

From The Rectory

ALLELUIA! Christ is risen! Writing this the week after Easter Sunday, I feel justified in beginning my article with these words. Churches and Cathedrals throughout the land will be bedecked with flowers after the austerity of Lent, the scent of lilies in the air (allergy sufferers beware!) and bells will ring out joyfully to welcome the risen Christ. The Passion, death and Resurrection of Jesus that Christians celebrate through Lent and Holy Week and with joy at Easter, this story brings hope, reminding us that death is not the end but that through Jesus Christ we have the promise of eternal life. Coming as it does in springtime, new life is all around us; blue tits are busily going in and out of the nesting box in the Rectory garden, lambs can be seen frolicking around their mothers in local fields and fresh leaves in a myriad shades of green, sometimes tinged with pink or orange, adorn the trees and shrubs, with hedgerows white with May blossom. Seeds sown begin to sprout. Isn't creation wonderful?!

In stark contrast, we see the images of war-torn Ukraine on our screens, buildings razed to the ground, homes and livelihoods lost. Buildings can be rebuilt, but the human loss is devastating and many in these situations ask, 'Where is God in this?' Again I return to the Christian belief that death is defeated through Christ, and that through his agony on the cross, Jesus knows the pain of human suffering. Wherever there is agony or loss, Jesus himself is in the centre of it,

bringing hope and strength. We can feel so helpless in the face of this injustice and suffering, but through our prayers we can help to bring about change, as we pray for strength and comfort for the Ukrainian people, and for wisdom and courage for the people of Russia, that they might stand up for freedom and justice. If enough people were brave enough to do this, perhaps the government would have to take notice. That is my prayer, that soon a way through dialogue and diplomacy might be found and a new, more compassionate government might come to power in Russia, so ordinary people there might also be set free from fear and deprivation.

Thank you to everyone who has left donations in the Rectory porch to support families in Ukraine.

Unfortunately the local Barnabas Aid collection point seems to have now closed, so I am unable to accept any more donations at this time. Money can be donated through this and many other charities – details can be found online. Please continue to hold the people of Ukraine, and all parents who have lost children through the war, in your prayers. Prayer is powerful and does bring about change!

Don't forget, we are always there to pray on your behalf, so if anyone has a specific prayer request, do let me or Colin know; this is always confidential unless we have your permission to include it on our weekly pewsheets for general prayer.

Every blessing, Helena

Rev. Helena Buqué, Vicar and Colin Cox, Associate Vicar
c/o The Rectory, School Hill, Findon, BN14 0TR. Tel: 873601
findonprectory@gmail.com www.findon-clapham-patching-churches.com