

✧ ✧ This month's Main Event ✧ ✧

➤ Strange Human Behavior

Sunday, Nov 26, 2023, 2 pm – 4 pm

Location: Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Rm 675, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/RwiUgEJ5ESHRhrPu8>.

Why *do* humans make decisions that seem illogical, even counterproductive?

Richard Kowaleski will explain in an entertaining manner the curious ways humans buy their stuff, vote, invest, and even choose a romantic partner. And you get to participate. After this presentation you will never think the same way again!

Prof. Richard Kowaleski teaches critical thinking at California State University, Sacramento for the university's Renaissance Society. He previously taught engineering and mathematics for Sac State's College of Engineering and Computer Science, and before that he taught similar courses at the United States Air Force Academy. Richard has spoken to AOF on several occasions, always provoking us to think unconventionally.

Contact for details: See <https://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>.

Free parking in the lot. OK to bring personal snacks & beverages – or to share, as you wish. AOF will provide cool clear water.



✧ ✧ Other Upcoming AOF Events ✧ ✧

➤ Film and Discussion Night

Friday, Nov 10, 2023, 7 pm – 10 pm

Location: Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Suite 675, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/RwiUgEJ5ESHRhrPu8>.

What fun. It's an **in-person Movie Night** at the new Reason Center in Sacramento, in a quiet room with cozy plush chairs and a huge screen and refreshments just a stroll away. The actual movie is a secret, because of our [MPLC License](#) and the gimlet eye of the lawyers -- but you'll like it, we promise. In fact please bring a DVD of your own favorite movie, maybe we'll watch that one! But nothing nasty or smarmy. Think of the children.

AOF co-sponsors this event. We provide popcorn - feel free to bring your own snacks as well. We also encourage a post-film discussion, which makes this an educational event, sort of. No fee to join the fun. But Reason Center always appreciates donations.

Contact for details: See <http://reasoncenter.com/contact/>

Free Movie Nights are a joint venture of AOF and Reason Center. You can suggest your own fave film for next time!



➤ Board of Directors' Meeting

Tuesday, November 14, 2023, 7 pm – 8 pm

Location: Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Suite 675, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/RwiUgEJ5ESHRhrPu8>.

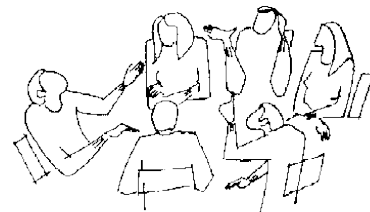
It's an AOF planning meeting, mainly for AOF directors & officers but open to all. These happen as required, and are a lot more fun than they sound.

Join us, meet the Board, keep an eye on the shenanigans. We love visitors. We often have snacks. And maybe you'll have some good ideas, hm?

Note, this Board meeting will be an actual in-person meeting, so be sure vaccinations are current, or wear a mask, or just don't cough on us.

Contact for details: See <https://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>.

Bring your ideas for AOF, your strategies, your event and activity suggestions -- best of all, your volunteerism!



COMING SOON.....SAVE THE DATE!

A HumanLight/Solstice Celebration ☆☆

Sunday, December 17, 2023, 12 noon - 2:30 pm, at Reason Center

A celebration of humanist ideals and humanist values: reason, compassion, hope, science, kindness, joy, and civil community.

Co-sponsored by:

- Atheists & Other Freethinkers
- Sunday Assembly
- Reason Center

The party will include live music, songs, potluck, games and socializing.



✧ ✧ Other Upcoming Events ✧ ✧

Here are highlights of *non-AOF* events. We don't own these, but broadcast them as a courtesy, because we're good guys.

➤ Recovery from Religion (RfR) online meetings

Sunday, Nov 5, 4 pm – 6 pm (Virtual Chapter Support, attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7287067292>)

Monday, Nov 6, 5 pm – 7 pm (Discussion, "Why Smart People Fall for Religion" with Chris Shelton, attendance link <http://tinyurl.com/weeklyrfrx>)

Saturday, Nov 11, 5 pm – 7 pm (for women & non-binary, attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87403436249>)

Saturday, Nov 18, 7 am – 9 am (Virtual Chapter Support, attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7287067292>)

Sunday, Nov 19, 1 pm – 3 pm (for LGBTQA+ folk, attendance link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7287067292>)

Saturday, Dec 2, 8 am – 10 am (for men, attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81672617364>)

"RfR" provides ongoing and personal support to individuals letting go of religious beliefs. Please be sensitive and tolerant, and cut others some slack, because *slack* binds us together, like the Force.

Details for Nov 5: see <https://www.meetup.com/rfr-sacramento-ca/events/291876533/>.

Details for Nov 6: see <https://www.meetup.com/rfr-sacramento-ca/events/297156962/>.

Details for Nov 11: see <https://www.meetup.com/rfr-sacramento-ca/events/294782234/>.

Details for Nov 18: see <https://www.meetup.com/rfr-sacramento-ca/events/291877149/>.

Details for Nov 19: see <https://www.meetup.com/rfr-sacramento-ca/events/294781864/>.

Details for Dec 2: see <https://www.meetup.com/rfr-sacramento-ca/events/296601596/>.

➤ Atheists Community videos & discussion

Monday, Nov 6, 2023, 7:30 pm – 10:30 pm

Location: A videoconference; to attend, wait for the meeting time, and then click

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81807086862?pwd=ZiUyamt1b2dlc1N5bEZ6Q0w1Um00QT09>.

An educational and entertaining teleconference about Atheism, Logic, Reason, Thoughtfulness - accentuated by videos and, of course, your presence.

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/reasoncenterevents/events/296154921/>.

➤ Blasphemy Breakfasts - and a Brunch

Saturday, Nov 11, 2023, 10 am – 11:30 am (Folsom)

Sunday, Nov 12, 2023, 9:30 am – 11:30 am (midtown Sacramento)

Sunday, Nov 19, 2023, 9:30 am – 11 am (Rocklin)

Nov 11 location: Mel's Diner, 13399 Folsom Blvd, Folsom, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/ri6JvaBoSZVHTdnU6>.

Nov 12 location: Mel's Diner, 3000 J Street, Sacramento, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/toijMkseMWmTanVP7>.

Nov 19 location: Mel's Diner, 6708 Lonetree Blvd, Rocklin, CA, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/ZUY2gg72KkmcC4bU6>.

Like to hang with like-minded people? Want to meet freethinkers in smaller groups? Or do you just get the morning munchies? Join us for our "Blasphemy Breakfast." We really don't blaspheme all that much, but dark mutterings may emerge ... be warned. A great place to speak your mind, and a good starter if you are new to meetups. Please RSVP.

Details for Oct 8, see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/znwwgtfcpbpb/>.

Details for Oct 14, see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/btpcgtfcpbqb/>.

Details for Oct 15, see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/pwwnssyfcpbzb/>.

➤ Sacramento Skeptics in the Pub

Saturday, Nov 11, 2023, 6 pm – 8 pm

A social meetup for the skeptical minds, a community of people, friends, and families that champion the methods of science and critical thinking. Visitors and new skeptics most welcome!

For details see <https://www.meetup.com/sacskeptics/events/lzkdgtfcpbpb/>.

Location: Duke's Pints & Plates, 510 La Sierra Dr, Sacramento; map at <https://goo.gl/maps/aNzV4j33cnizW9j77>.

➤ Sunday Assembly

Sunday, Nov 12, 2023, 11am - 1pm (doors open 10:30am)

Location: Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Suite 675, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

Sunday Assembly is a secular celebration of *you* with music, readings, food and speakers, plus entertainment for children. For the potluck lunch, bring your favorite dish to share, and be hungry. Key presenter this month is Noel Navarro.

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/reasoncenterevents/events/stvshtyfcpbqb/>.

➤ Suicide Loss Survivors Discussion and Support

Tuesday, Nov 14, 2023, 5 pm – 7 pm

Online survivor support in a compassionate, secular way. Attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82683645189>.

Details: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82683645189>.

➤ Games at Reason Center

Friday, Nov 17, 6 pm – 9 pm

Location: Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Suite 675, Sacramento, map at <https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

A fun evening of games and food. OK to bring some of your own games to share. And snacks to share to too. We have a good variety, both board games and card games. (Here are a few: Ticket to Ride, Azul, Camel Up, Labyrinth, Rummikub, and more.) But no gambling allowed.

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/spvshtyfcpbwb/>.

Contact: See <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/members/380483831/>, or call 916-426-6416.



➤ Saturday Night Hangout

Saturday, Nov 18, 2023, 6 pm – 9 pm

Saturday, Dec 2, 2023, 6 pm – 9 pm

Location: An online meeting, attendance link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83092441353?pwd=Wmp6RVIUR1Q0dFZZMIFQUIVodTN0dz09>.

An online meetup on alternate Saturdays, at 6:00 PM Pacific Time. We'll spend about the first half hour greeting friends, catching up, meeting newcomers, and deciding what we want to do for the evening. The list of options may grow.

Details for Nov 18: See <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/skdshtyfcpbxb/>.

Details for Dec 2: See <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/kkdshtyfcqbdb/>.

➤ Ancient Christian Study Group

Sunday, Nov 19, 2023, 12 noon – 2 pm

Location: Shine Café, 1400 E Street, Sacramento, map at <https://maps.app.goo.gl/fFgfsvK3ky2RvdWs6>.

The history of ancient Christianity is endlessly fascinating. Don Fox and Steve Thoreson will facilitate this review of the history of Rome, religions of the Roman Empire, Gnosticism, Mystery cults, history of Christian persecutions, biographies of major Christians, the history of the Bible and many other related topics. If you ever wanted to sort out Eusebius from Clement, or Constantine from Diocletian, or the Vulgate from the Septuagint, then this group is for you. Previous biblical knowledge is not required to participate.

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/ndfzqyfcpbzb/>.

➤ Black Humanists & Non-Believers Book Club

Saturday, Nov 25, 2023, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

An online book discussion open to all. Topic will be *Allow Me to Retort* by Elie Mystal, Chapters 1-7. RSVP to attend, and the location will be revealed.

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/bhnb-sacramento/events/whnfftyfcpbhc/>.

➤ Coffee and Community

Sunday, Nov 26, 2023, 10 am – 11:30 am

Location: A videoconference; to attend, just wait for the meeting time and then click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88317332021?pwd=OVI6M3IRQm52L0hQUmhwd0pucENEQT09>.

Meet for open-topic conversation, brew your own coffee. Get to know new folk or visit with some old friends! Hosted by Nancy Sneed and Lucila, such friendly people!

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/ssgcgtyfcpbjc/>.

➤ Porch Talk

Wednesday, Nov 29, 7 pm – 8:30 pm

Attendance link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88417809715?pwd=UGx1Q3hpU25iWkwrZjZaTWZFZMEMxZz09>.

A social gathering on the virtual front porch. Join online (via your personal computer) for a videochat on topics of the day; just click the link at meeting time and follow the instructions. Discussion suggestions are welcome. Host: Nancy Sneed.

Details: see <https://www.meetup.com/sacfan/events/kcs1ftyfcpbmc/>.

➤ Open Library Hours at Reason Center

Thursday, Dec 7, 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Location: Reason Center, 1300 Ethan Way, Ste. 675, Sacramento, map at

<https://goo.gl/maps/S5MR1e8ZodBzb4TG8>.

The Reason Center library is open for browsing. We have an extensive collection of freethinky books; you can even borrow them if you are a Reason Center member. See reasoncenter.org to join, or you may join up at the library.

Contact for details: Call 916-426-6416, or see <https://reasoncenter.com/contact/>.



➤ More Events – See the Event Calendars

Migosh that's a lot. But there's more! And plans change, so don't trust the static list above. To keep track of all those other events, bookmark & follow these links:

- Sacramento Freethinkers, Atheists and Nonbelievers, <https://www.meetup.com/SacFAN/events/calendar/>
- The Reason Center calendar, <https://www.meetup.com/ReasonCenterEvents/events/calendar/>
- Black Humanists of Sacramento events, <https://www.meetup.com/bhnb-sacramento/events/calendar/>
- Recovery from Religion Sacramento, <https://www.meetup.com/RfR-Sacramento-CA/events/calendar/>
- Sacramento Skeptics events, <https://www.meetup.com/sacskeptics/events/calendar/>
- Compassionate Humanists of Roseville, <https://www.meetup.com/compassionate-humanists/events/calendar/>
- Sunday Assembly Sacramento events, <https://www.meetup.com/sunday-assembly-sacramento/events/calendar/>
- Central Valley Alliance of Atheists & Skeptics, <https://www.meetup.com/fresno-cvaas/events/calendar/>

Can you help? Yes. Here's how.

Support Reason Center

Since Reason Center opened in July 2014, it has hosted hundreds of events and accrued twelve partner organizations. Its mission: to support a social and intellectual community for freethinkers, contribute to society through education and community service, advance the civic understanding and acceptance of freethinkers, and uphold the separation of religion and government. All good work.

But to continue, "RC" relies on support from members and donors. Please stand up for Reason Center, because it stands up for you. To join or donate, visit ReasonCenter.org.

Suggest a Meeting

Know a compelling speaker, have a great meeting idea, a critique? Tell the AOF Program Committee! Go to <http://www.aofonline.org/contact.html>, click "Program Committee" in the drop-down line, and enter your thoughtful suggestion. (Reasonable honorariums paid to speakers.)

Volunteer?

We suggest it meekly. See <http://www.aofonline.org/learn/committees.html> for opportunities.

✧ ✧ Secular Holidays ✧ ✧

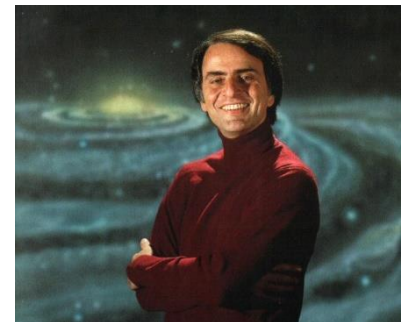
➤ Carl Sagan Day

Thursday, November 9, 2023

[Carl Sagan Day](#) marks the birthday of the great Carl Sagan, and is a celebration to honor his memory. Carl Sagan was Professor of Astronomy and Space Science and Director of the Laboratory for Planetary Studies at Cornell University, an outspoken skeptic, humanist and freethinker, and a Pulitzer Prize winning science author. But for the most part the public remembers him as the creator of the [Cosmos](#) television series. This Emmy and Peabody award-winning PBS series transformed educational television when it first aired in 1980. Thirty years later it is still fresh, and has gone on to affect the hearts and minds of over a billion people in sixty countries.

His *magnum opus* was his final book, [The Demon-Haunted World](#), published in 1995, the year before his untimely death.

Few other science writers (perhaps only Isaac Asimov) were able to reach and teach so many nonscientists in such a meaningful way. So in 2009, the [Center for Inquiry](#) inaugurated Carl Sagan Day as a secular holiday. Each year we will continue to celebrate Dr. Sagan, remember him and his work, and revel in the wondrous cosmos he helped us understand.



➤ Church State Separation Week

Sunday, November 19 – Saturday, November 25, 2023

Many freethinkers have adopted the week of Thanksgiving (~November 24) as **Church/State Separation Week**, to offer concerned and active citizens an opportunity to educate others about the importance of a clear division between Church and State. The hope is that this secular holiday will rally us and provide a platform to celebrate one of this nation's finest contributions to civilization.

Secularist societies such as [Americans United for the Separation of Church and State](#), the [Institute for First Amendment Studies](#), the [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#), the [American Atheists](#) and the [Institute for the Secularization of Islamic Society](#), as well as others united for a secular government, have supported this celebration.

In humanist circles, some also celebrate November 24 as [Evolution Day](#), marking as it does the anniversary of the first publication of *The Origin of Species* (Nov 24, 1859). For the most, however, the focus is on church/state separation this week. Charles Darwin has his own secular holiday (see: February 12).



Family News ~ ~

Angela Hope Freeland, Dec 10 1956 – September 8 2023

Farewell to Angela, who was part of AOF from Nov 2006 to Nov 2010, and the Sac-FAN Meetup Community in the same period. She attended few meetings but enjoyed lurking in our secular circle. Profoundly unhappy in Sacramento, she moved to Wisconsin several years ago. Her passions included music, photography, wildlife, her son Jason, and her cat Dusty Springfield Possum. Strong willed and outspoken, she loved to discuss physics and astronomy with family, friends and just about anyone. Her emails were always a blast. Goodbye, Angela.



Not yet an AOF member? Please join us!

Atheists and Other Freethinkers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, FEIN 68-0325762, incorporated in 1993. Meetings are free and open to the public. AOF also hosts civic service projects, dinners, movies and parties! See what awaits you at www.aofonline.org.

AOF President: Prolific Pamela Rivera
Vice-president: Marvelous Mynga Futrell
Secretary: Rapid Ruth Rezos
Treasurer & Registrar: Kinetic Ken Nahigian
Webmistress: Palpable Pat Kelley
Program chair: Super Susan McLean
Facebook page: Keen Kaeleigh Pontif
Directors at large:
Roger Zabkie, Fran Evanisko, Kaeleigh Pontif

How to Contact AOF:

- Call 916-304-3796 (voicemail)
 - Or write to PO Box 15182, Sacramento, CA 95851-0182
- Or visit <http://www.aofonline.org/contact> to e-message us.

How to Join AOF:

Visit <http://www.aofonline.org/join>, or come to a meeting. We have forms.

AOF's Facebook pages (two):

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1525411971087089/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Atheists-and-Other-Freethinkers-AOF-104763721971742>

AOF is affiliated with the Alliance of Secular Humanist Societies (ASHS), Atheist Alliance of America (AAA), American Atheists (AA), American Humanist Association (AHA) and the Sacramento Coalition of Reason (SCoR).

AOF Mission Statement:

"The purpose of Atheists and Other Freethinkers (AOF) is to promote the civic understanding of atheism and the acceptance of atheists in our community. Through educational programs, projects, and publications, AOF will extend secular perspectives, including the separation of religion and government and the right to think and speak freely on these perspectives."

What is a Freethinker? One striving to form opinions of life, religion, politics and philosophy on the grounds of reason and experience, rather than tradition, authority or custom. He or she need not be an atheist, though in a religious society most atheists do tend to be freethinkers.

AOF supports a benign separation of Church and State as the best means to protect the liberty and intellectual commerce of citizens. "... to keep forever from these shores the ceaseless strife that has soaked the soil of Europe in blood for centuries" (James Madison, 1803).

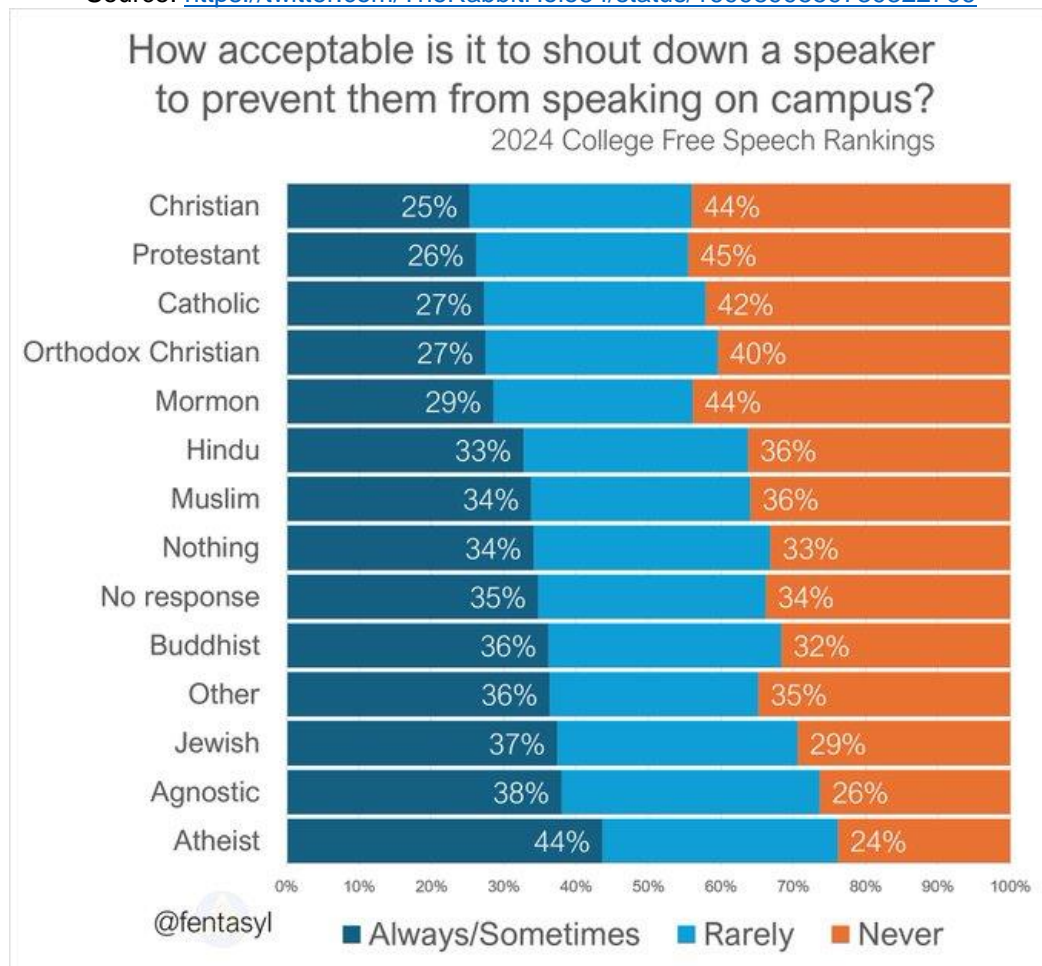
Our vision: to be a venue where secular and unchurched citizens can socialize, dialog, develop friendships and enjoy shared company. AOF does not discriminate on such grounds as race, sexual orientation, age, gender, class, physical debility or (*cough*) religion. We welcome the fair-minded of all political persuasions and preferences. Any who will treat others with respect and dignity may join.

Donations to AOF are tax deductible, and the newsletter is free by email. Please share with sympathetic friends.

Letters, submissions? We love them! See:
<http://www.aofonline.org/read/submission-guide.html>.

A regrettable statistic, submitted by Pat Kelley

Source: <https://twitter.com/TheRabbitHole84/status/1699899559739322766>



We can do better, don't you think?



Apocalypse on the rectory lawn, 1694

REVEREND JOHN MASON, a man of formidable prophetic gifts, was the Rector of Water Strafford, Buckinghamshire, in the 1680s. He often had disturbing visions of his parishioners, but his wife usually managed to get him to clam it.

But she died in 1687, and then his ministry had a new lease of life.

The Rev. John had a revelation that the second coming would take place in 1694. But where would those anointed sandals touch down? On the lawn outside the Rectory of Water Strafford, as the scriptures plainly foretell, for those who have eyes to see.

He gave up administering the Eucharist, and preached on no other subject but the imminent event. Word got round, and a commune of his followers settled on the lawn, spending their time in prayer, singing and liturgical dancing.

One of John's disciples noticed that he was a heavy smoker, and that he went into "a kind of ecstasy" when he indulged his pipe. And so it was that on Easter Monday, probably surrounded by clouds of smoke, that the inspired reverend found Jesus sitting in a chair in his study. The visitor announced that his arrival was scheduled for Whitsun. From then on, John's only prayer was, "thy kingdom come".

But soon after Easter, he fell ill. Reassuringly, he had a word from God that he would not die. Less reassuringly, he did die. Of tonsillitis by Whitsun.

The reaction of his followers was predictable: shock, grief and disillusion soon swept away by the revelation that he would rise on the third day. When else? When this comeback also failed to materialize, the disciples showed a truly inspiring steadfastness by insisting that John's resurrected body had been translated straight into glory.

The story persisted, and John's successor at the Rectory, evidently a man of small faith, was understandably so cheesed off by this cult that he dug up the body for all to see. But it didn't put them off in the least.

The moral: Oh well.