



17TH MARCH 2019

Jude Cranston writes....

Do you remember those warm, sunny few days we had a couple of weeks ago, when we all thought spring had arrived? They seem a distant memory as I write this with storm Gareth battling outside. It has made me think how the first few warm days of spring are a bit like the first few days or weeks after you first become a Christian. Everything's wonderful, and you can't imagine ever being cold again! Then it all goes wrong. The weather decided it wasn't spring after all! Things aren't all pink and rosy any more. And it's confusing, disappointing!

Last week I got caught in the rain while walking from one side of Bicester to the other. I looked around for somewhere to shelter, and thought about calling for a taxi, but by the time these thoughts had passed through my mind I was already pretty wet. So I thought, you know what, there comes a point when you just can't get any wetter! And I knew that if I kept putting one foot in front of the other I would eventually be back home, where there were towels, a change of clothes and a nice hot cup of tea. And once I had accepted my predicament and acknowledged it would be ok in the end, I started looking up instead of burying my face away, and I noticed that even though the weather's gone cold again, the blossom is still flowering, and the daffodils are holding themselves up against the wind, determined to show their beauty.

I think God is a bit like that blossom. No matter how many bad choices humans make, no matter how much darkness covers the earth, His glory will keep on shining. He has the power to turn darkness into light. And as Paul tells us in Romans 8:18, "our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." So however rainy life gets, his glory will shine through, you just have to look up.

Jude

NOTICES

Outdoor Encounter - An opportunity to worship God in a woodland setting

Meet at Gagle Brook school on Saturday 23rd March 4pm. For more information speak to April Beckerleg or Debbie Winson.

Encounter Evening – experiencing the presence of God

Saturday 23rd March 7-9pm at Gagle Brook Primary School OX27 8BD

MEN'S CURRY NIGHT

Tuesday 19th March—meet at Shakils at 7.45pm. Contact Colin Arter for more details.

Garden Talk

An opportunity to get together and chat about gardens and gardening over a cup of coffee.

Saturday 23rd March and Saturday 27th April 10.30am—12noon. Here at Emmanuel church.

RE-LOVE BICESTER - Saturday 30th March 10am—1pm

Bring any items in good clean condition, stay for a cuppa and a cake and take what you like for free. Entry £1 or donation for food bank. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and avoid things going to landfill.

Chocolate Hamper Auction for Alexandra House of Joy

Please could you give just one bar of chocolate (of any kind) to put in the hamper? All proceeds raised will go towards funds to build this much needed and very unique centre being built in Bicester. Please use the labelled box in the foyer here at ECB. For more information about this project visit <http://www.alexandrahouseofjoy.co.uk>

Sycamore Tree course

Have you been the victim of a crime that you would be willing to speak about on a restorative justice course, run by Prison Fellowship, at a local prison? If so, or for further information, please contact Jane Mitchell on janemitchell200@gmail.com

ROTAS: If you need to check rotas please log on to Church Builder. Contact the church office if you need help doing this.

ECB DIARY

SUN 17th March	10.30am	Informal Worship Sorrow for Jerusalem Leader: Ian Biscoe Preacher: Chris Hunt
	7.00pm	Evening Service (Café open at 6.30pm) Feeding the 5000 Leader: Helen Collier Preacher: Clive Collier
TUES 19th March	9.00am	Prayers
	7.00pm	Prayers
	7.45pm	Men's Curry Evening at Shakils
	7.45pm	PCC Meeting
WED 20th March	10.30am	Oasis Small Group
THUR 21st March	7.30pm	CAP Money Course
FRI 22nd March	9.30am	Cherish Group
	7.00pm	Prayers
	7.30pm	Contemplative Compline
SAT 23rd March	10.30am	Garden Talk
	4.00pm	Outdoor Encounter (meet at Gagle Brook)
	7.00pm	Encounter at Gagle Brook school
SUN 24th March	10.30am	Informal Communion Repent or Perish Leader: Erika Biscoe Preacher: Ian Biscoe
	7.00pm	Evening Service (Café open at 6.30pm) Hospitality as creating space Leader: Nik Christensen Preacher: Nigel Crook

Website: www.emmanuelbicester.org.uk

Notices: newsletter@emmanuelbicester.org.uk

Church Office—01869 320021 administrator@emmanuelbicester.org.uk

All notices to Admin Team by 7pm Wednesday

ministrysupport@emmanuelbicester.org.uk