



CNI

TV and Radio celebrates Easter with raft of religious programming

In celebration of Easter, the BBC offers a host of religious programmes across TV and radio, with a line-up that will include drama, music, reflection and worship.

Central to this year's Easter offering on TV will be actor David Suchet's extra special journey, retracing the footsteps taken by St Peter; a dramatization of the entire Gospel of John; and a one-off drama retelling of the biblical story of Noah and The Ark. These highlights will join the annual live Easter services from around the country, together with Pope Francis' Easter Sunday Message and Blessing - Urbi et Orbi.

Meanwhile on BBC radio, special Easter editions of key religious programmes will provide conversation, music, reflection, readings, hymns and special guests. At The Foot Of The Cross returns to BBC Radio 2 and Clare Balding welcomes the Most Rev John Sentamu,

Archbishop of York, for a special edition of Good Morning Sunday. BBC Radio 3 will play host to a series of Live In Concerts and Easter Day Sunday Worship welcomes the Rt Rev Libby Lane, Bishop of Stockport - the Church of England's first female Bishop - as she gives her first Easter sermon, live from Chester Cathedral.

Aaqil Ahmed, BBC Head of Commissioning, Religion and Head of Religion & Ethics, says: "Easter is not just one of the most important moments in the Christian calendar, it is also for the BBC the best way of illustrating its commitment to programming in this area. From prime-time drama on BBC One, the complete dramatized telling of the Gospel of John on BBC Two to Easter hymns, anthems and conversation across BBC radio, this is an exciting mix of programming that shows the BBC at its best, mixing genres, working across channels and delivering for our audiences a diverse range of quality programming."

BBC One

David Suchet: In The Footsteps of St Peter

Following on from BBC One's previous series, In the Footsteps of St Paul, David Suchet journeys through first century Galilee, Jerusalem, Turkey

and Rome, this time in search of Jesus' closest confidant and Apostle, St Peter.

David's quest: to discover how a lowly fisherman from the shores of Lake Galilee transforms into lead disciple, and eventually the figure which the Roman Catholic Church have seen for the last 2,000 years as the first Pope and Bishop of Rome.

David seeks out the man behind the controversial figure of St Peter as he carves out his identity as both leader and often flawed believer, through the highs and lows of the earliest days of Christianity.

The Ark

The Ark - a one off drama for BBC One, starring David Threlfall (Noah), Joanne Whalley (Emmie), Nico Mirallegro (Kenan), Ashley Walters (God's Angel), Emily Bevan (Salit), Michael Fox (Shem), Andrew Hawley (Japeth), Hannah John-Kamen (Nahlab) and Ian Smith (Ham). It is the retelling of the biblical story of Noah and The Ark. Noah, a farmer and family man, is instructed by an angel to build an ark in the middle of a desert in order to save both his family and the faithful from a devastating flood. A seemingly impossible task, especially when his sons refuse to believe him and help, Noah risks ridicule and humiliation

from the degenerate townsfolk as well as his loving but exasperated family, in his quest to carry out his God-given task.

The Ark is a timeless tale; a story of family and faith; about one man's belief and fixation with building the ark which will ultimately save his family and mankind. It is an obsession which leads to the fragmentation of his family, a test of their faith in their father and their father's faith in God and everything he believes in.

Songs of Praise

On Easter Sunday (5 April), in recognition of the lamb as an enduring religious symbol and an announcement of Spring, David Grant introduces Songs of Praise from a farm in West Sussex where around 1,400 lambs are born every year. David is hoping to witness one of those births. Bordering Coombes Farm in Lancing is a 1,000-year-old church - and religion and farming come together for the traditional 'blessing of the lambs' ceremony. Also, the programme joins an open air baptism on the banks of the River Jordan. But this River Jordan is in Dorset, not that of Biblical fame.

Live Easter Sunday - from Manchester Cathedral

Live Easter Morning service from the magnificent

setting of Manchester Cathedral. Uplifting hymns and inspiring music combine with traditional readings and prayers to celebrate the resurrection of Christ. The music will also include excerpts from Mozart's Coronation Mass. The service will be led by the Revd Canon Philip Barratt, Precentor of Manchester Cathedral with a sermon from the Bishop of Bolton, the Right Revd Chris Edmondson.

Urbi et Orbi

Pope Francis gives his Easter Sunday Message and Blessing, Urbi et Orbi, to the city of Rome and to the world. From the balcony on St Peter's Basilica, the Pope will address a huge crowd in the square below, but his words will resonate far beyond. Mike Wooldridge sets the scene and provides live commentary.

BBC Two

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John takes the story of Jesus from John's Gospel with its own unique characteristics. This three-part dramatization of the life of Jesus takes the actual Gospel text as its script, word for word, unedited. Narrated by leading British actor David Harewood (Homeland, Blood Diamond, Merchant of Venice) it is based on the latest theological, historical

and archaeological research. With specially constructed sets in the extraordinarily authentic villages and countryside of rural Morocco, this re-enactment of The Gospel of John immerses the viewer in the world of first century Palestine.

Easter From King's

Music and readings for Holy Week and Easter from the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge. The world-famous Choir, directed by Stephen Cleobury, sing some of the most popular and poignant choral music of all time, including Crucifixus (Lotti), Wash Me Thoroughly (S.S. Wesley), Greater Love Hath No Man (Ireland), Surrexit Christus Hodie (Scheidt) and pieces by Duruflé, Mozart, W.H. Harris, Hadley and Tavener. Seasonal hymns include There Is A Green Hill Far Away, When I Survey The Wondrous Cross and Thine Be The Glory. The story of Jesus's death and resurrection is told in the well-loved words of the King James Bible, and reflected on in poems by Malcolm Guite, Vassar Miller and Wilfred Owen, all in the stunning setting of King's College Chapel.

Radio 2

**At The Foot of The Cross - Friday 3 April,
8.00-10.00pm**

Diane Louise Jordan introduces an evening of

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music and reflections for Good Friday from Central Hall, Westminster. The warm, rich voice of actor, Patrick Robinson (Casualty, The Bill) brings the events of the first Good Friday to life with readings and poems telling the story of Jesus' last hours and also reflecting on the sacrifice made by those who died on the battlefields of World War I. The programme features music from the BBC Concert Orchestra, conducted by James Burton, who is joined by a chorus of singers from across London, BBC Radio 2 Young Chorister of the Year, Helena Paish, soul singer Louise Marshall and winner of The Voice 2014, Jermain Jackman. Their forces combine to provide an inspiring and poignant programme of music including well known hymns and spirituals, choral classics and pieces from popular British composers, culminating in a full performance of John Rutter's Requiem.

**The Sunday Hour - Sunday 5 April,
6.00-7.00am**

Diane Louise Jordan wishes listeners a Happy Easter on The Sunday Hour with favourite Easter hymns, Gospel music and sacred sounds. She will be reflecting on the Easter Story in words and prayers as well as delivering some special Easter dedications and requests.

**Good Morning Sunday - Sunday 5 April,
7.00-9.00am**

In a special edition for Easter Sunday morning, Clare Balding welcomes the Most Rev John Sentamu, Archbishop of York to be her faith guest for conversation and his reflection for the morning.

Easter Glory - Sunday 5 April, 8.00-9.00pm

The stunning voices of the Soul Sanctuary Gospel Choir are joined by top soloists, including Tracey Campbell, to tell the Easter story in their Gospel Oratorio "The Resurrection". In a celebration of life and music they bring this age-old story into the 21st Century through favourite Gospel songs and spirituals recorded at BBC Maida Vale studios.

Radio 3

**Choral Evensong - Sunday 5 April,
3.00-4.00pm**

A special Easter Festal Evensong on Easter Sunday will come live from Ely Cathedral. The Introit is Jesus Christ is Risen (Trepte) and responses from Leighton. The Office Hymn will be The Lamb's high banquet we await (Ad Cenam Agni) and Anthem, Death be not proud (Francis Grier) first broadcast.

Introit: Jesus Christ is risen (Trepte)

Responses: Leighton

Psalms 114, 118 (Garrett, South)

First Lesson: Ezekiel 37 vv 1-4

Office Hymn: The Lamb's high banquet we await
(Ad Cenam Agni)

Canticles: Murrill in E

Second Lesson: Luke 24 vv 13-35

Anthem: Death be not proud (Francis Grier) first
broadcast

Final Hymn: Jesus lives! thy terrors now (St
Albinus)

Festival Te Deum (Britten)

Organ Voluntary: Résurrection (Dupré)

Assistant Organist: Edmund Aldhouse

Director of Music: Paul Trepte

Radio 3 Live in Concert

A series of Live in Concerts will come from King's College Chapel, Cambridge throughout Easter. On Good Friday (3 April), the Live In concert will feature James MacMillan's St Luke Passion, performed by Britten Sinfonia Voices, choristers of King's College Choir, Cardinal Vaughan School and Trinity School, Croydon. The concert will be conducted by James MacMillan.

The Easter Sunday (5 April) Live In Concert will feature works by Reger, Bach, Georg Bohm,

Messiaen, Tournemire, Howells and Leighton,
with David Goode on the organ.

On Tuesday 7 April, a concert recorded on
Saturday 4 April, Bach St John Passion, will be
conducted by King's College's Stephen Cleobury
and will be performed by King's College Choir,
Ben Johnson (Evangelist); Christopher Purves
(Christus); Mary Bevan (soprano); Robin Blaze
(countertenor); Ed Lyon (tenor); Ashley Riches
(bass).

Private Passions

Anglican Priest, Lucy Winkett will be the guest
on the Easter Sunday edition of Private Passions

Weds 8th Apr (rpt. Sun 12th Apr)

A Sequence for Easter recorded at the Temple Church, London - in Choral Evensong slot

Introit: Since by Man came Death (Handel)

Lesson: Genesis 1 v 26; 2 vv 15-17, 19-22

Bidding Prayer

Hymn: Jesus Christ is risen today (Easter Hymn)

Lesson: John 20 vv 1-10

Anthem: Easter (Vaughan Williams)

Lesson: John 20 vv 11-18

Anthem: I got me flowers (Vaughan Williams)

Hymn: Love's redeeming work is done

(Savannah)

Anthem: Love bade me welcome (Vaughan Williams)

Lesson: Luke 24 vv 13-35

Anthem: The Call (Vaughan Williams)

Lesson: John 20 vv 19-31

Hymn: Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (St Fulbert)

Lesson: Matthew 28 vv 16-20

Anthem: Antiphon (Vaughan Williams)

Easter Collect

Te Deum (Collegium Regale - Howells)

Blessing

Organ Voluntary: Folk Song Suite - first movement (Vaughan Williams arr. Greg Morris)

Andrew Rupp (Baritone), Greg Morris (Organist),
Roger Sayer (Director of Music)

Radio 4

Prayer for the Day

The special guests delivering the Prayer for the Day (5.43am) over Easter are:

The Venerable Sheila Watson, Archdeacon of Canterbury (Saturday 28 and Monday 30 March – Friday 3 April), and Rev Dr Ian Bradley, Principal of St Mary's College, University of St Andrews (Saturday 4 April and Monday 6-10 April).

**Thought for the Day - Friday 3 April,
7.48am-7.51am**

The Rt Rev Graham James, Bishop of Norwich will introduce his Thought for the Day on Good Friday.

**Act of Worship - Friday 3 April,
9.45am-10.00am**

A special act of worship for Good Friday will come from from the Rev Dr Martyn Atkins, General Secretary of the Methodist Church.

**Good Friday Meditation - Friday 3 April,
3.00-3.30pm**

Dr Nathalie MacDermott tells the timeless story of Good Friday, relating her experience working with victims of Ebola to that of the plague village of Eyam 350 years ago.

We are told there is no greater love than laying down your life for others, and that is the subject of today's Good Friday Meditation. When the plague tore through the community of Eyam in Derbyshire 350 years ago, the villagers' first instinct was to flee. But their brave decision to stay – on the advice of the local clergy to keep the plague within the village – probably saved thousands of lives throughout the north of England.

Just last year, self-imposed isolation was also the choice of British doctor Dr Nathalie MacDermott. She was unsure whether she was incubating the deadly Ebola virus already contracted by two close medical colleagues in Liberia. Emerging from a lonely confinement, at least safe in the knowledge that she did not have the virus – this time – she returned to Liberia for a third tour of duty, struggling to bring care and comfort to communities that have lost thousands to this modern-day plague.

Guided by the present Rector of Eyam, the Revd Mike Gilbert, she hears heart-rending stories of this historic sacrifice at locations around the village, but also how genetic research on descendants of Eyam's plague survivors is bringing hope to the fight against present day versions of the disease as well as HIV. With music and readings illustrating the timeless story of Good Friday, Nathalie shares her own Christian perspective of why she, too, is still prepared to risk her life for strangers.

**Easter Sunrise Service - Sunday 5 April,
6.35-6.57am**

The gothic Lady Chapel of Ely Cathedral provides the setting for Radio 4's Easter Sunrise Service. The Very Revd Mark Bonney, Dean of Ely, responds to the story of the Resurrection of

Jesus through the art and architecture of the Cathedral. In this celebration of New Life, he reflects on how this age-old story and this ancient building can speak to the world today. With Easter hymns and anthems from the trebles of Ely Cathedral Choir directed by Paul Trepte.

Sunday - Sunday 5 April, 7.10-7.50am

For this special edition for Easter Sunday, Sunday will be marking the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. Presenter, Caroline Wyatt, will explore the story of how, in 1915, hundreds of thousands of Armenians were forced to leave their homes in the Ottoman Empire. Many were killed or died from starvation or disease during the deportation.

While the events remain a highly sensitive issue, the Armenian Apostolic Church plan to mark the centenary by canonising one and a half million victims of what they say was the genocide of the Armenian people.

On Easter Day in 1870 the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Manchester opened its doors for the first time. Sunday visits this community to reflect on the anniversary and its legacy. Plus other religious news and current affairs.

Easter Day Sunday Worship - Sunday 5 April, 8.10-9.00am

The first female Bishop in the Church of England, the Rt Rev Libby Lane, Bishop of Stockport, gives her first Easter sermon, live from Chester Cathedral on Radio 4. This Easter Eucharist has a wealth of seasonal music and hymns with the renowned Chester Cathedral Choir, including Jesus Christ is Risen Today and Thine Be The Glory. The celebrant is the Dean, the Very Rev Professor Gordon McPhate

BBC Radio Northern Ireland

Morning Service for Easter Day from First Bangor Presbyterian Church, conducted by Rev Mairisine Stanfield. 10.15 am

RTE

Friday 3 April – Good Friday

2.55pm Solemn Celebration of the Lord's Passion from the Church of the Most Holy Trinity, Rathdowney, Co. Laois.

Celebrant: Fr. Martin Delaney PP; Liturgical Music from the Combined Choirs of Rathdowney and Errill, directed by Maureen Gilfoyle, featuring

uilleann piper Billy Carrigan. Each year the people of Rathdowney participate in the liturgy of Holy Week in a special way. This year, parts of the liturgical cross will be carried from home to home within the parish. In each home prayers will be offered and petitions written on five pieces of the liturgical cross which will be assembled during the solemn celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday. (Simulcast on RTÉ One and RTÉ Radio 1 LW252 / 1 Extra / digital platforms.)