’. It’s a motto which tries to catch the futility of life. If all we have is a finite life, without hope, then the best thing to do is enjoy yourself as much as you can before you die. Large parts of our society seek to do just that today.



It’s a mood that would have been familiar to the disciples of Jesus on the original Good Friday. After following him for three years, convinced that he was a saviour sent by God, they saw his mission end in disaster. According to the New Testament, these close followers mostly ran away at the crunch point, ‘they all forsook him and fled’ say the Gospels. The Roman Centurion presiding over the barbaric execution on a cross, said, after Jesus died, ‘Truly this man was the son of God’, but in the original Greek language of the Gospels it’s clear that this is a past tense: he might have been the son of God, but he’s not any more; he *was*, but is no longer. And in one of the best-known Easter stories, two disciples leaving Jerusalem a few days later, heading to a town called Emmaus, told a stranger they met on the road about Jesus, and concluded ‘we *had* hoped’ he was the one. Past tense again. Hope was gone, and they were on the verge of despair.

For them on that first, bleak, Good Friday, ‘Eat, drink and be merry – for tomorrow we die’ probably seemed like a good option. Drowning their sorrows, escaping from the world, might look an attractive possibility when you’ve lost all hope.

A world around us which can look very frightening, with rumours of nuclear war surfacing again and the unknowns of life outside the EU in front of us (whether you voted for it or not), along with, perhaps, more personal anxieties too, might lead us to take the same option and seek escape from the world. In which case offers on beer and cider might be a way of making the bleakness of Good Friday feel a little better.

But, you might ask, if it’s such a bleak, hopeless day, why do we call it *Good* Friday? Surely it ought to be *Bad* Friday instead?

It’s wisely been said that life must be lived forwards but it can only be understood backwards. Things can look pretty hopeless around us. It’s in retrospect that we see there were signs of hope. So it is with Good Friday. If the cross had been the end of the story of Jesus, then the despair might be the right conclusion. But, of course, something happened three days later that changed the bad Friday into a good one.

A small group of women, going in the early grey dawn of Jerusalem to complete the work of preparing Jesus’ body for full burial, which they had not yet had time to do, found the tomb empty. A wild hope was born, and within a few days a large number of people were reporting that they had seen Jesus, risen from the dead, including those travellers to Emmaus who recognised him as he broke bread with them in a familiar way.

The message that Jesus had risen from the dead said, loud and clear, that life conquers death, love wins over hate, and that evil does not have the last word. Bad Friday became, in retrospect, Good Friday. The Easter message is not about the absence of evil, or the avoidance of it, but about facing it full on and finding it’s not the end. The Christian good news is not about putting your fingers in your ears and singing to keep your spirits up. It’s about finding hope in the most hopeless places. Christian celebration is an affirmation of hope, not a means of staving off despair.

For Christians the Easter season lasts 50 days. It balances the 40-days of self-denial in Lent with an extravagant period of celebration. Which means that the beer and cider (and possibly other beverages, not to mention chocolate) might be handy after all.

So perhaps we can raise a toast, in this Easter season, to the triumph of life over death, love over evil, hope over despair; and to the fact that in the resurrection of Jesus Good Friday really did get better.

Rev Richard Cooke

#### Churches’ Contact Details:

**Priest-in-Charge:** The Rev Barry Jackson  
Tel: 01926 640248

Email: [barry@edgehillchurches.org](mailto:barry@edgehillchurches.org)

**Associate Minister** (part time) -

The Rev Canon Dr Richard Cooke  
Tel: 07952 544820

Email: [richard.cooke@covcofe.org](mailto:richard.cooke@covcofe.org)

**Benefice Web Site** [www.edgehillchurches.org](http://www.edgehillchurches.org)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/edgehillchurches](http://www.facebook.com/edgehillchurches)

## MAY SERVICES IN THE EDGEHILL PARISHES

|                  | Kineton            |                            | Combroke            | Radway               | Ratley                            | Warmington           | Shotteswell         |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 7 <sup>th</sup>  | 8.30am<br>BCP Comm | 10.30am<br>Morning Worship |                     | 8.30am<br>Communion  | 10.30am<br>Communion with Baptism |                      | 8:30am<br>BCP Comm  |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> |                    | 10.30am<br>Communion       | 9.00am<br>Communion |                      | 5.40pm<br>Compline                | 10.30am<br>Communion | 8.30am<br>Communion |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> | 8.30am<br>BCP Comm | 10.30am<br>Morning Worship |                     | 10.30pm<br>Communion | 6.30pm<br>Communion               | 10.30am<br>Communion | 8.30am<br>Communion |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> |                    | 10.30am<br>Communion       |                     |                      | 6.30pm<br>Evensong                |                      | 8.30am<br>Communion |

### SIMPLY CELEBRATE

Sunday 30th April 10am  
St Peter's Kineton



Come for **breakfast** to begin the service. A time with God for everyone, with drama, puppets, activities, fun, songs and more. A time with God for everyone, with crafts, puppets, games, fun, songs and more.



**SATURDAY 20<sup>th</sup> May at 4pm,**  
at Kineton Primary School

A time with God plus crafts, games, activities and fun for all the family plus a hot meal together.

More info from Sarah on  
sarah.jackson05@hotmail.co.uk

### Meet & Eat

Tuesday 2nd May 12 'til 2pm  
in Kineton Methodist Hall

More info: Diana 07749 599211 or Chris 01926 640904

### MIDWEEK ECUMENICAL SERVICE

Thursday 4th May at 11am  
at St Peter's Church Kineton

A monthly ecumenical communion service with traditional hymns played on the organ.



### REFLECTIVE SERVICE

Sunday 28th May at 6pm  
St Peter's Kineton

Exploring ways of knowing God through contemplative prayer



### THE EDGEHILL MASTERS GOLF TOURNAMENT

Sunday 11th June at 2pm at The  
Warwickshire Golf Course

A **fun**, handicapped tournament for people of all standards.

We'll be playing 9 holes on a par 3 course (*clubs provided if needed*) followed by a meal together and a **prize giving** with a wide range of prizes including the

**Edgehill Masters men's and ladies' jackets!**

The total cost including the meal and the round of golf is only £20 per person.

Any surplus finance from the event will go to The Multiple Sclerosis Society.

**Places are limited so please book early.**

To book places or for more information please contact Barry on edgehill.events@gmail.com or 01926 640248



### THRIVE

A group for young people from 9-12 years old  
**Meeting on Sunday 7th May**  
from 6:00-7.30pm at St Peters Church, Kineton  
Have fun with friends and learn more about God!  
Contact Eira 07837 064081

### CONNECT

A new group for 12-15 year olds  
on 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays of the month

Films, video clips, pizza, chill & chat about  
God, life, the universe and everything.

**Next Meeting: Sunday 7th May 6 to 7:30pm**

More details Sarah at sarah.jackson05@hotmail.co.uk



Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May  
7pm to 9pm in Kineton

A one session course that explores the vows we make in a wedding service Everyone Welcome.

For more details contact Jane Hill on 01926 641024



### CHURCH IN THE PUB

**Rose & Crown, Ratley Sunday 11th JUNE 6pm**

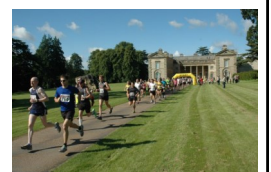
Each month we explore a theme or story from the news as part of our service which includes a discussion as well as some time together in prayer.

**Please note there will be no meeting in May**

### COMPTON VERNEY HALF MARATHON

Sunday 2nd July at 9.30am

Starting and finishing at Compton Verney. If you would like to help marshal please contact Alex Gunn on 01926 642589



### Ascension Day Communion



Thursday 25th May at 10.30am  
at St Laurence's Church Shotteswell  
A special service for Ascension Day