

Happy Easter! Despite March's 'beast from the east' and 'Storm Emma', with the change of clocks and lighter nights we can, we hope, look forward to better weather with winter finally behind us and the dawning of spring.

Here at St Swithun's we are celebrating the most important Christian festival of the year when, after 40 days of Lent and the dramatic events of Holy Week and the cross, Easter reminds us of the risen Jesus who willingly gave up all to bring us new life and hope. Not only for our own lives, but for the whole of creation. In the church calendar, after Easter Sunday, we enter into 50 days of the Season of Easter which leads up to the Festival of Pentecost, when we remember the coming of the Holy Spirit to empower and equip the young church as it grows.

Every year, as the months go by, the cycle of the Christian church calendar tells us time and again the story of the Christian faith from Advent to Christmas through Epiphany and Lent, to Easter and to Pentecost, Harvest, Remembrance and back to Advent again. As we tell this amazing story of God's participation with humanity, again and again, as followers of Jesus, we learn more about the story itself, and about God the story-teller.

But in between the big festivals we have lots of what the church calendar rather interestingly calls 'Ordinary Time'. This is, in fact, far from ordinary, because it is in the everyday, not just the big festivals and important occasions, when we live out the stories of our lives, and where, as a followers of Jesus, we learn more about how the big story of God's participation with humankind shapes our lives: how it challenges us in daily life, in our relationships with family, friends and work colleagues, how it shapes our response to events local, national and global. God is very much interested in the ordinary days of our lives and stories.

So, if you would like to know more about the story of the Christian faith, we would love to share more with you and to welcome you to St Swithun's. Contact one of the clergy team, come along to a service or to Messy Church. See the web for more details.

Rev Alison Mathew