

Newsletter for MARCH 2013

No Cross, no Crown

is the title of *A Discourse showing the Nature and Discipline of the Holy Cross of Christ, and that, the Denial of Self, and Daily Bearing of Christ's Cross, is the alone Way to the Rest and Kingdom of God*, written in 1682 by William Penn (for whom Pennsylvania is named). Christ's way is to be our way too; and our celebration of the joy of Easter will be superficial if we have not first journeyed with him in his sufferings, and reckoned with their consequences for our own journey. That is why we follow the pattern, established in dramatic form in the early Christian centuries, of keeping 'Holy Week', for which the gospels set the chronology and provide the detail.

On **Palm Sunday** we 'enter Jerusalem' with our palms, having turned each leaf waved in triumph to greet the King (*Hosanna*, they cried) into a cross (*Crucify*, the same people cried a few days later) as together we read the passion gospel - this year from St Luke - in full. On **Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday** - each day with its own theme - we hope some will be able to come to the Eucharist at 8am. **Maundy Thursday** also sees a stark shift, from the intimacy of the shared meal to the isolation of Gethsemane garden (*it was night*, says John when Judas leaves the table); so, having shared his supper, we keep watch in the presence of the sacramental remains of bread and wine as his betrayal and arrest proceed. On **Good Friday**, we share Churches Together in Stepney and Wapping's walk of witness - praying and singing and carrying the cross, not in churches, but through the streets - and then gather for our most solemn service of the year, kneeling at the foot of the cross and remembering his death (*It is finished*) by sharing again the broken bread and poured-out wine of the previous night - the meal which has become a sacrifice. **Easter Eve** (*it was the day of preparation*) is when we give the church a good clean and wait expectantly, before gathering in the evening to welcome the resurrection, lighting up the church with candles and song, renewing the vows of our baptism into the Lord's death and resurrection, and sharing the first communion of Easter.

Whether you're here or elsewhere, keep as much of this Holy Week as you can, to make **no cross, no crown** a fresh reality. Remember that all who wish to be regarded as 'in good standing' with the church must certainly make their Easter communion. Let the Rector know if you need the sacrament to be brought to you at home.

Electoral Roll

Most years the church electoral roll is revised prior to the annual parochial meeting, but every six years - including 2013 - a new roll is prepared, and everyone has to re-register. This is so that the list can be kept up-to-date.

We hope that everyone who regards St George-in-the-East as 'their' church and who qualifies to go on the electoral roll will do. (The qualifications are spelled out in detail on the form.)

It's an important document because

- a) although anyone can claim to be 'C of E', the roll is the local church's working document of all those who are its current 'members', and it needs to be as full as possible;
- b) the numbers on the roll determine the size of our Parochial Church Council, and how many members of Deanery Synod we are entitled to;
- c) it gives you voting rights in the life of the church - and also the right to be married here if you live outside the parish!

The closing date for enrolment is Sunday 7 April. A new roll will then be prepared and displayed in church for checking, but no new names can be added before the **Annual Parochial Meeting** on 28 April. (Note that only your name, and whether or not you live in the parish, is displayed - not your address or other contact details.)

Forms are available in church, or you can print one off [here](#) to complete. They should be returned to church, in person or by post to Wendy Ramanoop (the Electoral Roll Officer) at the church address.

We are using the form to update our address and email lists, and hope you will complete the optional section giving these details, which will remain confidential. This year the diocese is also asking for email addresses so that they can send mailings to church members, but we will only pass on this information if you tick the box.

Please make sure you complete your form in good time. We will be contacting everyone on the current roll whom we believe still qualifies, but please don't wait to hear from us! More information about the Annual Meeting next month.

Other news in brief

- ◆ The March all-age service will be a week later than usual - on **Mothering Sunday**.
- ◆ Gill Newman (our bishop's wife) and Carol Ryder (from Christ Church Spitalfields) have visited a number of schools, including our own, to show pictures and talk about their visit to the refugees in northern **Syria**, seeking further support to provide bags and pencils to enable children in the camps to have some basic education. Churches in the area, especially those dedicated to St Paul (which is part of our title), have been asked to keep a time of prayer for Syria, that eyes and hearts might be opened to its people's plight - since it was on the Damascus Road that the eyes of Paul's heart were opened and he began to follow Christ and work for the coming of his kingdom. We invite you to come into church any time during the day on Tuesday 19 March (the day when St Paul's Cathedral has a similar vigil planned) and offer your prayers. Material to help you will be available.
- ◆ The Rector has produced a short document on the issue of **same-sex marriage**, focusing not on the side issue of getting married (where, and by whom) but on the deeper questions about being married, and the need for all to acknowledge the status of those who make this public commitment. Copies are available in church, or you can read it [here](#).
- ◆ The **peregrine falcons** in the tower are preparing to breed again, and a nesting box has been put in place to help them.
- ◆ We now have a [deanery website](#), which is worth exploring.
- ◆ We offer you our prayers as we continue our Lenten journey, and the joy of Easter when it arrives!