

Donations

April 2026

Easter

**GREETINGS
FROM
LUDLOW
METHODIST
CHURCH**





Our Story, Our Song: Growing your Calling in Worship

With the President of the Methodist Conference

Do you feel called to lead worship or see it flourish in your church?

Join us for a day designed to encourage, equip and inspire everyone involved in worship across our churches.

Saturday 9 May | 9:30–15:30
Trinity Methodist Church, Kidderminster, DY10 2JL

Save the date! More information coming soon...



Mark your
calendar!

Psalm 121

I look up to the mountains- does my help come from there?
My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and He is a God who made heaven and earth!

He will not let you stumble; the one who watches over you will not slumber. Indeed, he who watches over Israel never slumbers or sleeps.

The Lord himself watches over you! The Lord stands beside you as your protective shade.

The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon at night.

The Lord keeps you from all harm and watches over your life.

The Lord keeps watch over you as you come and go, both now and forever.

Amen.

People often find this Psalm comforting.

Its meaning centres on deep and unswerving trust in God. Some see God as an ever-watchful protector who guards us people through every stage of life.

This psalm is illuminating because God is referred to six times as someone who watches over us, shamar; a tireless protector who does not sleep; caring for us at all times, in all ways.

His real and eternal care covers us in all our comings, goings and doings.

I have a doormat that Flik gave me for Christmas: it says, “You are blessed going out: you are blessed coming in.” Basically we are blessed every day in every way.

Heavenly Father, we lift our eyes to you, the Maker of heaven and earth, recognizing that You are our true source of help.

Lord, please keep our feet firmly on your path and be our protective presence through the trials of the day.

We entrust our journey to You, asking that You watch over our going out and our coming in, both now and forevermore.

In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

Denise

MAKING UP FOR LOST OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN

As with many aspects of our lives, I think we take for granted the availability of educational opportunities - yet this is far from the situation in many parts of the world. In many parts of the world, attendance in primary school is the only flicker of normality for millions of children.

In Syria Christian Aid, with its local partner, Darna, has been working to provide safe spaces to enable them to teach new skills, improve existing skills, increase resilience and encourage inclusion of children and young people through remedial methods, vocational training, psychological support and community involvement.

Before the national and international conflicts which have been raging since 2011 almost all Syria's children were enrolled in primary school- now the rate of attendance is among the lowest in the world and millions of people have been internally displaced.

Mahmoud faced unemployment after being twice displaced forcibly, with the consequent disruption to all aspects of his life. But he volunteered to work with his community at the Darna Centre - an educational and life skills centre run by one of Christian Aid's partners and funded by the EU. Here Mahmoud could improve his IT skills, learn project management and communication skills. He had to juggle the requirements of his course with his family's needs and his commitment led to him being offered a internship.



Mahmoud studying in the Darna Centre

With a proven portfolio of skills and accompanying growing confidence he secured a job with an organisation providing medical and general relief for people affected by the Syrian conflict.

"Darna opened the door for me and it is now my responsibility to keep going forward to prove myself and to help others."

Christian Aid has reached over 500 young people through these centres providing skills and education, a spark of hope for young people engulfed in a conflict we cannot imagine.

Please remember the work of Christian Aid in your prayers and support this work whenever you can. And the next opportunity for that is coming up very soon with Lent Lunches on two Fridays this month - Friday 13 March and Friday 20 March, in St Laurence's. Please support one or both.

Claire Wilcox
07906 894 027



Notes from the Church Life meeting held on Tuesday 10th February 2026

Ecumenical Lenten talks for five weeks, led by Rev Neil Richardson on the topic 'Christian Resilience in Dark Times, starting on Tuesday 24th February.

Rev Denise will be on sabbatical for three months from 1st April, followed by three weeks annual leave. Her theme will be 'Sacred Space'. She will visit several cathedrals in England, France and Spain, have a retreat in Wales and study two books – Sacred Space (Irish Celtic) and Kenneth Bailey's Paul through Mediterranean Eyes.

10th – 17th May – Celebrations to mark 20th Anniversary of church refurbishment and opening of Wesley's
Sunday 10th May – preacher, Rev Dr Neil Richardson;
Sunday 17th May – preacher - Rev Rachel Deigh, District Chairperson, followed by Bring and Share lunch in the Zion Room

Exhibitions in the side aisles of the church; on one side to celebrate the life of the church and Wesley's, and on the other side exhibitions by regular rental groups.
Wesley's menu will be at 2006 prices (half price current menu) for the week.

Concert in the church - 'Chiefly Ourselves' on Friday 15th.
Guided tours round the building; volunteers needed to take people round on request during cafe hours.

Christmas Carol Service 2026 change of time – proposal to change time from 6.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m. After discussion it was agreed to combine the service with Tea and Worship on 20th December at 3.00 p.m. for this year as 27th (Tea and Worship usual date) may be too near to Christmas to meet. Refreshments would just be mince pies and shortbread, or similar. To be decided whether to have it in the church or cafe area.

Leafletting to new housing estates giving details of church services – it was agreed that this would be better done ecumenically. Mike will take the suggestion to CTAL.

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 21st April, 3.30 p.m. in the Upper Room

Elizabeth

Methodist eNews

A Palestinian Christian living just outside Bethlehem describes what life has been like in Palestine recently

"For nearly three days now, (5.3.26), we've been living through the latest escalation in the Middle East, and the toll is already heavy. In Bethlehem, I find myself growing more anxious by the day, increasingly worried about our families, friends and loved ones. The uncertainty and distance make it even harder, knowing they are all facing their own risks while we try to cope with ours.

"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, he entered a world of uncertainty and danger. There was no room in the inn, and Mary and Joseph had to place him in a humble manger, finding shelter in whatever space they could. They were vigilant, protecting him from a world that felt unstable and often unwelcoming. That first night was not comfortable; it was a night of care, concern and awareness of fragility.

"Today, we in Bethlehem live in a painfully similar reality. Night after night, emergency alarms wake us from broken sleep. Children cry in fear, parents rush to gather them and neighbours come together to find the safest place in the building – often in stairwells, because there are no proper shelters. We sleep in our clothes, ready to run at a moment's notice. The gates surrounding Bethlehem are closed by the Israel Defence Forces, limiting movement, and fear and anxiety press on every heart. Families who were already distressed before this escalation now bear an even heavier burden.

"Like Mary and Joseph, we protect our children as best we can, sharing our limited spaces and resources, holding onto each other in moments of uncertainty. This reminds us that God is present even in these fearful times. Just as he watched over Jesus in Bethlehem, he watches over every family living in alarm and distress today, sustaining them with courage and hope.

"Holy God, we lift before you the lives of those lost in this war and the families who are living in fear of violence. We lament a world where our children cannot live lives of dignity, but instead are forced to grow up under occupation, in a constant state of fear and death. May your Spirit embolden all who resist this occupation with truth and courage. Help keep us steadfast in our faith that your justice will soon come to the land and its people."

Elizabeth



Easter

at Ludlow Methodist Church

Lenten Reflections

every Tuesday until March 24th at 2.30pm.
Led by Rev Dr Neil Richardson

Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service

2nd April at 7.30pm, led by Janet Williams

Good Friday Walk of Witness

3rd April starting 9.30am from Ludlow Mascall Centre.
A Churches Together Around Ludlow (CTAL) joint procession,
walking through town finishing in Castle Square

Good Friday Service of Reflection

3rd April, 11am, led by Rev Dr Neil Richardson

Easter Sunday, sunrise service at Whitcliffe Common

5th April at 8.00am, led by Stephen Dalton

Easter Sunday Morning Worship and Holy Communion

5th April at 10.30am, led by Adrian Williams.



Green Pages

A round-up of environmental
and climate-change news

April 2026

Maundy Thursday, time to wash feet

Maundy Thursday is famous for two things. The first is one of the final acts that Jesus did before His death: the washing of His own disciples' feet (see John 13). Jesus washed His disciples' feet for a purpose: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is 'mandatum novum do vobis'. The word 'mundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (or command). The ceremony of the 'washing of the feet' of members of the congregation came to be an important part of the liturgy (regular worship) of the medieval church, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

But Thursday was also important because it was on that night that Jesus first introduced the Lord's Supper, or what we nowadays call Holy Communion.

Jesus and His close friends had met in a secret upper room to share the Passover meal together - for the last time. And there Jesus transformed the Passover into the Lord's Supper, saying, 'this is my body' and 'this is my blood' as He, the Lamb of God, prepared to die for the sins of the whole world. John's gospel makes it clear that the Last Supper took place the evening BEFORE the regular Passover meal, and that later Jesus died at

"Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, 'Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.' So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces left over by those who had eaten."

John 6:11-13

After the generous miracle of feeding over 5,000 people, Christ instructed his disciples to gather the fragments leftover. He was both generous and frugal.

A slice of bread, a potato, and a few vegetables are among the most wasted foods in our homes today. We throw away 24 million slices of bread and 4.4 million potatoes every day. The average UK household discards £620 worth of food every year. The biggest driver of food waste is from our homes - not big businesses or far-flung places abroad.

So, food waste is a problem on our doorstep, and globally one-third of all food produced every year is thrown away. Yet 800 million people go to bed hungry each night.

Food waste is both a hunger and a climate issue. It contributes more to climate change than flying! 6% of global emissions come from food that is never eaten – three times higher than the aviation industry. When food rots in landfill, it releases methane, a greenhouse gas over 80 times more potent than CO₂ in the short term.

Climate change is already affecting our food. Extreme weather disrupted harvests across Europe in 2024 and 2025, pushing up prices on everyday staples. When we waste less, we ease pressure on a food system already under strain.

Climate Stewards

UK Ban to Plastic Wet Wipes

Landmark legislation protects waterways from microplastic pollution and reduces costly sewer blockages. Over 30.5 billion wet wipes enter the UK market annually, with more than 25 billion containing plastic. The ban targets plastic fibres that persist in sewers, rivers and oceans for decades, unlike plastic-free alternatives that break down naturally. The ban in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland will take effect in spring 2027.

Wet wipes cause 94% of all sewer blockages across the UK. Water companies spend roughly £200 million annually clearing blockages, a massive cost passed to households through higher water bills.

Beaches face mounting pollution. On average, 20 wet wipes litter every 100 metres of UK beach. When wet wipes hit rivers and oceans, they break into microplastics that accumulate in fish and marine creatures, eventually entering human food chains.

Manufacturers have already begun transitioning to plastic-free materials. Retailers like Tesco, Aldi, and Boots have phased out plastic wet wipes from their shelves. In 2024, only 12% of manufacturers produced completely plastic-free wipes. They now source alternatives from bamboo, cotton, viscose, and cellulose materials.

Families can switch to plastic-free wipes immediately. Consumers must remember one essential fact: nothing except human waste and toilet paper should go down toilets. Even plastic-free wipes cause blockages when flushed. All wet wipes should go in household waste bins.

Volunteers with the Beachwatch programme collected data showing wet wipe pollution patterns, providing scientists with the evidence needed to justify legislative action. The ban shows that sustained pressure from campaigners, scientists, and citizens can drive policy change. It demonstrates that businesses can adapt to environmental regulations when given clear timelines and support. As other nations watch Britain's implementation, the UK plastic wet wipes ban may inspire similar bans globally.

Happy Eco News

Delay of a ban on peat is harming the environment

Behind every bag of peat compost sold in garden centres lies a hidden and devastating ecological cost: the destruction of an ancient and irreplaceable habitat, the release of thousands of tonnes of carbon into our atmosphere, and the creation of a barren, dry landscape unable to protect communities from extreme weather events.

Beyond their climate benefits, healthy peatlands store and slow water flows, reducing flood risk and creating a rich mosaic of habitat that helps prevent the spread of wildfires. Peatland ecosystems store 3.2 billion tonnes of carbon, which makes their protection and restoration essential in the fight against climate change. Healthy peat bogs are also home to wildlife such as curlews and the large heath butterfly. All this is lost when peat is extracted for horticulture, and extraction releases vast amounts of carbon, with 880,000 tonnes of CO₂ released from horticulture peat extraction in 2020 alone.

In August 2022, the previous government made a commitment to ban the sale of peat for use in horticulture by 2024, and the phasing out in professional horticulture by 2030. The current UK Government recommitted to this promise, and there is cross-party support for the ban from the Liberal Democrats, Conservatives, Labour and Green parties. However, despite years of promises, we are still waiting for a legal ban on the use of peat in horticulture.

This delay is undoing progress in sustainable horticulture and undercutting businesses that have invested in peat-free practices. The latest polling suggests widespread public support, with 95% of respondents favouring a ban on retail peat. Protecting peat is one of the simplest and most effective climate and nature actions the UK can take. The Wildlife Trusts are working with MPs to urge Government action.

You can help by signing the Peat-Free Partnership petition, calling on the Government to put a ban on horticultural peat into law without further delay. Meanwhile, the delay in delivering on the promised peat ban is hurting nature, climate and business. It's high time for action.

The Wildlife Trusts

Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle

Almost everything we buy and use in our daily lives has a carbon footprint, from its manufacture to its transport, and ends up being thrown away at some point, risking harm to the planet some way. Most people are familiar with the 3 Rs: **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**, now there are two more: **Refuse** and **Repair**.

Refuse: Our lives are full of stuff we don't need. Even a simple action such as refusing a disposable coffee cup can make a significant environmental difference. Globally we use 16 billion disposable coffee cups every year and they are extremely difficult to recycle. If you do need to buy things, do it thoughtfully.

Reduce: Resist impulse buying; give yourself a couple of days to think it over. Carry a re-useable shopping bag. Never buy single use plastic bottles. Buy items that are made to last. Grow some of your own food.

Reuse: Ditch disposable for reusable every time. Reusing an item reduces the demand for more resources. It can also save you money. Think about whether you need to buy brand-new, buy quality items that will last. Shop in charity shops.

Repair: Too many items are thrown away simply because we don't know how to fix them or it's too expensive to do so. Before you throw it out check to see if anyone else could make use of it through online sites such as Freecycle, Preloved and Gumtree. Use Repair Cafes – Ludlow's happens every 3-months on the last Saturday of the month.

Recycle: Only when you've tried everything else, it is time for the final R. Even recycling processes have their own carbon footprint. Anything made from metal, wood, most plastics, paper and electronic e-waste are all likely to have a recycling option. Be aware that what you recycle can affect a whole truck's worth of recycling, so please recycle wisely.

*The Green Pages of the Ludlow Methodist Church monthly magazine
are brought to you by the Care for Creation Group.
For more information please contact Elizabeth Wright.*

Good Friday, Jesus and the thieves on the Cross

Luke's account of the crucifixion (Luke 23:32-43) emphasises the mocking of the crowd, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself' (35,37,39). In their view a Messiah does not hang on a cross and suffer. In considering the two men who were crucified with Jesus, we are also confronted with the issue of how Jesus secures salvation for us.

The words of one of those crucified with Jesus reflected the crowd's taunts: 'Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us.' He highlights the question of Jesus' identity: how can He save others, when He cannot save Himself from death? He failed to see that the cross itself was the means of salvation.

So - what kind of Messiah was Jesus?

The other criminal's response in his last moments is a moving expression of faith. When challenging the other man, he spoke of the utter injustice of the crucifixion: 'this man has done nothing wrong.' He perceived the truth that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. In a wonderful picture of grace, 'remember me when You come into Your kingdom', the second thief confessed his guilt and secured Jesus' forgiveness and mercy.

In reply, Jesus promised the man life from the moment of death; 'Today you will be with Me in paradise.' Jesus used the picture of a walled garden to help the man understand His promise of protection and security in God's love and acceptance eternally.

Each one of us has to choose how we react to Jesus on the cross. Do we want Him to 'remember' us when He comes into His kingdom, or not? If you were to die tonight, how confident would you be of going to be with Jesus? 'For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God' (1 Peter 3:18).

Easter morning, the 'Other' Mary

As the traditional Easter story is rehearsed again this month, you may notice that there is one name that frequently occurs. It is that of the 'other' Mary – not the mother of Jesus, but Mary of Magdalene, who stood by her at the cross and became the first person actually to meet the risen Christ.

That's quite a record for a woman who, the Gospels tell us, had been delivered by Jesus from 'seven devils' – New Testament language for some dark and horrible affliction of body, mind or spirit. As a result, her devotion to Him was total and her grief at His death overwhelming.

In church history Mary Magdalene became the 'fallen woman' a harlot who was rescued and forgiven by Jesus but there is no evidence to prove she was a 'fallen woman' but the contrast is sublime, Mary the virgin mother, the symbol of purity. Mary Magdalene, the scarlet woman who was saved and forgiven, the symbol of redemption. Surely, we all fall somewhere between those two extremes.

The dark cloud from which she was delivered may have been sexual, we are not told. What we do know is that the two Marys stood together at the cross, the Blessed Virgin and the woman rescued from who knows what darkness and despair.

The second great moment for her was as unexpected as it was momentous. She had gone with other women to the tomb of Jesus and found it empty. An angelic figure told them that Jesus was not there, He had risen – and the others drifted off. But Mary stayed, reluctant to leave it like that. She became aware of a man nearby, whom she took to be the gardener. She explained to him that the body of 'her Lord' had been taken away and she didn't know where to find Him.

The man simply said her name 'Mary' and she instantly realised it was Jesus. She made to hug Him, but He told her not to touch Him because His resurrection was not yet complete. She was, however, to go to the disciples and tell them she had met Him. She did – but they wouldn't believe her.

Fooling around – the BBC's spaghetti farm

Probably the most famous April Fool's joke of all time was the 1960's BBC TV broadcast

feature on the spaghetti farms of Italy. A BBC reporter interviewed Italian farmers about their work and the progress of the spaghetti plants in great detail. Spaghetti plants were filmed being carefully planted, and then being harvested. And all in the BBC's most serious documentary manner. It took a while to appreciate that this was Auntie playing games. Whatever next!

The odd thing is that no one is quite sure of the origin of this very British tradition. Most attribute it to changes in Britain's calendar in the 1700s, when New Year's Day moved from 25th March to 1st January. Not surprisingly, the change caused a lot of confusion and mistakes around the start of April. Others look even further back, to the ancient Roman feast of Hilaria, when the goddess Cybele was celebrated with pranks and jokes around the Spring Equinox, 25th March.

What's orange, sticky and worth preserving?

This month sees National Marmalade Week (18th – 25th April). If you really want to celebrate, go to Dalemain Mansion and Gardens in Cumbria, where they hold the World Marmalade Awards & Festival. It celebrates, preserves and promotes artisanal marmalades, with thousands of entries. (Even Paddington Bear will be in attendance!)

If you like marmalade, ever wonder where it comes from? One tradition traces it to a storm-damaged Spanish ship which took refuge in Dundee Harbour in 1700. It was full of Seville oranges that the captain was desperate to sell before they went mouldy. A local down-on-luck merchant, one James Keiller, bought the lot. He didn't know what to do with the oranges either, but fortunately he had a resourceful wife. She set about turning a shipload of Seville oranges into a preserve, and so the first marmalade factory was born.

Marmalade has been at the heart of British breakfasts for centuries. Winston Churchill fought the Second World War on it (washed down with a flute of Pol Roger each morning). DH Lawrence wrote novels on it. Paddington Bear's sandwiches were all marmalade. If you also want to get your fingers sticky, visit: www.marmaladeawards.com.

20th Anniversary Celebration Week for Church Refurbishment and the opening of Wesley's

10th to 17th May

As these dates come closer, it is time we all are aware of the celebration, what is planned and what we can all contribute. The aim is to let everyone know that we are here, what we have done, what we do, who we are and what we can offer.

During the week there will be displays of pictures and memories of the refurbishment project and how Wesley's came into being. Contributions are very welcome. The title or theme is 'The Story So Far'. We are inviting the people and groups who use the building to provide testimonials about their experience and we will also ask everyone in the congregation to say what they think and feel about the church – the building, the people, the fellowship

Just for one week only, Wesley's prices will be put back to 2006 levels. Over the years, Wesley's has made many contributions to local causes and these will be listed. Wesley's staff are invited to share memories and experiences – why they do it.

All the banners will be hung from the balcony.

During the week people will be offered tours of the whole building. Some of our own congregation may not have explored every nook and cranny!

Specific events

Sunday 10th May – Morning Worship led by Neil Richardson who took the service of rededication in 2006, long before he came to live locally.

Friday 15th May – 'Chiefly Yourselves' a variety concert by willing volunteers

Sunday 17th May Worship will be led by the new Chair of District, Rev Rachel Deigh.

Please think and pray about all this. What can I contribute? How can I be involved?

Thoughts and offers to any committee member: Janet Williams, Stephen Dalton. Edith Blair and Joyce Evans

Thank you

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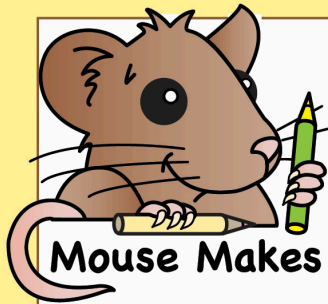
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Quotes:

The precious Lamb of God gave up His precious fleece for us.
Christopher Nesse

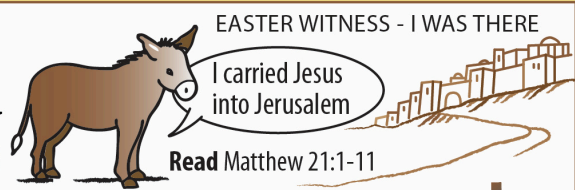
When Jesus bowed His head, And dying took our place,
The veil was rent, a way was found to that pure home of grace.
John Elias

The trouble is, we won't let God help us.
George MacDonald



GOOD NEWS
 OHOSANNA
 DEATHQB
 VNCOEUI
 UAHNAAR
 MIRVSYU
 ALIVETDR
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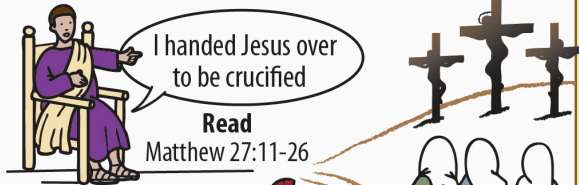
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 HOSANNA • PILATE • THORNS
 CRUCIFY • NAIL • CROSS
 QUAKE • DEATH • BURY
 TOMB • STONE • EMPTY
 ANGEL • MARY • HEAVEN
 RISEN • ALIVE • GOD
 GOOD NEWS • CHRIST
 SAVIOUR • EASTER • JOY



EASTER WITNESS - I WAS THERE

I carried Jesus into Jerusalem

Read Matthew 21:1-11



I handed Jesus over to be crucified

Read Matthew 27:11-26



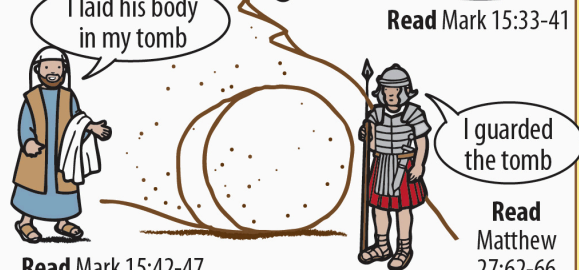
I nailed Jesus to the cross

Read Mark 15:16-32



We watched Jesus die

Read Mark 15:33-41



I laid his body in my tomb

Read Mark 15:42-47



I guarded the tomb

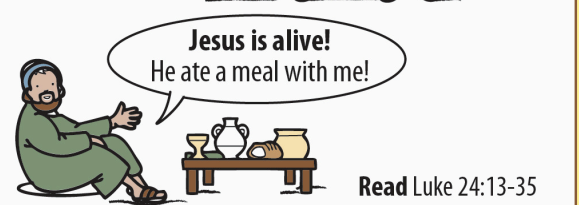
Read Matthew 27:62-66



We saw the empty tomb

and spoke to the angel

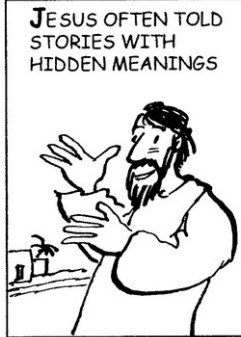
Read Matthew 28:1-10



Jesus is alive!
 He ate a meal with me!

Read Luke 24:13-35

The Big Bash!



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONE STORY WAS ABOUT A RICH MAN WHO DECIDED TO HAVE A PARTY

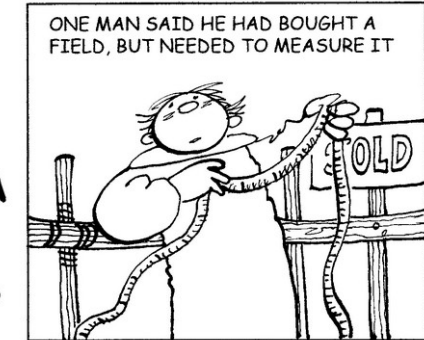


HE SENT OUT LOTS OF INVITATIONS



OH! NO!!

BUT PEOPLE STARTED MAKING EXCUSES



ONE MAN SAID HE HAD BOUGHT A FIELD, BUT NEEDED TO MEASURE IT



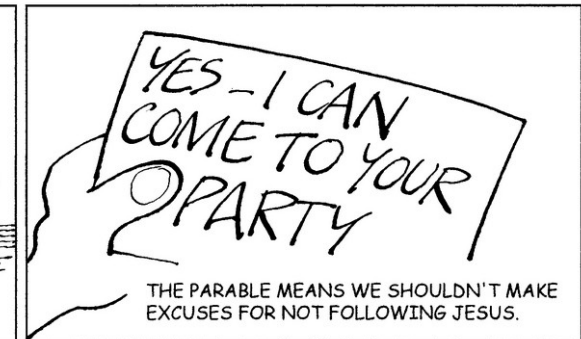
ANOTHER MAN SAID HE NEEDED TO TEST DRIVE THE OXEN HE HAS JUST PAID FOR



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE HAD JUST GOT MARRIED - AND HIS WIFE WOULDN'T LET HIM OUT!



SO THE RICH MAN INVITED ALL THE POOR AND NEEDY INSTEAD.



THE PARABLE MEANS WE SHOULDN'T MAKE EXCUSES FOR NOT FOLLOWING JESUS.