

**April 2026**

It can be rather depressing whenever you open the paper and see another bad news article about the Church. It makes you wonder; 'What is the point of the Christian Church?'

Well, if you don't take into account the way it has over the years defined the character and culture of our villages; if you don't consider how it unites rhythms of worship with those of life, the land and changing seasons; if you ignore the creativity it has brought to music, poetry and art; if you take no notice of how it has provided hospitals and education or just bread to those in need ... what *is* the point of the Christian Church?

Over the years the Church has made a big impact in the lives of countless people and has been part of the warp and weft of life. It's made mistakes – there is no getting away from that – and although it is going through change and apparent decline at present, it will prevail. For centuries the people who live in these villages have turned to the Church as they live out life's joys and sorrows, and sometimes our inherently Christian communities have flourished ... and sometimes not.

All this stems from a single event and one man. The man who is God came to show us how much God loves us. He demonstrated love, peace, justice and wholeness, showed us that we are never alone in this difficult world, and filled hearts with yearning for a promised kingdom and a desire to see it fulfilled. Yet they nailed him to a cross where he suffered an agonising death. But on the third day he rose again from the dead, changing our relationship with death and sin forever. For hundreds of years people in our villages have celebrated Jesus and Easter, which is the heart of our faith and the hope of all creation. Alleluia!

With Easter blessings

Revd Sue

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