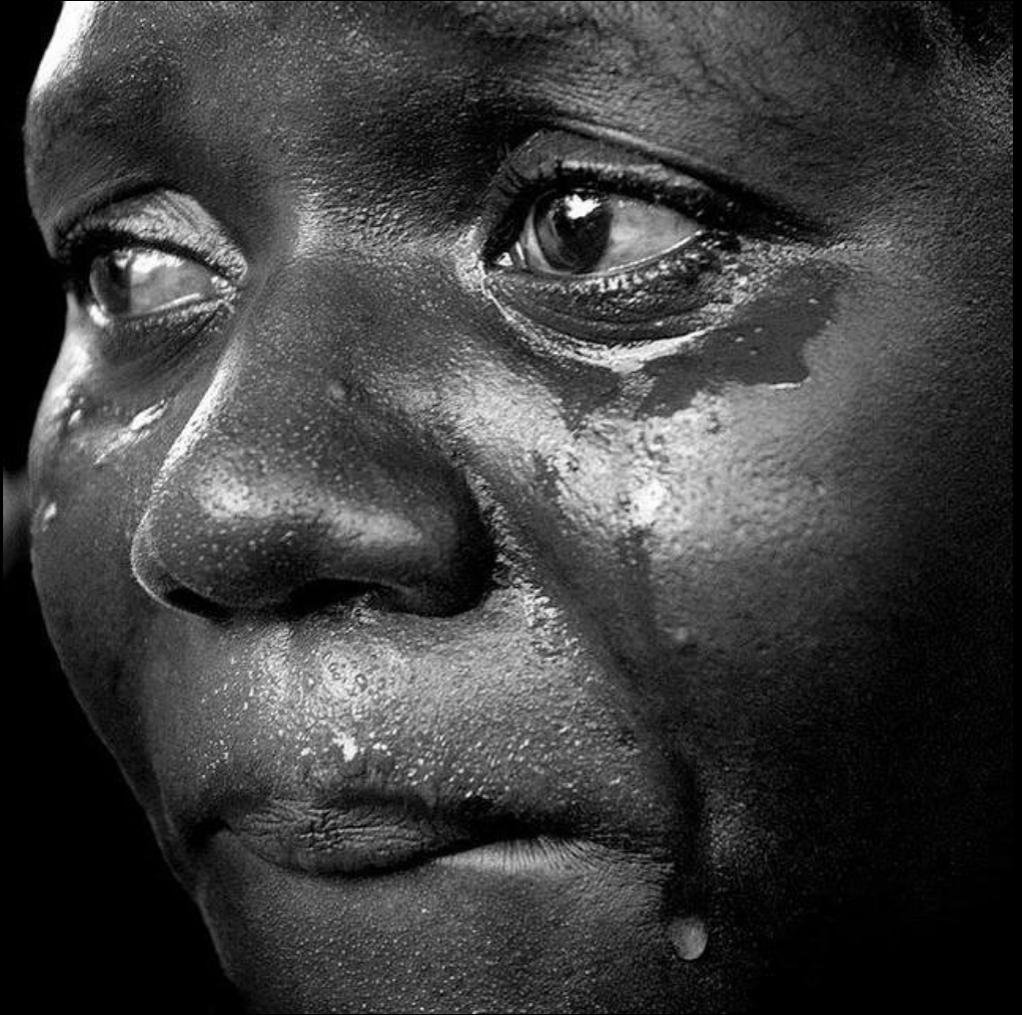


# Messenger

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF THE 453 CHURCHES

*Barton | Gotham | Kingston | Ratcliffe | Thrumpton*

May 2019





**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May at 7 for 7.30pm**

**Barton Village Hall, Barton in Fabis**

**Join us for a Bollywood night of food, cinema, dancing and fundraising!**

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# How The Innocent Suffer



Stories about innocent suffering continue to make the news. As I write, nearly one hundred children have died in Africa from the second deadliest outbreak of Ebola in history, and more than eight hundred have reported symptoms. There have also been reports of clergy sexual abuse in a number of different denominations, as well as in non-religious organizations such as the Scouts, gymnastics, swimming, hockey, and by politicians as well, over the last few months. And a study found that nearly five hundred American school teachers were arrested in 2015 on sexual abuse charges. We are not immune from such pain in this country. And the question that believers, as well as unbelievers, ask, is: Where is God when such tragedies occur?

The Bible does not shy away from tackling this question and in fact devotes an entire book to the topic. The book of Job, and in particular, chapter 9 poignantly describes the pain innocent victims feel when God seems to fail them. Job pictures the omnipotence of the One "who alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea... who does great things beyond searching out, and marvellous things beyond number" (v8, 10). But this omnipotent God seems to be impervious to Job's cries for help: "If I summoned him and he answered me, I would not believe that he was listening to my voice. For he crushes me with a tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause" (v16-17). In fact, according to Job, "When disaster brings sudden death, he mocks at the calamity of the innocent" (v23). This must be how many victims of sexual abuse feel about God.

And Job is not alone in complaining about innocent suffering, there are Psalms that raise this question; for example, Psalm 42 cries out, "I say to God, my rock: 'Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?'" And as we remember on Good Friday, even Jesus cried out as He hung on the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). And so how are we to make sense of this?

Jim Denison encourages us to consider five Biblical facts.

1. God does not cause innocent suffering. The Bible is categorical in stating that God is holy, sinless, and perfectly just, and that He does not tempt anyone to evil. It is the actions of people who misuse their free will which causes much of the innocent suffering in the world, along with disease and natural disasters.

2. God must allow us to misuse our freedom, or we can not be truly free. In the Old Testament, God set before His people the choices of "life and death, blessing and curse" and urged them to "choose life" (Deuteronomy 30:19).

3. Disease and disaster are a result of what we call the Fall (Genesis 3:17-19). When Adam and Eve sinned and were punished by God, the entire world was also affected.

4. God does at times intervene to prevent the consequences of our sin. So whilst He did not stop Herod from executing James, He did send angels to rescue Peter (Acts 12:1-11). Jesus healed many who were sick (Matthew 8:14-17) as well as calming a storm.

5. God redeems all He allows. Because God is sovereign, He must allow all that happens, and because He is holy He can never make a mistake, and all that He does allow He redeems for a greater good (Romans 8:28).

Which raises a mystery. Since God does sometimes, why doesn't He always prevent innocent suffering? If God is as cruel as He seems to be when He allows a Minister to abuse a child, then why did He send His Son to die for our sins? Why does He forgive our sins? Why does He prepare a place for us in Heaven? But then if He is as loving as He seems to be at Calvary, why does He allow innocent people to be abused?

Perhaps God could explain this mystery to us but chooses not to.

This seems unlikely to me since innocent suffering causes so many people to turn away from faith in Him. It seems more plausible then that God cannot explain the mystery of innocent suffering simply because we cannot understand it - as God says, "my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts." And we do the same thing - we don't teach the theory of Quantum Mechanics to a 4 year old, they simply cannot understand it. Which leaves us with a stark choice, which was demonstrated by an incident in the life of Abraham Lincoln.

In 1862 Lincoln's 11 year old son Willie died. Lincoln's wife "tried to deal with her grief by searching out New Age mediums." Lincoln however, turned to Phineas Gurley, a Minister of a Church in Washington. Several long talks led to what Gurley described as "a conversion to Christ." Lincoln confided that he was "driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I have nowhere else to go."

When we cannot understand God's ways, we can choose to reject His love, grace, and power, as Lincoln's wife did. But this is to turn from the Great Physician when we need His help the most. Or we can trust, as Abraham Lincoln did, we can trust our pain to God's love, knowing that our Heavenly Father feels all we feel and grieves with us. We can trust Him to redeem our innocent suffering for His glory and our good. That's not to say that such trust is easy, especially in the midst of pain and suffering; and if that's you then know that you are not alone - a father once cried out to Jesus, "I believe; help my unbelief!" And Jesus did. You can pray to God for the faith to have faith in God. Where else have we to go?

May God bless you and those you love.

*Richard*

**The closing date for copy  
for the June issue is  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May.**

# HOME IS WHERE THE HEATING IS!



This Women's Crisis Centre is desperately underfunded and continues only by God's grace.

There are always new women arriving in desperate need at the centre. Among them are Oksana (top) who needed refuge after running away from a violent husband and Katya, a young orphan mum who would be homeless had it not been for the centre.

To facilitate the extra space needed, Love Russia has been fundraising throughout the last year to complete the new building that will have fewer running costs when finished.

The team we sent out last summer helped complete the first floor bedrooms so only the ground floor is left. As part of this, an appropriate heating system needs to be installed. This is going to cost an additional **£17,000**; and we feel convicted we need to finish what we started.

**The completion of the new Women's Crisis Centre is time sensitive.** The building must be fully in use by 2020 to comply with government building regulations.

**This centre is the only means of rescue for many vulnerable women.** Can you help towards a heating system that will make this building usable all year round?

On completion, the men's centre can relocate to the existing women's refuge and leave behind the dilapidated building they currently use. Please keep both the men's and women's facilities in your prayers and if you feel led to help financially, we know God will bless your gifts towards this work.

**Email: [postmaster@loverussia.org](mailto:postmaster@loverussia.org)**



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## Round and About ...

**The next Soar Valley U3A general meeting** will be at 2:00pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May when our speaker will be Kirsty Jackson from the Nottinghamshire Police with a talk 'Keeping Safe Online'. With cyber crime rife, and older people often targeted by fraudsters, online security has never been more important. And where better to get good advice on keeping safe than from the police.

If you're retired you're welcome to join us. Refreshments provided.

Soar Valley U3A (University of the Third Age) provides relaxed learning and leisure activities for retired people in your area. For more information, phone Membership Secretary Lorna Orton on 01332 811030 or visit our website: [u3asites.org.uk/soar-valley](http://u3asites.org.uk/soar-valley)

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## Congratulations!



We send our love and congratulations to Revd Moses Thabethe and Alison who were married on April 6<sup>th</sup> in Johannesburg. Moses has been a friend of our parishes for many years and has spent time with us on several occasions and become part of our extended church family. So, we welcome Alison to the family of the 453 Churches and wish them a long and happy marriage.

## News from Nigel ...

By the time you read this I will be home after a further 8 weeks in Sierra Leone. All is going well with the project and we are starting to see a real transformation taking place here at 'Destiny Village'. It's amazing what God is doing here but as always, we are constantly faced with challenges.

We have been interviewing people from the slums who hopefully will be able to move into the village in early July. These people will have the sort of skill or trade which means one member of each family will be given paid employment. It is also hoped that the Junior school will be completed in September and 100 children from these families will start learning.

The bakery has been producing some rather nice bread and we can now appoint a bakery manager who will oversee the operating and running of the business.

We've been in talks with the government to plan how to get power to the village as there is none at the moment. We use good, old fashioned generators which are dirty, noisy and expensive to run. I have come up with a design and price using an off grid solar mini grid system, for each compound of 8 houses. This, I hope, can be implemented and will be cost effective within 3 years.

Home Leone are certainly becoming a household name out here. We had the mayor of Freetown visit 3 weeks ago and was impressed with what our model was. She was particularly impressed by our community cooker. This is an effective incinerator which can burn most rubbish, but more importantly, plastic, once it reaches a temperature in excess of 850 degrees. At that temperature it will burn 'clean' with no harmful toxins polluting the atmosphere. It provides 5 large hobs where you can boil rice, etc., and even 2 small ovens, as well as controlling waste which is a huge problem out here.



*Photo shows the Mayor of Freetown on the left visiting the bakery with Nigel Taylor on the right.*

# Family Fun service launched

They said it would be different and it was! The church set up was very different from the moment we came in. Chairs in a circle, something for tots to play with in the middle, jazzy music playing, ribbons on the chairs to intrigue us and of course, balloons in a net above us.

They said it would be interactive and it was! None of us will forget doing the left right Bible story and the laughter and confusion that caused, not to mention tying ribbons together as we thought about mothering and those who mother us.

We were promised a gift for mums, but we all got one. A special thank you must go to Howick's Nurseries for their generous donation of primroses.

Finally thank you to all our talented cup cake makers who made such a delicious array of cup cakes. Needless to say there weren't many left!

We even got Take Away Church. A box filled with all kinds of things to do at home. Some as a family and some just for children. What a great idea!

I think we can say it was a success and we can all look forward to enjoying this very different and fun style of service exploring a wide variety of subjects.

Do come and join in - bring the family  
and see church in a very different light!

**Our May Family Fun Service is on  
Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 4:00pm  
in Gotham Church  
and  
*We'll be looking at toilets??!***





**By popular demand  
They're coming back!**

# ZULU TRADITION



**From KwaZulu Natal to the World's Stage!  
Rekindling the spark of Zulu culture and heritage  
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**At your request we have invited the amazing  
Zulu Tradition back to Gotham Church  
on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September.**

**They were with us 2 years ago when they came  
as performers and left as friends.**

**Look out for tickets going on sale. DON'T MISS THIS!**

# From Barton ...

- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May:** Coffee Morning from 10:30am to 12:00 with Edna Harrison
- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May:** Teas in Church. 2:00pm - 4:00pm
- Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May:** Breakfast in the Village Hall 10:00am to 12:00
- Flower Rota:** 5<sup>th</sup> May: Ron and Sylvia Cutts  
19<sup>th</sup> May: Daphne Towers

## Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May

### FLOWER DEMONSTRATION BY BEVERLY ARTIS

Starting at 6:45pm in Barton Village Hall

TICKETS £5 INCLUDING NIBBLES AND WINE

Afterwards Beverly will be available for people to ask her about the flowers for their flower festival arrangements.

### Advance Notice:

**4<sup>th</sup> June:** The mystery trip is no more but we will be running a trip to Boughton on the Water and then on to Morton in the Marsh. There will be a charge of £5 for anyone wanting to go to help with funding. Phone Sue on 0115 983 0945 to reserve a place. The bus will leave Barton at 9:00am from both stops and Gotham from 9:15am from the pump.

**8<sup>th</sup> June:** Garden Fete by kind permission of Bill Harrison at the rear of 1 Chestnut Lane.

**13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> July:** Flower Festival

It is with regret that we have to announce the death of Revd Sir Timothy Forbes Adams who died peacefully in his sleep on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. He was vicar of Barton and Thrumpton and was a kind and very caring person. Our love and prayers go out to his daughters and grandchildren.

*Pat Curtis*

## From Barton Village Hall

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May: Car Boot Sale** 9:00am - 2:00pm £5 per stall. BBQ and coffee, tea and cakes in Barton Village Hall. Stalls will be on Manor Road which will be closed to cars while this event is taking place. All welcome.

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May: Joint parish council and village hall AGM.** Hall open at 7:00pm. Parish council AGM commences at 7:30pm. Come and meet your Parish Councillors and your Village Hall committee. Would you like to join the committee? New members always welcome.

## From Gotham ...

**Richard and Anna James** would like to thank family and friends for their kindness and support during Mick's illness.

RIP Michael Leonard James      1 July 1949 - 25 March 2019

## From Ratcliffe ...

The funeral of Edith Lillian Gillespie took place on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2019 at Loughborough Crematorium. Edith, more often known as Joan was a most respected resident of Ratcliffe on Soar and was born in 1921 which means she achieved the age of 97. She was a regular user of the Soar Valley bus and in tribute the bus was laid on to take villagers to the funeral. A collection taken at the service raised £246 which will be donated to the charity who operate the bus.

*If you avail yourselves of any of the goods or services advertised in this magazine please do make sure to let the people know that they have your business because you saw their advert in this magazine. Thank you.*

## From Kingston ...

**15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> June:** Kingston on Soar and Sutton Bonington Garden Walkabout. Around 25 gardens open across the 2 villages. Programmes £5 each to cover both days, accompanied children are free. Plant stalls, craft and cake stalls. All money raised goes to Cancer Research UK. Programmes available throughout the weekend or in advance from the Post Office in Sutton Bonington.

**15<sup>th</sup> June:** Live band in Kingston on Soar village hall to raise money for charity (Local causes and Cancer Research UK). Bar open from 6:00pm, music from 7:00pm. Adults £10, students and children £5. Tickets available on the night or can be reserved in advance by emailing [nicole.e.elders@gmail.com](mailto:nicole.e.elders@gmail.com)

### Dates for the diary

**21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> September:** Kingston on Soar Beer Festival. Back by popular demand with a wide selection of locally produced real ale and cider. Wine and prosecco will also be available and live music on the Saturday night.

## From Thrumpton ...



### SUMMER IN THRUMPTON

Open Gardens

Flowers in church

Refreshments

Saturday: Cricket match and stalls

Sunday: Classic cars and bikes

**JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup> AND 9<sup>TH</sup> 12:00 TO 5:00**

# Favourite recipe ...

## Sizzling salmon with butter bean mash

4 salmon fillets

1 lime

3 tbsp clear honey

1 tbsp wholegrain mustard

410g cans of butter beans, rinsed

25g / 1oz butter

5 tbsp crème fraîche

2 or 3 garlic cloves, crushed, depending on taste and size

100g bag rocket

Put salmon fillets in a shallow flameproof dish. Finely grate the zest of the lime into a bowl, then squeeze in the juice and stir in the honey and mustard. Pour the mixture over the salmon and leave to marinade for an hour.

Set the grill to its highest setting. Grill the salmon without turning for 5 to 6 minutes until golden on top and cooked through. Leave for longer if you like a crispier topping.

Meanwhile, tip the beans into a pan and add the butter, crème fraîche, garlic and season. Turn up the heat to moderate and coarsely mash everything together until it is hot and bubbling. This only takes a few minutes as the beans are already cooked. Tip in the rocket and stir into the mash until it is hot and just wilted.

Serve the salmon on the mashed beans, drizzled all over with the cooking juices.

*Val Hopkins*

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*Cover photo courtesy of Patrick Farrell & The Miami Herald.*



[www.453churches.com](http://www.453churches.com)



[facebook.com/453Churches](https://facebook.com/453Churches)

## Contact details ...

<b>Rector</b>	Revd. Richard Coleman ( <i>day off Monday</i> )	0115 983 0608 <i>rector@453churches.com</i>
<b>Licensed Lay Minister (Reader)</b>	David Smith	0115 983 0184
<b>Pastoral Care Coordinators</b>	Sylvia Cutts Anne Farnsworth	0115 981 5814 0115 983 0007
<b>Safeguarding Coordinator</b>	Anne Farnsworth	0115 983 0007
<b>Magazine Editor</b>	Val Hopkins	<i>valatthrumpton@btinternet.com</i>

### Barton-in-Fabis

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<b>Church Wardens</b>	Carole Edis Sue Davies	0115 983 0756 0115 983 0495
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### Gotham

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<b>Church Wardens</b>	Anne Farnsworth David Smith	0115 983 0007 0115 983 0184
<b>Church Hall Bookings</b>	David Power	0115 983 0400

### Kingston-on-Soar

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<b>Church Warden</b>	Angie Howard	01509 673472
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### Ratcliffe-on-Soar

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<b>Church Warden</b>	Janet State	01509 674235
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### Thrumpton

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<b>Church Wardens</b>	Debbie Bradley John Collins	07710 352194 0115 983 0533
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## Our churches are open:

Barton	Every day	9:00am - 5:00pm
Gotham	Saturday	10:00am - 12:00pm
Kingston	Every day	9:00am - 5:00pm
Ratcliffe	Every day	9:00am - 4:00pm
Thrumpton	<i>Key available - See noticeboard for details</i>	

# May Services

## Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>

9:00	Barton	Communion Service
11:00	Gotham	Communion Service
11:00	Thrumpton	Morning Service
6:00	Kingston	Evening Service

## Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>

9:00	Ratcliffe	Communion Service
11:00	Barton	All Age Service
11:00	Gotham	Methodist Service
11:00	Kingston	All Age Communion
11:00	Thrumpton	Morning Service
4:00	Gotham	Family Fun Service

## Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>

9:00	Kingston	Communion Service
11:00	Gotham	Communion Service

## Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>

9:00	Barton	Morning Service
9:00	Ratcliffe	Morning Service
11:00	Gotham	The Gathering
11:00	Kingston	Morning Service



Every Tuesday at 10:30am at Gotham there is a short Communion Service followed by refreshments.

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