

**April 2019**

*Rev John writes:*

## **‘NOW THAT’S WHAT I CALL MUSIC!’**



In an office just off the Portobello Road in 1983 two managers of Virgin music had the idea to launch a compilation album of the greatest hits of the year – a deal was eventually struck on Richard Branson’s boat moored in Little Venice. That led to the first ‘Now’ compilation on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1983 (on vinyl and cassette). Containing eleven of the year’s No1 hits the album went straight to the top of the charts. The franchise has just released ‘Now! 102’.

The Old Testament contains a wonderful collection of musical hits too – the book of Psalms. The name comes from a Greek word *psalterion* – which was an ancient stringed instrument. Many of the Psalms are attributed to King David, who we know was a lyricist, songwriter and harp player. King David and the other contributors took ancient poetic texts and set them to music.

The collection of 150 that we have today was brought together over a long period of time (possibly as long as 400 years, and was completed at some time in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, since when it began to be used as a hymnbook in temple and synagogue.

Like popular songs, the psalms come in a variety of styles. There are Psalms of thanksgiving, cries for help, songs of praise, pilgrim songs, wise thoughts, and cries for vengeance. Psalms are rich in imagery and metaphor, they abound in wordplay, alliteration and repetition – which is perhaps why they have spoken to so many generations throughout history. The psalms are not manuals of theology, nor moral lessons, legal lists or historical nuggets – but rather they are personal expressions of the human relationship with God.

All the Psalms are worthy of consideration, sadly it seems anything with more than a dozen verses is often by-passed in modern liturgy. One of the joys of worship at St Martin's is in singing the psalms each week at Evensong.

We all have our personal favourites – my greatest hit list would certainly contain the following:

Psalm 8 – a song of praise and wonder at God's creation.

Psalm 13 – a plaintiff cry in time of trouble.

Psalm 19 – extolling the glory of God.

Psalm 22 – an anguished lament, quoted by Jesus on the Cross

Psalm 23 – perhaps the most famous and popular of all, an expression of trust in the Lord.

Psalm 27 – a song of confidence in the Lord's protection.

Psalm 42 – a psalm of longing for God.

Psalm 46 – a song of Zion, trust and blessing.

Psalm 51 – a great psalm of repentance, forgiveness and mercy. The Lenten psalm.

Psalm 65 – a song of praise for God's goodness.

Psalm 139 – a psalm of devotion and self-examination.

Psalm 150 – a final great hymn of praise, beloved by choristers.

These are my favourites, sadly no room for 1, 65, 67, 119, 121 or 148. What would you choose?

Yours in Christ

Reverend John.

# ***HOLY WEEK AND EASTER***

The events of Holy Week and Easter are the most significant moments in the life of Jesus and centre on the two major tenets of our Christian faith – his death and resurrection. That is why the church focuses so much on worship in this Holy Season, and this year we hope to provide a varied programme of prayer, meditation and worship for the whole church family.

As we are working together with our brothers and sisters in Green St Green and Pratt's Bottom we are planning to share our devotions and worship together over this Holy season.

## ***Palm Sunday***

We shall gather at the **Rectory at 9.30am for the Liturgy of the Palms**, before heading in procession through the village to **St Martin's for a Palm Sunday family service at 10.00am**.

Well Hill will have a Palm Sunday service led by Brian Kemp.

## ***Holy Week***

The story of our Lord's journey to the Cross is well known, powerful and painful – sometimes we pass over it too quickly.

There will be other reflections for the Holy Week Services as we share a quiet start to Holy Week with a series of **Holy Communion and Meditation each evening at 7.30pm**. These will be held as follows:

- Monday at St Mary's, Green St Green
- Tuesday at St Martin's Chelsfield
- Wednesday at All Souls, Pratt's Bottom

## ***Maundy Thursday***

Our **Agape** experience this year will be at **St Mary's, Green St Green at 7.30pm**. We will share a simple supper and join in a simple table Eucharist as we commemorate the Last Supper.

At the end of the Agape we will return to St Martin's for the stripping of the church (at around 9.30pm), and the keeping of a

short vigil of prayer in church, reflecting on Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

### ***Good Friday***

Worship on this most holy day begins with **Litany and Ante-Communion at 8.00am.**

In the morning you are invited to join with the folk from churches all over Orpington for a **Walk of Witness and Worship in Orpington Town Centre.** This will set off from Orpington Methodist church on Sevenoaks Road after a short act of worship at 10.00am. The walk begins at around 10.40am. (see page 25)

Our devotions at St Martin's will see us keep an hour's **'Watch by the Cross' from 2.00 – 3.00pm in the afternoon.**

### ***Holy Saturday***

Come and help decorate the church for Easter in the morning, and join us for the

**Easter Vigil Service at 8.00pm.**

### ***Easter Day***

Services of **Holy Communion at 8.00am (BCP) & 10.00am Family Eucharist (with Easter Egg Hunt) & 11.00am a shortened BCP Eucharist (said)**

as we celebrate the joy of the Resurrection. There will be no evening service at St Martin's, please join us for

**Easter Praise at St Mary's at 6.30pm.**

***Above all remember that Christ died and rose for you,  
to him be glory for ever! Amen.***