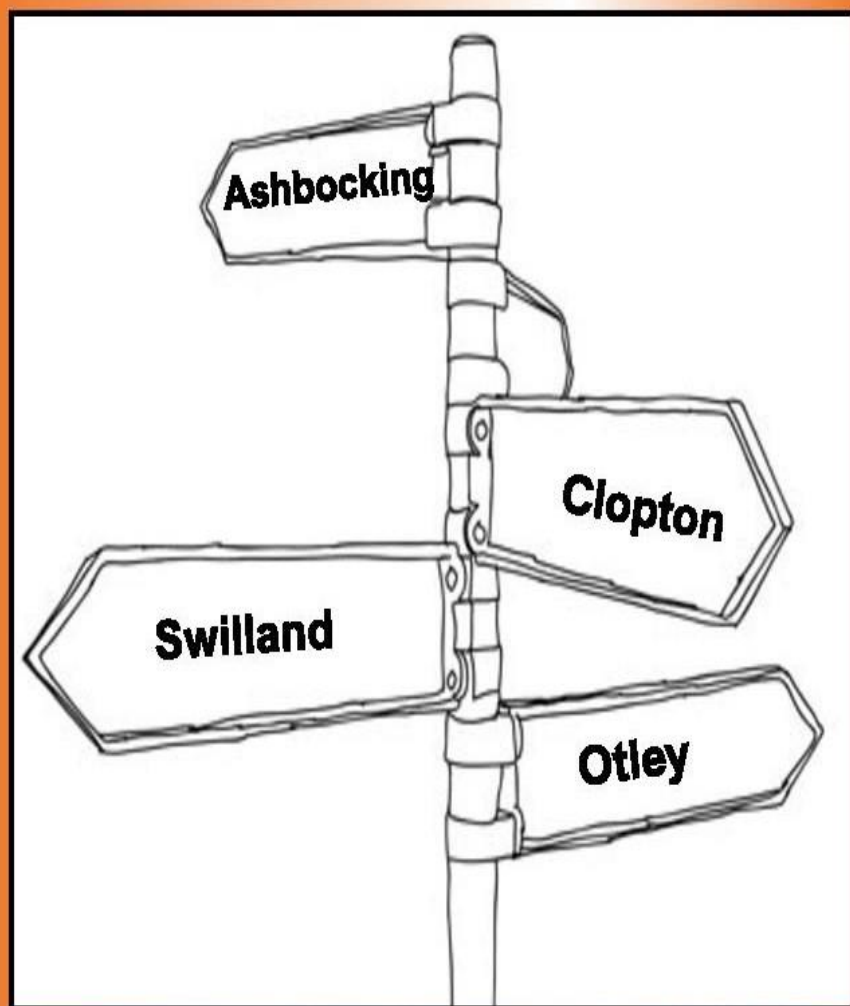


# *The Signpost*



*News from the Parishes*

## A Word from The Editor.....



Welcome to the **March** edition.

What a busy month we have - Mother's Day, Easter, St Patrick's Day, Crufts and The Great Daffodil Appeal. Good job the clocks spring forward so we have more time to fit everything in. There are also plenty of offerings in our villages with church services, coffee mornings and other fundraisers, all of the details for these are in the magazine. March always seems to be a month for doing, as you feel inspired by the lighter and longer days. There is always plenty to do in the garden this time of year too! Whatever you are up to, I hope that you have a good March!

If there is anything else you would like to see within next year's magazine, or if you would like to advertise or promote upcoming events that you are a part of, please do get in touch using my contact details below.

If you would like any special birthdays, exam results or anniversaries celebrated, then please do let me know and I will include in the next month's magazine.

**The next Signpost will be the April issue,**  
**With a deadline of 24<sup>th</sup> March 24.**

To register to receive The Signpost via email, each month,  
please email me at [bakergirl174@gmail.com](mailto:bakergirl174@gmail.com)

News of the Carlford Churches and details of online Worship can be found on the website [carlfordchurches.org](http://carlfordchurches.org) and within the Mini Grapevine. If you would like to receive the Mini-Grapevine weekly via email, please register via the website [carlfordchurches.org](http://carlfordchurches.org) or with [amy@carlfordchurches.org](mailto:amy@carlfordchurches.org). There are links on the Carlford Churches website to the Facebook page, Mini-Grapevine and The Signpost. The Carlford Churches Facebook page can be accessed directly <http://facebook.com/carlfordchurches>.

Should you wish to speak with a member of the benefice team,  
please telephone 01473 735183.

*Wishing my Mum and all mums a very Happy Mother's Day*

*I hope that you all enjoy a very Happy Easter too!*

*Keep safe and take care till next month.....*

*Amy*

# March

## *A Spike of Green*

When I went out  
The sun was hot  
It shone upon  
My flower pot.

And there I saw  
A spike of green  
That no one else  
Had ever seen!

On other days  
The things I see  
Are mostly old  
Except for me.

But this green spike  
So new and small  
Had never yet  
Been seen at all!

*Barbara Baker*

*from All Day Long  
compiled by Pamela Whitlock*



## Things to do this March

We may all have rather mixed feelings on reaching March this year. On the one hand, it is lovely to see the onset of Spring, but the wars in Ukraine and Israel-Gaza grind on, as does the cost-of-living crisis. We may need to find new ways to keep going, so here are some suggestions that draw on both science and Christian theology.

### Getting outside



Time outdoors in a natural environment is very good for you – and you can't argue with the happy hormones produced by exercise. Attending to the details of nature can also inspire awe, which has been linked to positive mood, and increased life satisfaction. Enjoying Creation can also help us connect with God.

### Looking outside

If you are truly stuck indoors, try putting bird feeders outside your window so creation comes to you. This is also an act of kindness (see below)!

### Lament and praise

The Psalms are a rich resource to help us express both our grief and our thanks to God. Try reading one or two each day.

### Journaling

Keep a journal of thoughts, experiences or practices you have engaged with during the day. Constructing a personal narrative or story is now recognised as a very powerful psychological and spiritual tool for building resilience. It is also a vital learning tool that we can go back to when tough times return in the future.



### Acts of kindness

Helping or encouraging someone else is obviously a good thing to do in itself, but it also has a very positive effect on the giver – spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and even physically. Whichever way you look at it, finding new ways to show kindness to others can be a very effective way to help ourselves feel better too.

### Gratitude

Gratitude is another natural drug – in a sense – that can help us feel better. Try keeping a grateful diary, adding a few things each day.

All of these activities are deeply rooted in our physical and mental makeup. You may have forgotten how great they feel, especially in times of sadness, but we can learn from children who do them very naturally.



## Brain teasers



### How Y's are you?

The Y and wherefore of the little game below is to add a Y to each word given. You can rearrange the letters to form a new word. For example, you can add a Y to THOU, re-arrange and you get YOUTH. This is a good chance to Y's up on your anagramability.

- 1 Bass
- 2 Grind
- 3 Idle
- 4 Drone
- 5 Rang

(Solutions on Page 32)

### The Consequences of Turning Down a Social Invitation



77 per cent of us have accepted an invitation to an activity that we did not want to attend.

But according to recent research at West Virginia University, we may be over-estimating the anger and disappointment we will cause if we say no.

As one researcher confessed: "I was once invited to an event that I absolutely did not want to attend, but I attended anyway because I was nervous that the person who invited me would be upset if I did not, and that appears to be a common experience. Our research shows, however, that the negative ramifications of saying no are much less severe than we expect."

The recent study found that, as long as the person who refuses the invitation provides a reasonable explanation, then any anger or disappointment is greatly

"There are many things in life that will catch your eye, but only a few will catch your heart..... pursue those."

- Michael Nolan



reduced. That is good news to those of us who are struggling to cope with the commitments and events we already have at present.



As one doctor said, “Burnout is a real thing... don’t be afraid to turn down invitations here and there. But keep in mind that spending time with others is how relationships develop, so don’t decline every invitation.”

### 7<sup>th</sup> March - Perpetua and Felicitas, Joyful Martyrs of Africa



This story could come straight out of modern Africa. Perpetua was a young married woman of 22 who had recently become a Christian. But the authorities had forbidden any new conversions, and soon she and some other catechumens were arrested and sentenced to death. This was not under Islamic State, nor Boko Haram, but under the emperor Septimius Severus in Carthage, in the year 203.

Imprisoned with Perpetua was a pregnant slave, Felicitas, and seven men. Perpetua’s family were frantic with worry for her, so she sent a message to reassure them: “My prison became a palace for me, and I would rather have been there than anywhere else.” As the days passed Perpetua devoted herself to prayer, and experienced various visions depicting the spiritual battle storming around her.

Soon Felicitas gave birth to a girl in the prison, and she and Perpetua enjoyed a last *agape* meal together. On the day of the Games they left the prison for the ‘joyfully as though they were on their way to heaven.’ Perpetua sang a hymn of praise as animals were prepared for killing the prisoners: leopards and bears for the men, and a maddened heifer for the women. The heifer did not succeed in killing them, and after the young women exchanged one final kiss of peace, Perpetua herself guided the gladiator’s knife to her throat: “It was as though so great a woman... could not be despatched unless she herself were willing.”



Perpetua and Felicitas's joyful witness and unflinching courage went on to inspire many other early Christian martyrs. Down the centuries, the feast day of Perpetua and Felicitas became widely observed. In 1907 an inscription in their honour was discovered at Carthage in the Basilica Majorum, where they had been buried centuries before. Their memory still lives on: eight episodes of Perpetua's life are represented on a 14<sup>th</sup> century altar frontal at Barcelona.



### **Plant of the Month**

*Last year we looked out for wildlife in our gardens, this year we will look at the ideal plants for some all year colour in your garden.*

#### **Prunus Cerasifera 'Nigra'**



This is a very popular tree for a small garden – it grows fast and puts out a cloud of charming pale pink flowers that are guaranteed to liven up a grey day. If the tree gets too big, prune in summer to avoid silver leaf.

**Flowers:** March to April

**H & S:** 10m X 10m

### **What Can You Forage for This Month?**

**Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)** - Chickweed is an overlooked and underrated weed with cleansing and healing properties and is packed full of vitamins and minerals. Chickweed is a common plant that can be used in salads.

- ❖ **How to use it:** it's tender leaves can go in salads with lemon and olive oil dressing. Blend into homemade pesto or use to liven up fish or chicken. The tiny white, edible flowers make a pretty salad garnish.
- ❖ **What to look for:** it's a tough, creeping annual common throughout the UK on waste ground and in gardens. It's abundant throughout the year from



spring to late autumn. Look for its small, star-like white flowers. Look for it from February – March.

**Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)** - The name of this plant literally means lion's tooth (*dent de lion*) probably referring to its jagged leaf edges. It's long been associated with folklore and herbal medicine and is probably best known for its diuretic effect. All parts of dandelion are edible and can be eaten raw or cooked.



- ❖ **How to use it:** all parts of this slightly bitter plant are edible, both raw and cooked. Add young leaves to salads, sandwiches or pies. Flowers can be used in many dishes from risotto to omelettes, for decoration and to make beer and wine. Unopened buds can be marinated and used like capers. Roots can also be thrown into stir-fries or added to vegetable dishes, or try making dandelion coffee by drying then grinding the roots.
- ❖ **What to look for:** really common, easy to identify and found almost everywhere. Young leaves from the centre of the rosette are best – the dark outer leaves may be too bitter. They first appear in February.

**Goosegrass or Cleavers (*Galium aparine*)** - Easy to find and abundant, goosegrass is really starting to shoot up now. It's known by most people as the plant you throw on your friend's back. If you're going to eat this plant as a vegetable, it needs to be picked really young. This plant is in the Rubiaceae – the same family as the coffee plant. Now is a good time to pick the young shoots of goosegrass which can be eaten as a vegetable.

- ❖ **How to use it:** if you're eating this as a vegetable just use the fresh looking tops when the plant is very young before the seeds appear in summer. As the plant matures it becomes fibrous and bitter. Cook it as a green vegetable or add to soups, stews and pies. You can also eat the seeds. Wait until they've hardened, then roast and grind as a coffee substitute.
- ❖ **What to look for:** it's easy to identify – it has a square stem and is covered in tiny hooks. Look for it from February and March along hedges, path and roadsides, and waste ground.

Cleavers





## Otley and District Gardening Club

Dear Readers,

What a winter it's been so far. Wet, windy, and quite mild in comparison to previous years. The garden is starting to wake up with bulbs flowering, perennials starting to shoot, and the roses are also perking up with plenty of new growth on them.



We had a wonderful meal at the Otley White Hart on February 5<sup>th</sup> with 25 of our members enjoying the scrumptious food Lynda provided. She never lets us down. Thank you, Lynda! We always enjoy this gathering as a chance to sit and chat with the other members and meet new people with gardening as a passion.

This month's Otley and District Gardening Club meeting is at 19:30 at Otley Village Hall on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March and we welcome Steven Medley of Roselea Nursery. He will be talking about "A Year of Veg" so perfect for anyone interested in growing their own vegetables and fruit. I'm sure even the most seasoned gardener will come away with some useful tips and tricks to apply to their growing techniques.

So please come along if you're interested in the subject. Members are £2.00 and non-members are £4.00. Everyone is welcome. The raffle will take place as usual, and teas and coffees are served midway through.



We look forward to greeting you all at our next meeting.

*Phil Pollard,  
The Green Chairman, Otley and District Gardening Club.*

## NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

### ASHBOCKING

Hello from Ashbocking, I hope everyone has survived the rain, and continual flooding on the roads.



I always feel, when March arrives, we are nearly there. There being spring and summer. All the signs are there, bulbs pushing up to the light from their winter darkness, daffodils in abundance and the birds doing their thing; nest building, finding a mate etc etc. Of course, this does not mean March always has good weather as often winter gives us a last look. At least the days are getting longer, and I feel great hope during March, with anticipation of the summer months.

Easter is early this year and Lent is upon us. The Lent course started in Ashbocking last Tuesday evening and it was a delight to welcome people from across the parishes, we were fourteen in number led by James Hall using Christian Aid material. It was thought provoking, looking at the subject of poverty. There was much discussion on the subject, and it was good to hear people's thoughts and experiences. We meet every Tuesday evening at 7:30pm at Hawthorns, The Green, until Easter, and offer refreshments to all who would like to join us.



Other dates for the diary are;

**Coffee morning** at Hawthorns, on Friday March 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:30am- 12:00ish. Everyone welcome for coffee and cake and lots of chat.

**Knit and Stitch** is on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March, 10:00am - 12:00noon, also at Hawthorns.

**The Ashbocking Mothering Sunday service** is on Sunday March 10<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00am, and will be held back in the church for the first time since Christmas, with the hope it might be getting a little warmer. Everyone welcome. Refreshments will be available after the service.

A family service for **Palm Sunday** will also be in the church on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March at 11:00am. Refreshments available afterwards. Everyone very welcome.



Please note there is no service in Ashbocking Church this Easter. Due to the logistics of clergy being available in every church for the celebration of communion. We are joining with Swiland Church for the **Easter day** service on the 31<sup>st</sup> March at 11:00am. You are invited to come and will be made very welcome.

Now I must reveal the answer to last month's riddle...  
The answer is ..... **'Your Grandfather'** .

We wish you all a happy and joyful Easter and pray for Love and Peace in all places of the world where there is no hope of joy or happiness at this time.

*Linda Pollard*

*Tel 07887537152 if you require further information*

*Church Wardens: John Pollard 07786 803490 or Duncan Bray 07933 705350*

### **CLOPTON**

Spring is properly here and the 10<sup>th</sup> March is **Mothers Sunday**. Bunches of flowers will be distributed at the end of Clopton's 11am lay-led service. This is a family service, with cake and tea/coffee after the service. Bring along your children and grandchildren and celebrate your wonderful Mums!



**Easter Sunday** is also fast approaching. This year and next year, due to a lack of clergy, it has been decided that the parishes within the benefice will twin together for the service, taking it in turns to host the Easter Day service. We are twinned with Otley, and so this year we shall be sharing their service at the St. Mary's Church, Otley. This will be a Holy Communion service at 9.30am. Please

do come along to represent Clopton, and to enjoy their company and worship on Easter Day morning.

Great news!! The restoration of our heritage organ is underway! The instrument will be carefully dismantled and removed to a workshop for expert conditioning and restoration. A big “thank you” to those who kindly lent their strength to lifting the “stand-in” organ on and off the trailer - great work - and, most of all, to our master organ builder, Roger Pulham who is undertaking this whole project with so much skill and enthusiasm. For the period of time that the work takes, Roger has very kindly lent us the magnificent little organ of his own making (its base is shown in the photo), which is being positioned at the back of the church. Do come along to one of our services (2nd



Sunday of the month at 11am, and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 9.30am) to hear it being played. During the restoration, we shall unfortunately have to lock the church except for services but do feel free to contact us if you wish to enter the church at another time (01473 738357). There will also be a notice on the church door. This is the first time the organ has been fully restored since it



was first installed in the 1880s and it will be exciting to see the completion of a long-overdue project. Thank you so much to everyone for your kind and generous support, both through individual donations and also through attendance at all the fundraising events that we have laid on since the start of our campaign. We still have funds to raise, but we have been so touched by the generosity of our village community – this is a great thing that you have all been achieving for our parish church.

  
**FOR YOUR DONATION**

Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> February, we celebrated a very special occasion in the church year - Plough Sunday. This planned fund-raiser for the organ project was generously supported, and very well-attended. After last year's success, we decided to establish this festival as a firm fixture in the St. Mary's calendar, and we are so grateful to Richard Taylor for



coming along once again to give us a fascinating talk about ploughing over the years, with lots of local references. In turn, it gave the congregation the opportunity to give thanks for all that the agricultural community does for us, not only as a nation but locally as the most important aspect of our rural setting here in Suffolk. It was a very meaningful occasion, with rousing hymns and thoughtful prayers, rounded off by a shared ploughman's lunch at the back of the church, which everyone really enjoyed. If you missed it this year, come along next year!



Another hugely successful Village Ceilidh took place on 17<sup>th</sup> February, with the brilliant band “Once Bittern” – love the pun! The dancing was amazing, and everyone enjoyed the raffle and a delicious interval supper of pulled pork and roasted butternut squash baps followed by yummy homemade cakes. A great night out for all ages, and also fantastic support for the parish organ restoration



fund. £580 was raised, giving the fund a wonderful boost. The next Ceilidh will be on 18<sup>th</sup> May, with the “Hosepipe Band” so pop the date in your diaries – don’t miss the fun!

The plaque for the repositioning of the altar, marking the late Queen Elizabeth II’s Platinum Jubilee is now in position beside the altar, completing this successful project, made possible by the grant from the Suffolk Historic Churches trust, to whom we are very grateful. (The plaque is straight; the photographer was wonky, trying to avoid a self-portrait in the reflection!)



2024 had an uncertain start for the churches of our benefice with our priest moving away. As services now settle to a calmer norm, even though we are still without an incumbent, we shall, as planned, be reading the names of those from Clopton who fell in the two wars at the end of our services including, of course, the Americans from the 493rd Bomb Group stationed at Debach Airfield who lost their lives. Information about many of these men is available in our Heritage Centre which was set up by Doris Main at the back of the church, and which contains so much information about our village. With the church closed during the restoration of the organ, access will not be as easy, but do spend some time, once the church is open again, browsing through the folders. It is well worth it.

You will by now be familiar with our QR code, linking you directly to the giving page for the Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Clopton, and enabling you to donate directly via your smart phone, should you feel able to do so. Any donation, large or small, helps us to maintain this beautiful building and the churchyard, and is very much appreciated. Thank you very much.



And here's a reminder of our regular get-togethers, held between 10.00am - 12.00pm, in the village hall (IP13 6QN).

- **Hobbies/Craft Group**, on the first Wednesday of each month, will take place on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March, with tea/coffee, biscuits and friendly chat. (Just £2 to cover the hall expenses).
- And our **parish coffee morning**, held every third Wednesday of the month, will be on 20th March. With free refreshments, enjoy the companionship, chat and cheer to be had amongst friends and neighbours. Everyone is most welcome.



Also, please join us for our friendly, **Parish Services**, held in St. Mary's Church, on the second and fourth Sundays of every month. In March they are as follows:

- Sunday, 10th March, is **Mothering Sunday**, with a lay-led service for all the family at 11am, followed by tea/coffee and home-made cake.
- Sunday, 24th March, we shall be celebrating **Holy Communion**, at 9.30am, and the service will be followed by refreshments and the chance for a friendly chat.
- **Easter Sunday** – 31<sup>st</sup> March, due to a lack of clergy, we shall be sharing with the Otley congregation at a 9.30am service at St. Mary's, Otley. (The plan is that next year we shall be returning the favour and they will attend in Clopton).

**HAPPY EASTER, EVERYONE!**

*Jenny Schurr*

**OTLEY**

It is raining again as I am writing, and the puddles are getting bigger on the road and in our garden. February has been very wet but mild like spring. Snowdrops and crocuses have been out for a while in our garden but now the daffodils are in bud, and some are already flowering. Despite the weather things have been happening.



We had a lovely service on February 4<sup>th</sup> which was taken by James and Helen played the organ again. We are very grateful to Helen for coming from her home in Woodbridge to play for us at our regular services on the first Sunday of the month and on other occasions like festival services.

## ? QUIZ TIME

A very successful quiz night took place in the village hall on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February which was masterminded by Ruth Farnhill with help from Ruthie Bullock and helpers in the kitchen on the day. Jonathan Farnhill looked after the bar and the quiz questions were set by Julie Baker and friend. As usual there was a tasty baked potato supper. Everyone seemed to enjoy the evening. The money raised after expenses were taken amounted to £700. Thanks to everyone who supported the event. Our **'cuppa and cake'** afternoons in the village hall are carrying on. This month it fell on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February which meant that it was Valentine's Day and this year also Ash Wednesday. A dozen people came and enjoyed cake and company, some who have been before and a couple who came for the first time. Next month we are meeting on Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of March.

Our next **service at Otley church** is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March at 9.30am when we are marking World Leprosy Day with a collection for that charity which has been supported by our church for many years. This year the charity is raising funds especially for a hospital in Bihar State in India focusing on their outpatient department. Leprosy can be cured but if it is not recognised early enough the leprosy sufferer may already have developed clawed hands and sores on both hands and feet. In the worst cases there may have to be an amputation of a limb.

The special Leprosy hospitals are playing a vital role in caring for people affected by that illness at whatever stage the patients arrive there. Helping the individual to



be able to work again helps them, their family and the community. Unfortunately, there is still a lot of prejudice and stigma attached to this illness. If you are unable to attend the church on Sunday, there is another opportunity to contribute to the once -a -year fundraising effort: Come and join me for a **fundraising afternoon** on Friday the 1<sup>st</sup> of March at 16 Spring Park 2 – 4pm in aid of the Leprosy Mission. There will be a cuppa and cake!



Looking further ahead Gail is organising a **special ‘Kagera’ service** on Sunday 17th of March in Otley church. Don’t forget to put the date in your diary.

*Karin Upson*

### SWILLAND

At the moment we have scaffolding up the tower to do essential repairs due to storm damage. Our spirulet and some tiles were damaged. We are able to claim on the insurance for the cost.



The churchyard is looking very pretty with a lot of primroses. We are most grateful to John Lord and Gina Wilden for keeping it tidy. The moles are doing their best to make it more difficult!

We have a communion service on **Easter Sunday** probably at 11 a.m. this will be displayed on the A-Board.

There will be a **coffee morning** on Saturday 23rd March at 10 a.m. The venue will be displayed on the A-Board.

Thank you to all those who do the flower arranging and take turns in opening and closing the church every day.

*Ann Kent*



## Swilland Church Appeal

In the next few weeks every household in Swilland will be getting a letter asking for help to raise money to provide a toilet and kitchenette in the church. We would like the church to be used more for village events as well as weddings, christenings and funerals but we need these facilities to make this practical. Please read the letter. Any donation, large or small would be appreciated.



Meanwhile, if you are having a spring clean, I would be grateful for donations of good quality clothing that I could sell on Vinted, to raise funds. Please bring them to Honeypot Cottage and I will do the rest. Thank you.

*Margo Barker*

## Why Saying Hello is Important

What lessons can Christians learn from a London rail worker who was recently honoured by King Charles, for talking 29 people out of taking their own lives?

HELLO



Maybe something about the power of conversation and being willing to ‘stop for a chat.’

Rizwan Javed helped to save each life over a period of eight years, by being alert and approaching vulnerable individuals in difficult situations. He was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours earlier this year. Rizwan was alert, and willing to engage people in conversation.





Anglican priest Jemima Prasadam's style of talking with people has been described as 'bus stop theology.' She put it into action on the half-mile walk from her home to the church in Lozells, an inner-city area of West Birmingham, with high unemployment and poverty.

Her engaging approach is featured in *Stick with Love*, a recent book by Arun Arora, Bishop of Kirkstall in northern England.



She explained: "I don't go out looking to talk to people, but I am ready to do it. I don't pass anybody without saying 'Hello' and when I leave, I always say 'God bless you.' Meetings happen on a daily basis, but often only last as long as it takes for the bus to arrive.

"People often say they are not religious, but I say we are all spiritual beings, and they agree. So, I simply tell them that weak and simple people like me call that God."

Sadly, we are living in a society where conversations are being closed down. People who might have chatted on the bus or train, are now deeply involved with their mobile phones.



Supermarkets are phasing out staffed checkout points, so that elderly people and others who live alone are deprived of those conversations that can make a difference to their day.

Jesus asked questions as a vital component of His earthly ministry. His deep conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4 begins with Him asking for a drink.

Maybe we, as Christians and churches, need to be looking out for more chances to start conversations, to give people the opportunity to open up about their lives. In our busy, rushing-around world, there are many people out there who are just longing for a chat...



## The Story of Aspirin



You will probably have taken aspirin, in one form or other, many times. But how much do you know of its history?

It was 125 years ago this month, on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1899 that the German pharmaceutical company Bayer first patented aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid).

But this is based on salicylic acid, which was used in herbal medicines as far back as Sumerian times, in 2500 BC. It was then that the Assyrians used willow leaves for rheumatic disease. The Egyptians also used willow leaves, as well as myrtle, to ease joint pain or inflammation.

In Greece, Hippocrates (460-377 BC) recommended an extract of willow bark for fever, pain and childbirth. And even the peoples of ancient China, Rome, and Native America all discovered and used plants containing salicylic acid.

Fast forward to Chaucer's 14<sup>th</sup> century, and the Knight's Tale recommends the use of meadow sweet for pain, another source of acetylsalicylic acid.

In 1763, some science was introduced, when an English clergyman, the Revd Edward Stone, used willow bark to successfully treat fever 'ague' in 50 of his parishioners. He carefully documented it all for the President of the Royal Society.

In 1828, Johann Andreas Buchner, a Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Munich, purified salicin from willow bark.



In 1859, Professor Hermann Kolbe, at Marburg University worked out the chemical structure of salicylic acid and made it synthetically.

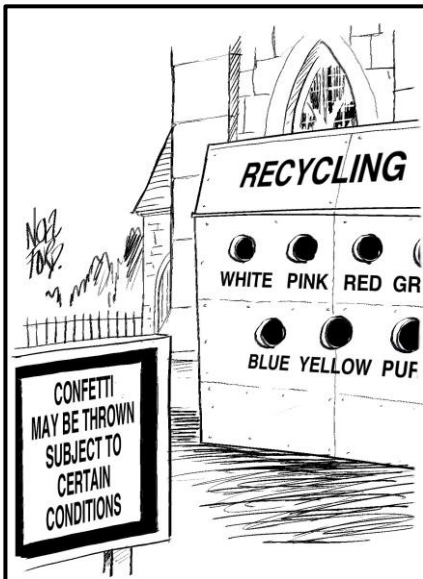
In 1897, Dr Felix Hoffman, a German chemist at Friedrich Bayer and Co, managed to produce pure stable acetylsalicylic acid (ASA). His discovery was the *first time* that a drug had been made synthetically, and so it was the birth of both aspirin and the pharmaceutical industry.

Finally, in early 1899 the new compound was named and registered Aspirin. The ‘A’ comes from acetyl and ‘spir’ from the first part of *Spirea ulmaria* (Meadowsweet) a botanical source of salicylic acid.

So next time you take an aspirin, think of the Assyrians chewing willow leaves, 4,000 years ago.

### Wise Advice from a Farmer's Wife

- ♥ Check your shoelaces before runnin' to help somebody.
- ♥ Homemade's always better'n store bought.
- ♥ A tongue's like a knife. The sharper it is the deeper it cuts.
- ♥ It's easier to clean an empty house, but hard to live in one.



21



"The new vicar is really cool, Dad. Did you know that God emailed the Ten Commandments to Moses' Tablet PC?"



Hi everyone,

Often charities, a bit like businesses, are judged by the largest number of customers for the smallest costs. However, successful community-based projects like The Debenham Project almost always follow an alternative principle – provide the care and support now, and worry about the cost later. We have always applied this approach by “getting on and doing something” – something that might help a family carer, or the loved one they care for, even if only just a little. We hope that The Debenham Project will always be somewhere to find help. The numbers that come to the Carers Club, Fit Club, Lunch Clubs, Songs for Sharing, etc. are great, but the real benefits of the Project lie in the difference that it can make, personally and individually, from having someone to talk to, assistance with forms, information, advice, guidance, friendship, etc. All acts of kindness not readily to be measured by statistics. I am convinced that it is these, and the personal relationships involved, that help and strengthen the well-being of those families amongst us who are having to live with dementia.

With all my best wishes,

Lynden Jackson

[www.the-debenham-project.org.uk](http://www.the-debenham-project.org.uk) ; 01728 862003

Research has shown that laughing for 2 minutes is just as healthy as a 20 minute jog.

So now I'm sitting in the park, laughing at all the joggers. 😂





## Pets' Corner XI March 2024

### FLEAS! A topic that's sure to make you itch!

#### What are fleas? Here's all you need to know!

Fleas are dark brown insects, at 2-4 mm in length, they are visible to the naked eye. They can't fly but can jump a long way and this is the way they move about.

Like many insects, fleas have a multi-stage life cycle.

- An adult flea lives for 1.5-2 months and during that time lays many eggs. These are laid on the animal host, but most fall in the environment (approximately 95% of them are NOT on the dog).
- The eggs take 1-10 days to hatch and for the flea larvae to emerge from them.
- The flea larvae are tiny worm-like things that don't feed directly on blood, they lack the mouth parts to bite through the skin, so they feed on 'flea dirt', the partially digested blood excreted by adult fleas. They can live both on the dog or in the environment, if there's sufficient food for them. The larval stage has 3 distinct phases that last 5-11 days and, after the third, the larva turns into a pupa to finish its transformation into an adult flea.
- The flea pupae are egg-like structures with a hard shell that protects the insect while it is transforming into an adult. This stage takes somewhere between 5-150 days, but can take longer if the conditions are not favourable. Being so hardy and not needing any food, pupae can last up to 2 years in the environment.
- After the pupa opens, a new adult flea emerges to repeat the same cycle.

Adult fleas do not live exclusively on a host, hopping on and off. Therefore, they can be found outside, in fields and gardens, or in our homes, sheds etc. However, because they need to feed on blood, they stay close to animals like dogs, cats, rabbits, etc.

Because of this, dogs can easily pick them up whilst out on walks. Other animals can bring them home after they have been out on an adventure too.



Fleas can also hitch a ride with us; they can travel on our clothing, in our vehicles, etc.

## What are the symptoms of fleas in dogs and cats?

The obvious sign of a flea infestation is the presence of fleas.

Sometimes though, if there are not too many of them or your dog or cat is very good at removing them, or when it's warm enough in the environment, you might not see fleas on the dog. What you will always find is flea faeces, aka 'flea dirt', dark grits in the dog's coat and on their skin.

Brush your dog's coat onto a white sheet of paper and wipe the dark grits with a bit of wet cotton wool or add a drop of water on them. Other dirt, like soil, will stay the same while flea dirt (which is partially digested blood) will create a brown-red smear or ring around it.

Other signs you may see in a dog or cat with fleas are:

- itchy skin,
- red and irritated skin,
- bald patches,
- thickened or crusty skin,
- oily coat,
- darkened spots
- Black areas on a cat's tongue

In animals that are not allergic to fleas though, these symptoms can be very mild.

To help them feed undetected, fleas use their saliva to numb the skin and prevent the blood at the bite site from clotting. But their saliva contains a lot of proteins and they can cause allergic reactions in some dogs, which is known as Flea Allergy Dermatitis (FAD). In such cases the symptoms are similar, but much-much more pronounced and the fleas even harder to detect.

Sometimes fleas will also bite the people in the affected household, especially around the ankles. So if you or anyone in your family starts getting red itchy spots or bumps on their legs, that's an additional reason to check your dog for fleas or flea dirt.

## How to prevent or get rid of fleas?

Getting rid of fleas is not that complicated, but it requires time and patience as you must regularly treat your dog, all the other pets and the house itself at the same time for several consecutive weeks.

There are a lot of flea-killing products available in UK, all with different characteristics:

- some of them kill fleas through contact with the chemical on the dog's coat, others do this when the flea ingests the chemical with the dog's blood;
- some are freely sold over-the-counter and others only prescribed by vets (the former are often ineffective, so we advise the latter);
- flea shampoos, spot-ons and collars would be a poor choice for a dog that swims or gets washed often because the water dilutes the product and decreases its effectiveness, we recommend to use tablets in such cases;
- some products kill both adult fleas and larvae, while others work only on adult fleas (eggs and pupae are too impenetrable for anti-flea products).

Speak with your vet, or give us a call and we will be able to help you choose the right product for your situation.

### The fleas on other animals

To get rid of the fleas successfully, you must treat all other furry pets that live in your house (or your garden if your dog has contact with them or their bedding) - dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, etc.

Only use treatments developed specifically for that species. For example, you must never use a dog product on a cat or rabbit, as this causes severe, sometimes even fatal, toxicity.

### The fleas in the house

Only 5% of the total flea number is made up of adult fleas on your pets, the other 95% are in the home environment as eggs, larvae and pupae. This means that to clear the flea infestation, you need to treat the house too.

Wash at 60°C everything that your dog uses (bedding, blankets, fluffy toys, etc) and can withstand this temperature.

Flea eggs and pupae are often found in cracks, crevices, and soft furnishings. As mentioned before, anti-flea products don't affect these life stages that easily. They are the ones that make getting rid of fleas a lengthier process.

To bypass this resistance, start your 'house treatment' with vacuuming thoroughly. This has two advantages:

- it physically removes the eggs and pupae from the environment (dispose of the vacuum bag or its content immediately after),
- the vibrations from the vacuum attract the larvae from within their hiding places, but also stimulate the eggs and the pupae to hatch, making them vulnerable to an anti-flea product.

Only after a good vacuuming, use an anti-flea product for the house to kill the larvae and adult fleas hiding in the carpets, floors, furniture.

There are several options available on the market, for example:

- [RIP Fleas Extra](#)
- [FLEAtec Household Flea Spray](#)
- [Household Flea Powder](#)

- Indorex Defence Household Flea Spray
- Frontline Homegard

Carefully read and follow the instructions for use on their package. Keep in mind a few general precautions when using these products:

- Clear the area you are planning to treat of people and pets. Where possible, remove (or at least cover tightly) aquariums, vivariums and water storage tanks.
- Once you have applied the spray or powder, leave the room and allow the product to work for the recommended time (often at least 30 min).
- Ventilate the room thoroughly by opening windows and doors for at least 1 hour before allowing pets or children back into the room.

### Additional advice

Don't panic if, despite your efforts, you still see the occasional flea. If you use a good quality product on your pets, these random fleas come from the pool of eggs and pupae left in the environment. They hatch out in waves, so you need to consistently repeat the treatments of the pets and the house until you don't see any at all.

If you keep seeing large numbers of fleas despite your efforts, there could be several reasons for that:

- not using the correct treatment on your dog or in your house,
- not treating all the animals in the household,
- not treating your car or other areas that your dog spends time in, for example, a kennel.



If you'd like any advice about how to keep flea free, then do give us a call- 01473 598398. Our **Happy Pet Membership** for dogs, cats and rabbits includes parasite prevention, and unlimited veterinary free consultations. See our website for more details: [nightingalevets.co.uk](https://www.nightingalevets.co.uk)

Kind regards from Dr Emily Nightingale and the team at Nightingale Vets.



## 24<sup>th</sup> March - Catherine of Sweden, The Good-Natured Carer



Families are divided in two kinds of people: givers and takers. Blessed is the family with at least one ‘giver’, that someone of a cheerful, generous nature who does not panic when you ask them for help. These kindly saints are on hand when you need them, not fleeing with the cry “But I have to think of myself in all this!”

Catherine of Sweden (1331-81) should be the patron saint of all good-natured, compassionate family members. Givers usually start early in life, as did Catherine. She was the fourth of eight children of Ulf of Godmarrson and Bridget of Sweden, and she grew up caring for the needs of younger siblings.

One thing about giving – once you start, you are generally looked to for more help, and Catherine was no exception. Her parents married her to one Eggard Lydersson, an invalid, whom she proceeded to nurse devotedly. Catherine felt compassion for his helplessness and found her life in giving it for him.

In return, Eggard encouraged her to have a 14<sup>th</sup> century version of ‘respite’ fun at ‘Spring Harvest,’ for Catherine joined her mother to journey to Rome and Jerusalem for a time.

Refreshed and spiritually fortified, Catherine returned and nursed Eggard until his death. She then joined her mother’s religious order and ended as abbess of the convent of Vadstena. Her cell still survives to this day, with a window on to the church’s sanctuary. Catherine was important in the history of the Brigittine Order, as she won papal approval for it in 1376.



## Time for the Great Daffodil Appeal

The month of March brings us the Great Daffodil Appeal. This annual campaign is a fundraising initiative by the Marie Curie charity, which provides care and support to people living with terminal illnesses and their families.



The Great Daffodil Appeal says: “Right now one in four people don't get the care they need at the end of life. With your support, we can help bring end of life care and support to everyone who needs it, in their homes and in our hospices.”

Here are some ways to participate:

- **Purchase a Daffodil Pin:** And wear it as a symbol of support.
- **Organise or Attend Fundraising Events:** Many events, such as charity walks, bake sales, and concerts, are organised to raise funds during the appeal.
- **Donate Online:** Visit the Marie Curie website to make a donation online, which goes directly to providing care for those in need.
- **Volunteer Your Time:** to help with various activities during the appeal.
- **Spread Awareness:** Use social media to encourage others to get involved and donate.

The Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal was established to honour the memory of Marie Curie, a pioneering scientist known for her work on radioactivity, as well as her dedication to providing care to those with cancer. The daffodil, a symbol of renewal and hope, was chosen to represent the campaign's message of support and care for individuals with terminal illnesses.

<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil>



## All in the month of March....

It was:

- ❖ 750 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1274 that St Thomas Aquinas, Italian Dominican friar, Catholic priest, philosopher, and theologian, died.
- ❖ 500 years ago, on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1524 that Florentine explorer Giovanni de Verrazano became the first European to reach the Atlantic coast of North America. He reached North Carolina, continued northwards to New Brunswick in Canada, and then sailed southwards to Florida.
- ❖ 250 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1774 that Matthew Flinders, British navigator and cartographer, was born. He led the first inshore navigation of Australia, and was the first person to call the country by that name.
- ❖ 150 years ago, on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1874 that Charles Lightoller, British naval officer, was born. He was Second Officer on the RMS Titanic, and the most senior member of the crew to survive the sinking in 1912. He was also a commanding officer in the Royal Navy during WW1, and took part (as a retired volunteer) in the Dunkirk evacuation in WW2.
- ❖ 100 years ago, on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1924 that Greece became a republic. The monarchy was abolished, and the Second Hellenic Republic was proclaimed.
- ❖ 90 years ago, on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1934 that Yuri Gagarin, Soviet cosmonaut, was born. He was the first man in space. (Died 1968)
- ❖ 80 years ago, from 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> March 1944, that the Great Escape took place. 76 Allied prisoners of war broke out of the Stalag Luft III prisoner-of-war camp near Sagan, Germany after digging three tunnels. Three of the prisoners escaped, 73 were recaptured, and 50 were executed. The event was dramatized in the film *The Great Escape*.
- ❖ 75 years ago, on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1949 that the 1948 Arab-Israeli War ended. Israeli victory.
- ❖ 70 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1954 that the USA tested the most powerful nuclear device it has ever detonated – a thermonuclear hydrogen bomb codename Castle Bravo, at Bikini Atoll, in the Marshall Islands. Due to a design error, the 15-megaton blast was 2.5 times greater than expected, and caused extensive contamination, deaths, burns and birth defects.
- ❖ 65 years ago, on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1959 that the Barbie doll was launched at the International Toy Fair in New York City.
- ❖ 60 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1964 that American world heavyweight boxing champion Cassius Clay was given the name Muhammad Ali, after joining the Nation of Islam.

## Crufts Dog Show, 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> March

Crufts has well been called the greatest dog show in the world.

Everything about Crufts is big: last year more than 155,000 visitors flocked to the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) at Birmingham for a show that lasted four days, to see more than 24,000 dogs compete. In addition, there were numerous displays of agility, obedience, and simply fun games.



Crufts was established in 1891, and named after its founder, Charles Cruft. In 1876 a young Charles had left college with no wish to join his family's jewellery business. Instead, he became a travelling salesman for Spratts, a dog food company. This brought him into contact with large country estates and many sporting kennels.

When his next job with Spratts took Charles Cruft to Europe, he became friendly with some French dog breeders. In 1878 they invited him to organise the promotion of the canine section of the Paris Exhibition. Though Cruft was still just two years out of college, his entrepreneurial talents were already evident.

Back in England, in 1886, he took up the management of the Allied Terrier Club Show at the Royal Aquarium, Westminster. And then, in 1891 the first Cruft's show was booked into the Royal Agricultural Hall in Islington. It has evolved and grown ever since.

Last year more than 200 breeds of dog were shown at Crufts. More than 83 per cent of the people who visit Crufts are dog owners themselves.



"One reason a dog is such a lovable creature,  
is his tail wags instead of his tongue."

- Anon

## STORIES FROM THE STRANGER SIDE OF LIFE

### Twin Job

A pair of twins is in custody after attempting to steal 180 bars of soap from a supermarket. Kenny and Lenny Stewart, 48, of New Jersey, were foiled when they both ran into a rubbish bin outside the shop, before tripping over a shopping trolley. They then ran straight into the arms of a police officer investigating a crash in the parking lot.



### Mother-of-the-bride killed by falling tree

A 61-year-old woman has been killed after a tree fell on a wedding party in California, local media reports. Margarita Mojarro, the mother-of-the-bride, was part of a group posing for photos when the large Eucalyptus tree uprooted. A four-year-old girl remains in critical condition.

### Blame it on the weatherman



Residents in the eastern parts of Iceland have started a Facebook group calling for TV weatherman Sigurdur Jonsson to stop standing in front of their part of the map when delivering the forecast. Their appeal has worked - Jonsson has swapped sides and started presenting the weather from the western side of the map instead.

### Hard cheese as toastie dispute ends with police

A man is in custody after a family dispute over a cheese toastie escalated into a stand-off with police. Maryland officials say Daniel Brian Blackwell became enraged when his wife took a bite of his toastie and opened fire at her from the basement of their family home. After his wife and daughter fled, Blackwell barricaded himself inside the house before surrendering to police five hours later.





### Angry Bird attacks Tourist

Police are on the hunt for a man dressed in an Angry Bird costume who assaulted a tourist in Toronto. The victim was pushed on to the ground after making a "harmless comment" about the costume and punched and kicked until he was unconscious, say officials.

### Fisherman dragged into sea by marlin

A fisherman is recovering in hospital after being dragged off his boat by a large marlin, 30 nautical miles off the coast of Western Australia. Authorities were alerted to the incident after the man's boat was seen travelling at speed with no one at the controls. The fisherman survived by treading water for more than six hours.

### Speeding driver was 'drying his car'

A Canadian caught travelling at 110mph, twice the speed limit, reportedly told police in Calgary he had just washed his car and was trying to dry it. The man received a 45-day driving suspension Supermarket sweep and a fine of CAN\$800 (£497).



### Solutions to the Brainteasers on Page 5



- |   |       |        |
|---|-------|--------|
| 1 | Bass  | Abyss  |
| 2 | Grind | Drying |
| 3 | Idle  | Yield  |
| 4 | Drone | Yonder |
| 5 | Rang  | Angry  |

How did you do?

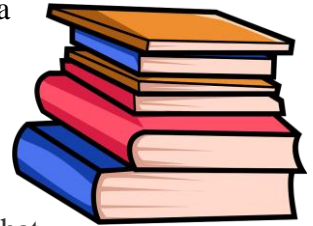
## An American in America: A Winter's Worries



I have spent much of this winter trying to understand my own country – and I have failed. It won't surprise many of you that I am not an admirer of our former President. I grew up in a moderate, politically aware but not active family. My father worked for the US Federal Government and as such both he and my mother kept a low profile. As a military family my husband and I did likewise. We were good citizens, paid our taxes, voted, and informed ourselves on the issues.

The world of American politics that I knew seems to have vanished. The civility and moderation that I remember seems a thing of the past. I have spent the last eight years cringing at the extremes of left and right which appear to rule our politics. Now, as you can imagine, I despair at the prospect of the next election. My only solace is to consider who will form the cabinets of the respective political nominees. I know the sort of men Biden has chosen and Trump chose. On that basis, my choice is clear. While I may not understand the choices of other voters, I will honour them. However, there will be those who cannot or will not abide opposing choices. This I fear.

To soothe my nerves, I spent these last three months with my nose buried in books – largely English mysteries. They were harmless and mindless, by and large. Finally, however, I selected a remarkable novel by Paul Lynch, Prophet Song, published by Oneworld. The author and title should ring a bell. Lynch won the 2023 Man Booker Prize.



If I had any illusions that I was going to read an escape novel, one glance at the New York Times Book Review should have been enough. The Prophet Song “comes at a moment when the fear it addresses is daily in the news: that the social contract is about to break, that what we think of as ordinary life is about to be transformed into a constant existential struggle, which will be played out not in a state of nature but in something arguably worse, at the fault line between opposing ideologies.”



Set in the modern-day Republic of Ireland, it is all too easy to identify with the family caught up in the terror of the power struggle that tears the fabric of Irish society apart. The details of the book are taken from our daily headlines. The apathy, inertia, and disbelief voiced by characters sound chillingly like what I say to calm my own worries. The main character keeps believing that the accepted political and legal norms will protect and prevail, never imagining the horror and terror that will overtake her and her family. Lynch's writing is lyrical and fervent as he describes the family's disintegration.

At any rate, I recommend an excellent book to you all even though it may be an uncomfortable read.

Mary Miner [susiespinner36@msn.com](mailto:susiespinner36@msn.com)

### **What do you think of the weather forecasts?**



It seems there is some turbulence between the Met Office and the Royal Meteorological Society.

The Royal Meteorological Society has objected to the recent “deluge” of cautionary statements that the Met Office put out concerning the recent storms. It says that “probably not a day went by” during one week of bad weather, “without a weather warning.” It fears that too many warnings will risk making people “complacent”.

The Met Office, backed by a Cabinet Officer minister, Alex Burghart, disagreed. Responding to an urgent question in the House of Commons, he said:

“The forecasting capabilities of our experts in the Met Office and the accuracy and speed at which they can warn and inform the public of incoming severe weather events does, with no doubt, save lives and protect our homes and businesses.”

What do you think? Is the Met Office playing Nanny, or getting it right?

## SMILE LINES



### **Palm Sunday visit**

It was Palm Sunday, but because of a sore throat, five-year-old Bobby was kept home from church with his grannie. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds and Bobby asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by," his father explained.

Bobby was aghast. "I don't believe it! The one Sunday I don't go, and He shows up!"

### **Destination?**

Lenora, 95-years-old and in excellent health, confided that she was terribly worried: "Every one of my friends has already died and gone on to heaven. I'm afraid they're all wondering where I went!"

### **Mother's reward**

A man was decorating his new den and decided it was a good place to display all the awards he and his two sons had won at various athletic competitions. When he had filled two whole walls, he remarked to his wife that it was a shame she had no awards to contribute.

The following day, she produced, neatly framed, the birth certificates of their two sons, and added them to the display.

### **Mothers and teenagers**

A woman was confiding in her neighbour just how hard it was for her to get her teenagers out of bed in the morning. The neighbour replied that she never had any trouble at all with her son. "I just open the door and throw the cat on the bed," she explained. The woman was puzzled, and asked how that might help. "Easy. My son sleeps with the dog."





### St Patrick's Day groaners

Why do people wear shamrocks on St. Patrick's Day?  
Regular rocks are too heavy.

Why can't you borrow money from a leprechaun?

Because they're always a little short.

How can you tell if an Irishman is having a good time?

He's Dublin over with laughter!

### St Patrick's Day

"I married an Irishman on St Patrick's Day."

"Oh, really?"

"No, O'Reilly!"



### Pewsheet notice that went wrong....

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

### Helping

If it's true that we are here to help others, what are the others doing here?



### Missing socks in your life

What does it mean when all the socks in your laundry match, with none left over?

You're now losing them in pairs!

### Musings on life...

I hate it when I see an old person, and then realize we went to school together.

My boss calls me 'The Computer'. Nothing to do with intelligence; I go to sleep if left unattended for 15 minutes.



## CHILDREN'S CORNER

### Easter Egg pebble painting



Gather up a few rocks or pebbles and prepare to get messy with this sweet way to make beautiful Easter eggs.

We've long been fans of the community rock-painting treasure hunts and this would be a fun project to turn into a home-made Easter egg hunt.

Hide your finished rocks around the house or garden once they're dry! Add a coating of clear varnish to make your eggs weather-resistant if you'd like to use them to brighten up your garden more permanently.

### Turn Paper Plates into Spring Animals

Reach for your leftover summer picnic or party supplies and transform paper plates into a chick and lamb.

This idea is a timeless Easter craft ideas for kids to enjoy.

**For the Chick:** A yellow paper plate (we had white paper plates so we painted one yellow with acrylic paint), orange scrapbook paper, yellow feathers, googly eyes, craft glue, and scissors.

1. Out of orange card stock or construction paper cut two long strips for your chick's legs, a little diamond for a beak and two little chick feet.



2. Start making the chicks legs by accordion style folding each strip of orange paper. Next glue the feet to the bottom of each leg.
3. Attach your legs to the bottom of your paper plate. Fold the orange diamond in half to make the chicks beak and attach to the centre of your plate.
4. Now add your googly eyes and attach some feathers to the back of the plate to give your chick some fluffy wings and that's it. You're done!

**For the Lamb:** A white paper plate, cotton balls, grey or black scrapbook paper, googly eyes, craft glue, and scissors.

1. Glue cotton balls to the paper plate until it's covered.
2. Cut out four strips of scrapbook paper for the legs, an oval for the head, and two little oval ears.
3. Fold the four strips accordion-style and glue to the back of the plate.
4. Glue ears onto the back of the lamb's head and googly eyes to the front.
5. Glue the lamb's head onto the cotton ball-covered plate.

## Jokes

Q: What kind of jewellery does the Easter Bunny wear?

A: 14 Carrot Gold



Q: What's the best way to make Easter easier?

A: Put an "i" where the "t" is.

Q: What do you get if you cross Winnie the Pooh and the Easter Bunny?

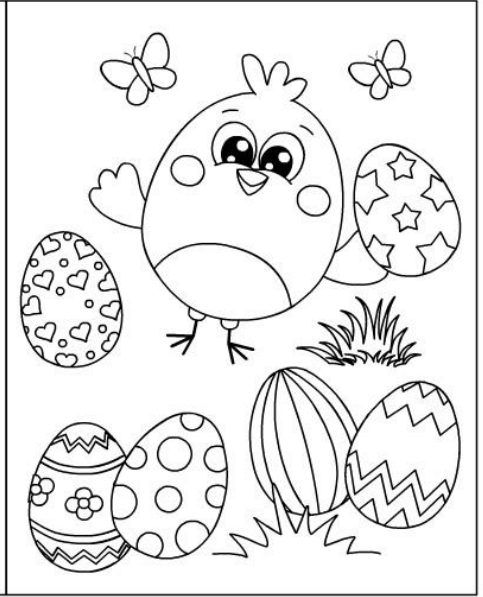
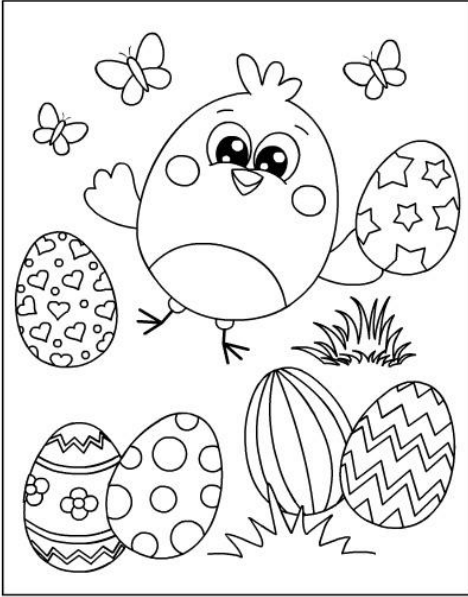
A: A honey bunny





# Easter

Spot 5 differences!



Spot 10 differences!



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