

Issue 145

# THE LADYGROVE CHURCH



## MAGAZINE

April 2019

The Ladygrove Church meets at the  
Ladygrove Community Centre, Tamar Way  
every Sunday at 10am

*Blessed by God to Be a Blessing to Others*

[www.theladygrovechurch.org.uk](http://www.theladygrovechurch.org.uk)

Minister: The Revd Hugh Boorman Tel: 819036

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## **Thank you to all our contributors this month:**

Hugh Boorman, Jonathan Farnhill and Terry Young

It would be great to see your name here next time!

The **May magazine** will be available on  
Sunday 28th April and the deadline for articles to go in it is  
**Sunday 21st April.**

Please give your contributions to Hugh Boorman or Mary Parker.

# Thought for the Month

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## The Thin Line

Last month I talked about our recent visit to the Battle of Britain Bunker Museum in Uxbridge. Lindsey, Daniel and I also visited Imperial War Museum in London over the half-term. It had certainly changed considerably since my last visit but then, as my loving wife pointed out, that was nearly half a century ago! I remembered it as simply offering the cold facts of the two world wars but now it tells much more the human stories behind those facts.

This was especially so of the one floor that is entirely devoted to the Holocaust. I was already aware of the main facts and many of the images on display I had previously seen in my father's Pictorial History of World War II. But it was the quotations from both the victims and the perpetrators that really hit home.

One quote particularly struck me. It was made by an SS officer who enthusiastically welcomed the introduction of gas vans to execute the Jews whom his unit had hunted down. Prior to that, he had had



to set up a four-man firing squad with two firing at their victim's head and two at the heart. The officer had been becoming increasingly concerned about the well-being of his men because the task was clearly upsetting them. How can a man be so concerned about the emotional health of some people and yet be happy to carry out the wholesale slaughter of others?!

I guess we face a similar question each time we reflect on the week of Easter. There we don't even have different treatment for different people. It is all focused on just one person – Jesus. One moment he is welcomed by the crowd with shouts of jubilation as the great saviour of Israel and then a few dates later, (possibly) the same people are baying for his crucifixion.

And, of course, recent tragedies in the news remind us that similar events can't just be relegated to history. They still happen today. We human beings are such strange creatures. We manage to display such incredible

compassion and altruism and yet can also sink to the most sickening levels of cruelty and depravity. And the disturbing thing is that each of us holds within us the capacity for both. As Aleksander Solzhenitsyn wrote, "The line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being." Similarly Paul wrote, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do" (Romans 7:15). His conclusion was to declare, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:24-25). That is all well and good, but wouldn't it be better to avoid doing what I hate to do in the first place? So what can we do?

Well, one thing that was very obvious at the Holocaust Exhibition was the incredible lengths that the Nazis had gone to, to redefine what a Jewish person was. There was so much literature on display allegedly drawing from history and religion that sought to prove that it was all their fault – from Jesus' crucifixion through to their defeat in World War I, the Treaty of Versailles, the dreadful economic climate, everything! And equally dodgy science emphasised that they were only really sub-humans anyway. At that first Easter, we see the crowd only welcoming Jesus because they were working on incorrect information. They had misunderstood who the Messiah was supposed to be. Perhaps his apparent willingness to be arrested had led them to feel let down or even betrayed.



Propaganda, "Fake News", gossip – call it what you like, throughout history, it has always been there. And it's there because people have found that it works. It swings opinion; it changes our attitude and behaviour... if we listen to it.

The words of the Psalmist trip off our tongue so easily: "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105) but how often do we hold the light of God's word up to the "facts" that we take in and share, or the path we intend to walk?

"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12) but, for Scripture to be active, it needs to be drawn from its scabbard and wielded.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In God's word and guided by His Spirit we are provided with all the resources we need "to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2) so let's use it.

Lent isn't just a time for giving chocolate or alcohol a miss for a few weeks. It's a time for some realistic reflection – for holding ourselves up to the mirror of God's word and taking a long hard look at the way that the world has left its mark on us. Only then will we realise how 'wretched' we also are and how amazing was Jesus' willingness to go through the Easter events for our forgiveness.

'Thanks be to God, who delivers us through Jesus Christ our Lord!'

**Hugh Boorman**  
**Minister of the Ladygrove Church**

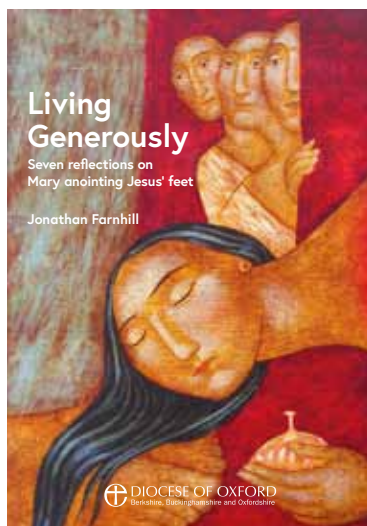
# Generous with Talents

by Jonathan Farnhill

*Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard,  
anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair.  
(John 12:3)*

As a child, I had a particular talent for being argumentative, and I was very generous with this talent. I could argue about anything, anywhere, with anyone; in fact, I often didn't need another person to argue with.

Years later, I did one of those 'personality profile' tests, and it revealed that my kind of personality 'can find compelling reasons for whatever they want.' I exploded with laughter when I read that. It took years of training as an adolescent to achieve that level of expertise.



We all have talents that reflect 'whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable' (Philippians 4:8) but we do not always use them for the good. I'd like to think that I have taken the argumentative talent of my childhood and turned it into an ability to encourage people to lead generous lives. I certainly hope so.

Mary's talent in this story is the tender and caring way she anointed Jesus' feet, the feet that would within days be nailed to a cross.

Jesus intimates that Mary knows he will soon die – 'She has anointed my body beforehand for its burial' (Mark 14:8) – and Mary, faced with that realisation, offers her talents to care for a body that will soon be brutally broken.

Mary felt compelled to use a talent she had and here we are, thousands of years later, being inspired by it. It was, to the disciples at least, a bit 'left field'. Perhaps that's the way God often likes it. God can use the talents he has given us in unexpected ways but, to do so, we need to be open and looking for ways in which we can share those talents with others.

The Quakers have a lovely phrase in their book of 'Faith and Practice' – 'Attend to what love requires of you.' We need to attend to what our love for God and God's people requires of us, and be generous in the use of our talents to enable us to do that.



**Jonathan Farnhill** is the Generous Giving Adviser for the Diocese of Oxford, and has an MA in Applied Theology from the University of Exeter. He has written seven reflections on this episode in the Bible.

## It's Annual Meeting Time Again!

We will be having our Annual General Meeting or Annual Vestry Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting after church on **Sunday, 7th April** during the shared lunch.

During the meeting, we'll be appointing people to serve on our PCC and in other roles (see the March magazine for details). Please be praying about whether God is calling you to serve in one of these roles, and have a word with Hugh to find out what's involved.



**Please make the shared lunch and meeting a priority in your diary as we seek God's vision for our future.**



# April Prayer Diary

Feel free to make suggestions of topics that we can add and, in the future, if you would like prayer for something particular on a specific date, whatever it might be, please let one of the editors know and we can add it to this prayer diary.

## Monday, 1st April

- Please pray for the Year 4 children and staff of All Saints' School as they celebrate their Palm Sunday Service this afternoon.
- People living in Teescroft.

## Tuesday, 2nd April

- Please pray for those looking for meaningful, fulfilling employment and all those who seek to help them find it.
- People living in Wansbeck Wood.

## Wednesday, 3rd April

- Please pray for the Didcot TRAIN Youth Project, our local mission partners.
- People living in Beaulieu Mews.

## Thursday, 4th April

- Please pray for those who find it hard to control their emotions.
- People living in Rother Garth.

## Friday, 5th April

- Please pray for our music group meeting to pray, praise and practise this evening.
- People living in Blackwater Way.

## Saturday, 6th April

- Please pray for for all those who work in accountancy, taxation and other parts of the finance industry.
- People living in Crookdale Beck.

## Sunday, 7th April

- Please pray for our AGM/AVM & APCM.
- People living in Grange Beck.

## Monday, 8th April

- Please pray for teachers and other staff that they might find time to rest and recharge their batteries during the school holidays.
- People living in Mersey Way.

## Tuesday, 9th April

- Please pray for those families who struggle to feed and entertain their children during the school holidays.
- People living in Venners Water.

## Wednesday, 10th April

- Please pray for Pastor Gay, our mission partner in the Philippines.
- People living in Ancholme Close.

#### Thursday, 11th April

- Please pray for all those meeting round the Kitchen Table this evening for food, fun and fellowship.
- People living in Dulas Close.

#### Friday, 12th April

- Please pray for those who face persecution and harassment in their daily lives.
- People living in Longford Way.

#### Saturday, 13th April

- Please pray for those who work in our shopping centres.
- People living in Cow Lane.

#### Sunday, 14th April

- On entering Jerusalem, Jesus went and cleared the Temple courts of the money changers and sellers (Matthew 21:12-13). Let's pray that God might overturn the attitudes and practices in our lives that get in the way of true worship.
- People living in Lea Grove.

#### Monday, 15th April

- In his last days, people sought Jesus to try to understand what he was saying about himself (John 12:20-36). Let's pray for those who long to find answers but still struggle to see that they can be found in Christ.
- People living in Swarbourne Close.

#### Tuesday, 16th April

- Please pray for the Bungokho Rural Development Centre in Mbale, Uganda – our mission partners through CMS/Church Army Africa.
- People living in Tyne Avenue.

#### Wednesday, 17th April

- Jesus encountered a fruitless fig tree, which later withered. Let's pray for those who seem to have lost their passion for Christ.
- People working in Lostock Place.

#### Thursday, 18th April

- As we gather to remember the Last Supper, let's pray for those who are facing difficult, possibly life-changing situations.
- People living in Nunney Brook.

#### Friday, 19th April

- Please pray for the Act of Witness and Good Friday Service taking place in the town centre this morning – that it would speak to those going about their shopping.
- People living in Ashburn Place.

#### Saturday, 20th April

- Please pray for Messy Church meeting today.
- People living in Doe Lea.

#### Sunday, 21st April

- Let's give thanks for Jesus!
- People living in Brunstock Beck.

### Monday, 22nd April

- Please pray for those working in customer services.
- People living in Finham Brook.

### Tuesday, 23rd April

- Let's pray for our nation – for greater tolerance and understanding.
- People living in Ingrebourne Way.

### Wednesday, 24th April

- Please pray for our Parents/ Carers and Toddlers' Group meeting today and tomorrow morning.
- People living in Stort Close.

### Thursday, 25th April

- Please pray for our BMS World Mission partners in Amsterdam – David and Dorothy McMillan.
- People living in Monks Lode.

### Friday, 26th April

- Please pray for those who find it hard to forgive and let go of past hurts.
- People living in Lambwath Stream.

### Saturday, 27th April

- Please pray for the continuing development of the Willowbrook Park Estate and for those who will come to live there.
- People living in Prestwick Burn.

### Sunday, 28th April

- Let's pray that God might help us to discover Christ in the people we meet and the situations that we encounter.
- People living in Bowmont Water.

### Monday, 29th April

- Please pray for the Prayer Spaces taking place in Aureus Secondary School this week.
- People living in Tarret Burn.

### Tuesday, 30th April

- Please pray for our RGB youth group meeting this evening in the children's centre.
- People living in Blakehope Burn.



Photo by Patrick Fore on Unsplash

May

Wednesday, 1st May

- Please pray for those working in all aspects of the Civil Service.
- People living in Medlock Grove.

Thursday, 2nd May

- Please pray for the local elections taking place today.
- People living in Chinnock Brook.

Friday, 3rd May

- Please pray for Sharon Jones, our mission partner in Lima, Peru, with Latin Link.
- People living in Abbey Brook.

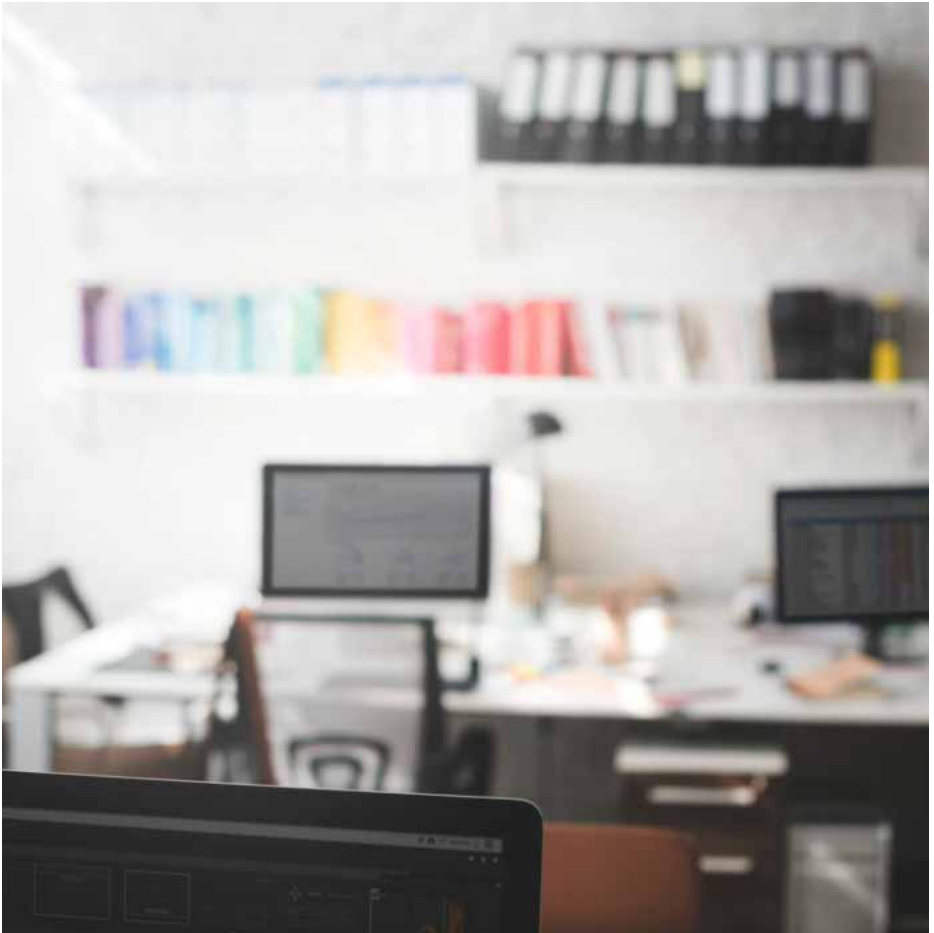
Saturday, 4th May

- Please pray for those who feel abandoned or lonely.
- People living in Sutherland Beck.

Sunday, 5th May

- Let's pray for a clearer vision of how God sees our world and our community so that we might be able to discern where he is calling us to partner him.
- People living in Dudwell.





## **How can I bring the workplace into my faith?**

*While Jesus clearly rejected worldly values, the parables in Luke showed he thought some worldly methods worth a second glance. I am now increasingly convinced that we need to revisit and rethink the workplace, perhaps radically so, writes Terry Young*

How can I bring the workplace into my faith? When I ask the question the other way around, I discover there are many resources on taking my faith to work. The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity has been at the forefront of recent efforts to reclaim the workplace as focus of Christian interest. But isn't there something sinister about the workplace coming into my faith?

The relationship between life in worship and at work is complicated, since personal greed readily invades sacred spaces. We see Jesus resorting to violence to cleanse the temple and reassert its central role as a place of worship. We watch the early Christian leaders leave the workplace at Jesus' call and most preachers see it as a failure when several disciples return to their old job – fishing – in John 21. We note that the disciples sold their possessions rather than set up businesses to fund their charity, while Jesus' warnings about wages, rewards and amassing treasure still ring in our ears.

Overall, we find work healthy – six days for work, a day for worship – because God commissioned people to look after land and livestock. Paul learned a trade (as did all trainee Rabbis) and his network of tentmakers drew Priscilla and Aquilla into the vocation of developing Church leaders. At its best, work is a creative outlet that provides purpose and generates cash: for ourselves, our dependents, and for personal generosity.

Nonetheless, we have inherited a lopsided view of the workplace: positively, it provides income – as would a bonus, an inheritance or benefits – and demonstrates God's provision for us. Negatively, it is a domain of ego and greed (although we like the money). Is that all?

My parents were called away from the workplace to serve God but their children divide evenly between sacred and secular jobs. Growing up, I would listen to my father's lively preaching, which challenged many: some would confide in me that they had once felt called but had not responded. Their sense of regret left me wondering, even then, if their analysis of missing out was right.

The relationship between work and worship has (in the best possible way) haunted me ever since. I left university to earn a living while taking Christian service seriously – leadership, committees, speaking and writing. I am increasingly convinced that we need to revisit and rethink the workplace, perhaps radically so: not just as a place to go into from Church but as a place to bring into Church.

## **Entrepreneurial Luke**

A while ago, in studying Luke, I was struck by the frequent parables about enterprising types: builders using wise construction methods, servants who trade with their masters' wealth, a fortunate farmer, and a shrewd manager. There are stories of rich people who leave Jesus sadly because they cannot let go and those who are overjoyed at the prospect of giving most of their wealth away. Even parables about other things have a financial theme: a Samaritan spends his own money on a stranger, while thieves try to steal a vineyard.

The shrewd manager seems particularly out of place in a parable, but what does Jesus say? 'The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly.'



For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.' (Luke 16:8, NIV). Jesus clearly rejected worldly values but thinks some worldly methods are worth a second glance.

In his *Ballad of the White Horse*, GK Chesterton declares: 'It is only Christian men guard even heathen things.' I don't think Luke wants to import secular values into the Kingdom, but he makes us consider what can happen when working methods filter through believing lives back into Church.

I believe the radical spark lies not in seeing the workplace as somewhere to be redeemed (although many workplaces certainly need that) but as a place where truths about the Kingdom operate in a way that they cannot work in the purely sacred sphere (at least, not yet!).

If this is so, it turns our one-way arrows (from church to work, from minster to laity) into a circular dynamic where each side has important things to listen to and vital things to say. It creates a livelier role in building the Church for maybe 95 per cent of the people who come to church.

## **The way ahead**

In the next four blogs, I would like to explore what difference this might make to:

***Decisions and development.*** In my experience, Christian organisations veer between dramatic, sometimes faith-based, decisions and an overcautious passivity that waits for others to do something first. Furthermore, and in common with many cause-driven organisations, they often treat their own people poorly. What can churches learn from the workspace about decisions, development, and supporting good people?

***Evangelism.*** Churches have accidentally silenced the very people who are most in touch with the dis-evangelised coal face. What is the latest thinking? Where is technology taking us? What philosophies are already changing our lives? Somewhere among



the Church's secular workforce someone will sense an answer. But that is not how we plan evangelism. How could we do better?

**The poor.** If this approach has merit, then alongside a tradition of charitable giving, the Church also enjoys an underused mandate for entrepreneurial wealth creation to the benefit of others. This goes beyond mere survival: it touches many of today's live issues and includes equality and disability. The proposition is fraught with challenges, but worth looking into.

**Redeeming the workplace.** One consequence, presumably unintended, of separating the sacred and the secular as we have done, is that we lose our influence in the workplace. Having denied working Christians a voice in church, it is hardly surprising that the Church has lost its voice at work. What was supposed to be a creative space where effort generates wealth that spills over and blesses society, is more often a meaningless grind.

**Terry Young** was born to missionary parents working in the Middle East. He has always tried to unify his life of worship and secular missions, and has been part of church leadership teams in Essex, and at Slough Baptist Church. He has written a few books that link worlds, including *After the Fishermen*, and *Jake, Just Learn to Worship*.

After a mobile early childhood his family settled in the UK to the northwest of Birmingham, and eventually he studied at the local university. After his doctoral studies he worked for 16 years in Chelmsford undertaking research and business development in the aerospace sector, where his interest was in fibre optics and photonics. In the end he gravitated to healthcare systems and move to Datchet with a position as a university professor.

This article was first published by *The Baptist Times* and is reprinted here with permission. We will share Terry's next four blogs in future editions of this magazine.

# April Diary

Date	Time	Event
Monday, 1st	1:45pm	All Saints' School Year 4's Palm Sunday Service at All Saints' Church. All welcome.
	8.00pm	Prayer Hour at 12 Trent Road. All welcome.
Tuesday, 2nd	7.30pm	Lent Course at the Delaneys
Wednesday, 3rd	9.30am	Ladygrove Parents/Carers and Toddlers Group
	1.45pm	All Saints' School Year 4's Palm Sunday Service at All Saints' Church. All welcome.
Thursday, 4th	9.30am	Ladygrove Parents/Carers and Toddlers Group
Sunday, 7th	10.00am	Morning Service with Children's Groups Luke 15:11-24 Identity: Living Beyond the Search
	12.30pm	Annual General Meeting, Annual Vestry Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting with Shared Lunch
Monday, 8th	8.00pm	Messy Church Planning Meeting for May.
Tuesday, 9th	7.30pm	Lent Course at the Delaneys
Sunday, 14th	10.00am	Baptist Communion Service All Together Luke 19:28-40 Palm Sunday
Tuesday, 16th	7.30pm	Lent Course at the Delaneys
Thursday, 18th	7.30pm	Passover Meal at 12 Trent Road. All welcome.
Friday, 19th	11.30am	Good Friday Service at the Sainsbury's Amphitheatre. Meet at Didcot Methodist Church from 10.30am for refreshments with Walk of Witness starting at 11.10am.
Saturday, 20th	3.00pm	Easter Messy Church. All welcome.
Sunday, 21st	5.45am	Easter Sunrise Service on the Mound. All welcome.
	10.00am	Easter Worship All Together Anglican Communion Luke 24:1-12 Easter Morning

Date	Time	Event
Wednesday, 24th	9.30am	Ladygrove Parents/Carers and Toddlers Group
Thursday, 25th	9.30am	Ladygrove Parents/Carers and Toddlers Group
Sunday, 28th	10.00am	Morning Service All Together John 20:19-31 Easter Evening
Monday 29th – Friday, 3rd May		Prayer Spaces at Aureus Secondary School
Monday, 29th	8.00pm	Worship All Together Planning Meeting
<b>May Diary</b>		
Thursday, 1st	9.30am	Ladygrove Parents/Carers and Toddlers Group
Thursday, 2nd		Local Elections – Don't forget to vote!
Sunday, 5th	10.00am	Morning Service Luke 5:27-32 Living the Gospel: Oikos

## Messy Church

**Saturday 20th April - 3-5pm**  
Ladygrove Community Centre



Crafts, games, activities and worship for families, followed by picnic tea. Offers of help and donations of finger food will be welcome! Please speak to Hugh for more information.

# Homegroups

There are a number of homegroups meeting throughout the week at various times and venues - some with a specific focus; others more generic.

For more details, speak to Hugh.

Tuesdays	7-8:30pm	RGB youth group at the Children's Centre Contact Hugh 819036
	8:00pm	Re-hydrate Men's Group on the first Tuesday of the month for Bible study Contact Jamie 07881 710171
Thursdays	7:30pm	Kitchen Table for 20's and 30's at Sarah and Vaughn Lawfull's home Contact Sarah and Vaughn 211868
	8:00pm	Refresh Ladies' Group - check with Lindsey for venue Contact Lindsey 819036
	8:00pm	Re-hydrate Men's Group on the third Thursday of the month for a social gathering Contact Jamie 07881 710171
	8:00pm	Home Group at Ian and Kathryn Sykes' home Contact Ian and Kathryn 850085

