

The Rambling Rector

Definition: A White Flowering Climbing Rose Or A Vicar With No Sermon Script!



An Empty Cocoon

Today the sun is out and there are butterflies dancing around in the garden. But before they can fly, they are cocooned, in a grey, dark, lifeless, chrysalis.

But that grey case begins to twist and turn violently, and suddenly splits open and a beautiful butterfly emerges. It stands there, gently moving its wings, pumping fluids into them to extend them fully. Then the butterfly soars gracefully away on the spring breeze, leaving nothing behind but a broken chrysalis to indicate its former bondage.

The cocoon and butterfly remind us of the empty grave clothes of Jesus. When Peter and John heard the news that Jesus' body was gone from the garden tomb, they ran all the way from their lodging. Peter entered the tomb and "*he saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen*" (John 20:6-7, NIV). The grave clothes once wrapped continuously around the body now lay collapsed, silent testimony that the corpse they had once shrouded had now emerged in life.

The bondage of death is broken. Christ is risen! We can face tomorrow with the assurance that Jesus is in fact alive to help us, to guide us, to give us hope for the future. And since He is living, the broken cocoon of His grave clothes proclaim that Christ has victory even over death. Because He lives, nothing is impossible.



Good News
Jesus is Risen!



Photos

Pictures sent in this week from around the parishes.



Rectory Revelation
A hair raising experience.

Bible Readings for Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43

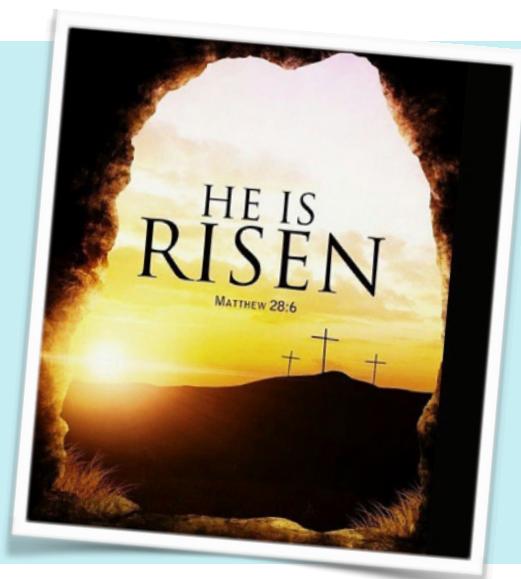
34 Then Peter began to speak: ‘I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism **35** but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. **36** You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. **37** You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached – **38** how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.



39 ‘We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, **40** but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. **41** He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen – by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. **42** He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. **43** All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.’

PRAYER FOR TODAY

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.



Matthew 28:1-10

28 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. **4** The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

5 The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. **6** He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. **7** Then go quickly and tell his disciples: “He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.” Now I have told you.’

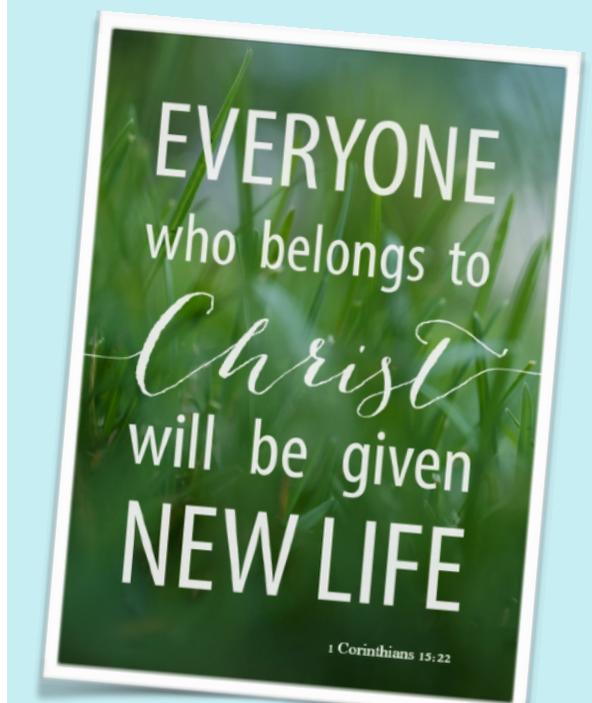
8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. **9** Suddenly Jesus met them. ‘Greetings,’ he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshipped him. **10** Then Jesus said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.’

HE IS
not here
FOR HE HAS
risen

MATTHEW 28:6



EASTER - NEW LIFE IN CHRIST
EASTER TIME - NEW LIFE IN NATURE



Unfurling fern. Peacock on primula. Tricia.

Reflection

The Evidence

First, Jesus died on the cross, a victim of Roman execution as a common criminal. The Romans were very experienced at this, and knew how to check that someone was dead. If they didn't die soon enough, then they broke the legs of the victim, but when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead.

Secondly, Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy and influential member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling Jewish Council, who was also a secret follower of Jesus. This is recorded in all four gospels, in slightly different ways (Matt 27.57, Mark 15.43, Luke 23.51, John 19.38). This would have been an odd thing to make up; if Joseph were invented, or Jesus not buried here, then it would have been an easy thing to prove wrong. Given that the Council were hostile to the early Jesus movement, it would also be a very unlikely invention.

Thirdly, on the Sunday morning the tomb was found to be empty. There are several striking things about this fact and the way that it is related in the gospel accounts.

First, the tomb was guarded by Jewish temple guards; in Matt 27.65 Pilate tells the Jews to post their own guard, and in Matt 28.11 the guards report back to the Jewish leaders. This was quite understandable; anyone who looked as though they might lead a rebellion against Roman rule could cause real trouble. And if the disciples had just gone to the wrong tomb, then the Jewish leaders could have produced the body from the right tomb to end the movement.

Secondly, despite what Jesus taught, it's clear none of his followers expected to find anything other than his dead body in the tomb when they went to anoint it. Their expectation was that the dead would be raised at the end of the age and would involve all of humanity. No-one expected an individual to be raised from the dead now. All the signs were that Jesus' death meant the end of all their hopes (see Luke 24.19–21)

Thirdly, John's account includes a curious note about the cloths that had been used to bind Jesus' body in the customary way.

"Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen." (John 20.6–7)

If his body had been stolen, then there would be no grave clothes, or they would have been removed and left together. The fact that each piece of material was still in the place that it would have been when wrapped around Jesus meant something else must have happened.

DEAD

BURIED

RISEN

SEEN

Fourthly, all the gospel accounts agree that women were the first eyewitnesses to the empty tomb. In a culture where women's testimony was not accepted in court, this would have been a silly thing to have made up—their word counted for nothing.

All four gospel accounts of the empty tomb are quite different, each with their own perspective, but they all agree on the core details: that women went to the tomb early on the Sunday morning; that the stone had been rolled away and the guard gone; that the tomb was empty; and that various of Jesus' followers believed that they met him, bodily alive again. This is entirely consistent with the gospels being independent accounts based on different eyewitnesses to these events. The mention of 'Peter' in Mark 16.7 suggests there is a strong case that Mark's gospel was based on Peter's own testimony. There is indeed an overwhelming consensus amongst scholars that all four gospels were written in the lifetime of eyewitnesses, and widely circulated amongst the early Christian communities.

Fourthly, there is a long list of eyewitnesses who met the bodily, risen Jesus, which Paul writes about in 1 Cor 15.3–8. Paul tells us that this was 'handed to him' as an early statement of belief, and it is most likely that he received it from Peter three years after his conversion (Gal 1.18). Paul's letter to the Corinthians was written in the early AD 50s, just 20 years after Jesus' death, and as he states, most of the eyewitnesses were still alive.

And the amazing thing about these people is that, whatever they experienced, it transformed them from a small, dispirited and disillusioned group to being the start of an extraordinary movement that, within a few decades, had a following across the entire civilised world of its time. This group became sufficiently important that, by AD 49, they seem to have caused Claudius to expel a good number of Jews from Rome, the capital of the Empire.

How do you explain the rise of this religious movement, following an otherwise unknown travelling preacher from an obscure backwater on the edge of the Roman Empire? When you compare this with other religious movements, it is really interesting that Jesus lived a short life, never travelled far, never wrote anything, left a relatively small body of teaching, was executed as a criminal, never held any political or military office, and never had a large following. No other religious or political movement had such unpromising and unlikely beginnings.

So those are the historical facts, which are well evidenced: Jesus died; he was buried; his tomb was found to be empty; and the small group of dispirited followers were transformed into the confident beginnings of a world-wide movement in a remarkably short time. Alternative explanations either contradict well-established facts, or they cannot explain these phenomena.

The true explanation is that something quite extraordinary happened, and only the certainty is that Jesus was raised back to life fits these facts.

**Jesus Christ Is Risen
He Is Risen Indeed – Hallelujah!!**

DIY PALM CROSSSES

Last week we included instructions to make your own Palm Cross, and in addition a number of people responded to the challenge to make crosses out of everyday objects. So, here are the results.



Our Lord has written the promise of the Resurrection, not in books alone but in every leaf in springtime.

Martin Luther

Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song.

Pope John Paul II



CROSSES BY

| | | |
|---------|---------|--------|
| Thomas | Eric | Phoebe |
| & Grace | Nicola | Mike |
| Jessica | Ann H | Janet |
| Karen | Ann A | Helen |
| Jo | Ava | Hannah |
| Tricia | Jenny S | |

All the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever were built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of mankind on this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.

Anon

Rectory Revelation

Uncovering the Secrets of the Rectory

Every wondered how the Rector always looks well turned out?

...what do you mean 'no'!

Well for the two people that do the answer is to the right!

Doncaster—In a move to capture the rapidly growing bald Rector market, popular head care company Shiny Domes has released a new line of head polishes specifically designed to cater to the needs of Vicars and other people in Christian ministry who have very little or no hair on their heads.

The new Pastor Polish line will allow bald leaders to shine both metaphorically and literally as they deliver sermons from the front. While bald head wax and other polishing products have been available for some time, this is the first kit to specifically cater to the Christian market. The product is said to guarantee more people paying attention to your sermons, more audience laughter at your jokes, and better sinner conversion ratios.

"Many bald Rectors lead upfront with a dull, boring dome," said a Shiny Domes representative. "How can you preach the gospel and shine your light before men if the light reflecting from the top of your noggin is dim?"

When paired with a well-trimmed beard or goatee, the Shiny Domes product is said to be the best way to make sure your bald Vicar retains the appearance of a holy man of God. Shiny Domes also recommends matching a shiny head with a nice flannel shirt or plaid button-up number. Representatives do not recommend mixing with tribal tattoos, as adverse side effects such as falling into heresy or leaving the faith entirely have been observed in clinical trials.

The product also comes with a lifetime guarantee that if youths approach you and begin mocking your baldness, two wild bears will immediately emerge from the woods and devour them. Neil's Dad and Chris Green have both endorsed the product.

LET IT SHINE
WITH PASTOR POLISH

*"Arise, shine,
for your light
has come"
-Isaiah 60:1*

PASTOR POLISH
Bald Head Polish
For Preachers

THE HEAD YOUR CHURCH BODY NEEDS

We understand "a man who has lost his hair and is bald is clean" (Lev. 13:40) Let that clean bald head shine the way God intended so that when 40 youths attempt to mock your baldness they are devoured by two she-bears (2 Kings 2:23-24). Comes in 5, 12, and 16 ounce containers.

INTERCESSIONS FOR TODAY

O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear.

Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected.

Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus.

Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive in the eradication of all diseases that create suffering and often result in death for many people.

Heal our self-centredness and indifference that makes us worry only when the virus threatens us, open ways beyond timidity and fear that too easily ignore our neighbour.

Strengthen and encourage those in the all frontline services; NHS workers, care-givers, nurses,

paramedics, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families.

Inspire, give insight and hope to all researchers focused on developing a vaccine.

Sustain all workers and business owners who suffer loss of livelihood due to shut-downs, quarantines, closed borders, and other restrictions and protect and guard all those who must travel.

Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth, halt the spread of misinformation and act with justice so that all your family may know healing. Heal our world, heal our bodies, strengthen our hearts and our minds, and in the midst of turmoil, give us hope and peace

Hold in your gentle embrace all who have died and who will die this day. Comfort their loved ones in their despair.

Remember all your family, the entire human race, and all your creation, in your love.

In Jesus's name we pray. Amen!

Good News & Pictures

From around the parishes



Pictures
by Tricia

*Easter spells out
beauty, the rare
beauty of new life.*

S.D. Gordon

*Rush is destructive
of rest, and pace of
peace.*

Thomas Adams

*The hurrier I go, the
behinder I get!*

Anon



Eco Church

Finningley has been awarded a Bronze Eco Church Award. Well done to those involved in putting the bid together and doing all the research.



Even as Jesus ate that last Passover meal with His disciples, He warned them He was about to be betrayed. He took the bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to them; He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them to drink. The Old Covenant, based on Law, was ticking away its final hours; the New Covenant, based on Christ's body and His blood, was about to be ushered in. Jesus prayed in Gethsemane that this fearful cup might be removed from Him, but even more, that God's will might be done. And it was. From Easter onwards we can only approach God through His Son, Jesus Christ, not on our own merit.

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| Jesus | Wine |
| Ate | Thanks |
| Last | Drink |
| Passover | Covenant |
| Meal | Law |
| Disciples | Old |
| Warned | New |
| Betrayed | Body |
| Bread | Blood |
| Blessed | Gethsemane |

Give God what's right – not what's left.

Man's way leads to a hopeless end – God's way leads to an endless hope.

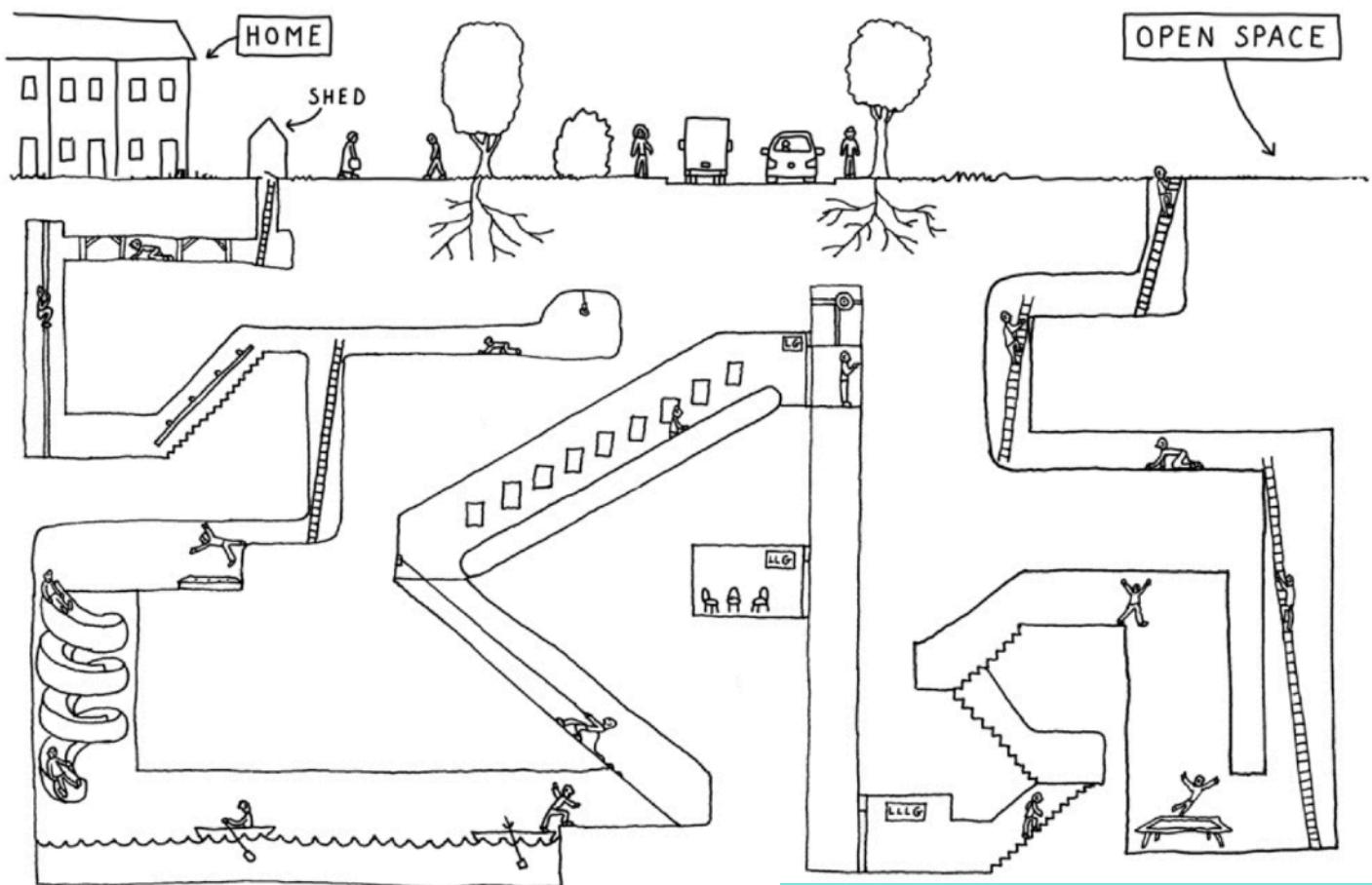
A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.

He who kneels before God can stand before anyone.

Why do we paint Easter eggs? Because it's easier than trying to wallpaper them!

EXERCISE

HOW TO AVOID EVERYONE ELSE



99 Years Young

Joyce Goodyear would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who rang, sent cards, and wished her well on her 99th birthday this week. We talked her out of candles on a cake, as this would have pose a serious fire risk!

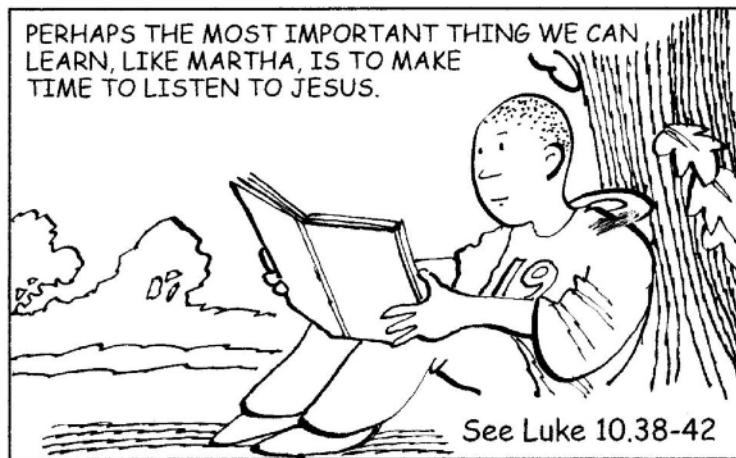
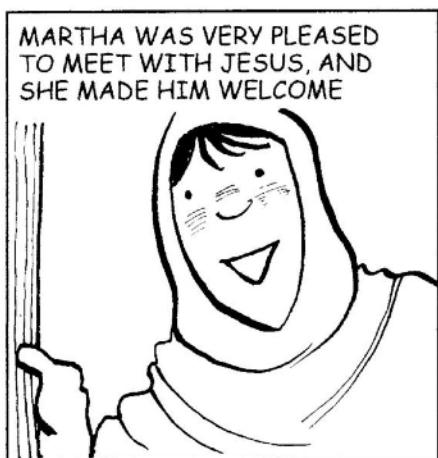
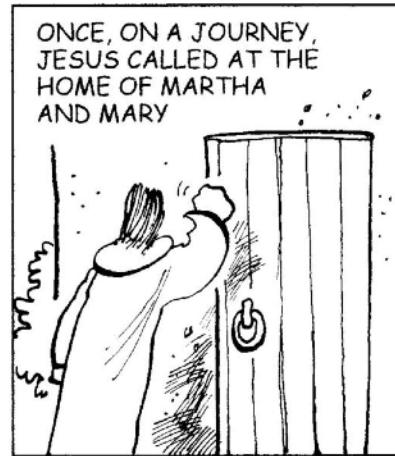
Joyce said we had to tell you this: "I know I'm getting a bit older now....I had to sit down in the shower, when I prefer standing up. Must be my age!"



Someone got very creative making a cross from 'household' items! Well done Mark!

A Picture Parable

Words and Actions



Weekly Service Via Zoom

Zoom is set up ready to go on Good Friday meeting at 2:30pm, Easter Sunday meeting at 9:30am and every Sunday after at 10am. The link, meeting ID and password are the same for every service so save this email.

The link will also be shared on WhatsApp and social media (though they will have to request the ID and password). There will be a 'waiting room' set up where I have to approve everyone that requests to join, therefore reducing any risk of 'zoom-bombing.'

During the services, everyone apart from Dad will be muted, if a response is necessary I will unmute everyone, I will also do the same at the end of the service to give you opportunity for fellowship. The background noise and notification noise on devices will be too distracting otherwise. Therefore, if you run in to a problem whilst the service is taking place please use the 'hand up' function or the chat box (or my email or phone) and I'll do my best to sort it.

You do not have to be on video, you can choose to take part without visual, your name will be displayed.

On your device if you tap the screen you should have 'gallery view' and 'speaker view' gallery view will show more people whereas speaker view will be on the person talking with everyone else smaller. To see more people depending on the device you use, you may need to swipe across your screen.

To leave the service before the end, you need to press 'leave meeting' which is in red when you tap on your screen. I will close the main meeting when we have done.

If you are struggling, I am happy to do practice runs prior to Friday, and more than happy to guide you through initial set up if you like. Contact me on hannahredeyoff@live.co.uk or 07875500555. Take care and 'see you' Friday. Hannah.



Link - <https://zoom.us/j/9723999511?pwd=dmRiZWhpUU9wRWw3N0N5OEVoQjVjQT09>
Meeting ID - 972 399 9511
Password - FABParish

Cut Out
And Keep

Parish Office

Telephone: 01302 770240

Email: parishoffice@fabparish.org

Web: www.fabparish.org.uk

Facebook: finningleychurch stsavioursauckley

Twitter: @finningleycofe @auckleychurch

We also have a parish WhatsApp group. If you would like to join please text Hannah Redeyoff on 07875 500555