

Day	Date	We pray especially for...
Monday	21st	...all who work in health and social care and all who need the services they provide.
Tuesday	22nd	...those involved in agriculture and in all aspects of food production and distribution.
Wednesday	23rd	...those who may be called to be our clergy and all involved in the selection process.
Thursday	24th	...all who work in the criminal justice system in the UK, which faces many challenges.
Friday	25th	...politicians and all involved in public administration in this country, at all levels, that they may exercise sound judgement;...political leaders across the world whose decisions have a profound impact on all of us, that they may act wisely.
Saturday	26th	...all organising and taking part in community and social events in our villages.
Sunday	27th	...our services today at Bedingham, Mundham and on Zoom, that all who attend may be nourished and sustained.
Monday	28th	...the homeless and all suffering from want, neglect or abuse in our society.
Tuesday	29th	...those across the world who are marginalised or oppressed.
Wednesday	30th	...all who need us to pray with or for them, for whatever reason.

Throughout, we pray for those who especially need your help at this time,

remembering: Martin, Ian, Emma, Helen, Michael, Ann, Wendy, John

Bedingham/Woodton: Sheila, Hilary, Peter, Liz, Anne, Bruce, Harry, Sally, Richard, Susan, Marco

Fritton/Morningthorpe: Jason

Hempnall: Lesley and family, Sophia, Claire, David

Long Term Care...

Bedingham/Woodton: Dennis, Shirley, Jacob

Fritton/Morningthorpe: Beryl

Hempnall: Colin

Mundham/Seething: Margaret, Nancy

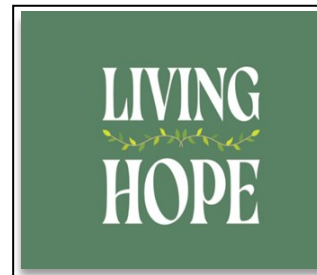
Recently Deceased and Upcoming Funerals...

John Havart, Barrie Buckland, Ruth Hadman, Andrew Matthewson

(Compiled by and for the Brooke Benefice and the Hempnall Group of Parishes)

Image (p.1) acknowledgement: Garden at Sissinghurst, National Trust Images/Andrew Butler at <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/kent/sissinghurst-castle-garden/the-garden-at-sissinghurst-castle-garden> [accessed 19.3.25].

Quotation (p.1) acknowledgement: Vita Sackville-West, 'The Garden' (London: Michael Joseph, 1946); extracts widely available online.



The Brooke Benefice and The Hempnall Group Thoughts and Prayers April 2025

A Perspective on April...

In 'The Garden', her final book of poetry published in 1946, the writer (and gardener) Vita Sackville West famously described April as 'the angel of the months, the young love of the year.' It's an arresting representation. And it's certainly a lot more complementary than the opinion of many who in various online surveys seem to regard April as 'fair to middling'... 'neither one thing nor the other'.



Sissinghurst Castle Garden in April

As part of preparing to write this I checked out views of April with a random assortment of friends and acquaintances: what did the month conjure up for them? Images and memories of budding flowers and trees, spring walks – and spring cleaning – were common. (More unusual was one decisive answer I received – 'Ants!' Ants? Yes, ants awake from winter slumber at this time of year and can already start to be a nuisance...).

What struck me was that hardly anyone said 'Easter' – whereas if asked a similar question about December most would probably refer in some way to 'Christmas'.

Now, of course, that's at least in part because Easter has always been a moveable feast. Determining a date for it was a matter of major controversy in the early church and even after agreement was reached in the C4th CE (ie that it should be on the Sunday after the first full moon following the Spring equinox) there was further fine tuning of the calculations. The Eastern Orthodox Church uses a different calendar and its Easter is later - but the effect for Roman Catholics and Protestants is that Easter can fall on any Sunday between 22 March and 25 April, depending on lunar cycles. In practice, more often than not, it's in April (19th April being the most frequent date – this year it's on the 20th). But it's not associated with a month in the same way as Christmas is.

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Nor its celebration embedded. Easter to many people is about chocolate and bank holidays – both things that are enjoyed, certainly – but with even less appreciation of a Christian dimension than is the case with Christmas. Perhaps that’s because the concepts of Easter are less readily understood. The birth of Jesus as a special child is somehow easier to talk about and to grasp than the significance of his subsequent death and resurrection. Yet for us as Christians the events of Easter are at the core of our faith and it’s our most important festival. After all it’s only because of Easter that we mark Christmas.

So in the coming month, when Easter once again falls in April, let’s recognise and try to meet a challenge: let’s try to think through for ourselves what Easter means for us and seek to share that with someone else, to whom this might be quite new. Perhaps in future, when looking back – and when looking ahead – they might then be able to say, ‘Ah yes, April 2025; that’s when I found out about Easter...

~Liam Pilgrim~

Sunday Readings	
6th April 2025 Lent 5 Passion Sunday	<i>Psalm 126</i> <i>Philippians 3:4b-14</i> <i>John 12:1-8</i>
13th April 2025 Palm Sunday	<i>Psalm 118:1-2;19-end</i> <i>Luke 19:28-40</i>
20th April 2025 Easter Day	<i>Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24</i> <i>Acts 10:34-43</i> <i>John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12</i>
27th April 2025 Easter 2	<i>Psalm 118:14-end</i> <i>Acts 5:27-32</i> <i>John 20:19-end</i>

Day	Date	We pray especially for...
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>1st</i>	...God's guidance and presence, asking for strength and wisdom to face the challenges of this month, to explore fresh opportunities and to be equipped for new tasks ...our lay Ministry Team (John, Liam, Tim and Jackie), meeting today to plan future services.
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>2nd</i>	...our local communities and all who live and work in them;
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>3rd</i>	...our two benefices during the clergy recruitment process now underway; and for all those contributing to the ongoing worship and mission which continues here.
<i>Friday</i>	<i>4th</i>	...our children, young people, teachers and other staff in our local schools, as the Spring Term ends today and their Easter break begins.

Day	Date	We pray especially for...
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>5th</i>	...all who engage in sport locally and everyone who supports and encourages them.
Sunday	6th	...all worshipping together in our Holy Communion services this morning at Brooke and Topcroft; and with the Family Praise team at Hempnall this afternoon.
<i>Monday</i>	<i>7th</i>	...those we know who are experiencing physical or mental ill health and those who provide care and support.
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>8th</i>	...all involved in the governance, planning and co-ordination of our church activities, including Frances, as our administrator, and all serving on our various church councils.
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>9th</i>	...our church premises and all involved in looking after them; our Churchwardens and Designated Persons; our Fabric Officers and Building Administrators; our cleaners and those who tend our churchyards.
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>10th</i>	...our Lent Lunch, in Morningthorpe, in aid of Emmaus; ...all who live and work in the Emmaus community at Ditchingham.
<i>Friday</i>	<i>11th</i>	...our environment, that we may take care of it.
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>12th</i>	...all who run businesses/offer services in our communities.
Sunday	13th	...all participating in our worship on Palm Sunday in Hempnall and Seething.
<i>Monday</i>	<i>14th</i>	...our final Lent Lunch at Hempnall Mill Centre in aid of Emmaus; ...our Compline services during Holy Week, at the end of our busy days.
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>15th</i>	...those who need the services of local foodbanks and those who make donations to them.
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>16th</i>	...our Home Communion Assistants and all whom they visit; all in our communities who are especially vulnerable; all who provide pastoral support in our parishes, in many different ways; ... those walking with the Holy Week Pilgrim Cross from Essex to Walsingham, stopping for refreshments today at Hardwick Church.
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>17th</i>	...all offering support to older people; ...our worship together this evening, on this Maundy Thursday, at Topcroft.
<i>Friday</i>	<i>18th</i>	...on this Good Friday, our greater understanding of the significance of the death of Jesus on the Cross; ...our Pilgrimage today from Thwaite to Brooke and our worship with words and music this afternoon in Hempnall Church ...Michael Windridge as he returns today to lead worship at Hempnall Church, after breaking his leg before Christmas.
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>19th</i>	...our families, friends and all who are dear to us.
Sunday	20th	...the experience and sharing of Easter Day joy as we celebrate all that it means; ...our services of Holy Communion in Brooke and in Hempnall and acts of worship elsewhere in lighting the Easter candle; ...our celebration this afternoon with the Family Praise Team in Hempnall; ...our recognition of the glory of God in all creation.