



Faith Comment for 17th April 2025 Canon Susie Collingridge

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Easter Unplugged

The year that the first stones were placed to build Steep Church is now 900 years ago (our best guess). People were still the same as us, really. They were just as varied – quiet ones and outgoing ones, insensitive ones and creative ones, hard-working ones and delicate ones. Ones with a sense of humour, and others more serious. They got hungry and thirsty just like us, tired, excited, angry, happy.

So perhaps it was mainly on the outside that their lives were so different – chocolate hadn't reached our shores for example, and they had none of the technology that we take for granted. So what were people doing that Easter? What did it mean for them?

In 1125 Easter Sunday was on 29th March, so taking a hike through the Hangers you would see the same flowers in the hedgerows as now. Yellow primroses, and the wild garlic were starting to show up. Heather on the heathland would be in flower, and the wildlife was doing much the same as it does today – although more of them and fewer of us!

Almost everyone went to church. With a new church being built I wonder if they wanted to worship there, or if they still made the long journey on foot to East Meon. Lent had been long and hungry, without meat or eggs. Without much fun of any kind in fact.

Church services were in Latin which most people did not understand, but I'm guessing that the Easter singing would have been loud, and spirits would have been sky high. Maybe they planted yellow flowers on the churchyard graves the night before Easter, reminding each other that the Resurrection meant that their loved ones would also rise with Jesus and live forever with God.

Now was the time to break open the treats and have a fabulous feast! There were new clothes (and you'd pass your old ones to someone else who needed them more) and houses were swept clean after the long, cold, dark winter. Easter festivities went on for days.

The point is that through the centuries people have found all the ways they could to celebrate Easter, and we can too. Christians believe that because of God's limitless love, Jesus died for us. Then through God's love, God raised him to life again so that we could know him for ourselves and live for ever with him.

What a life-changing message - what an incredible thing to celebrate!

Have an amazing Easter!