



## Coventry and Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter March 2026

Dear Fellow Humanists

Welcome to the March 2026 edition of the Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists Newsletter. I am looking forward to waking up on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March. This is one of my favourite days of the year. On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March we will be putting the clocks forward and for me, Sunday will be the start of Spring. After a long dark Winter with shorter days, it is the day when we appear to get more daylight along with the joys of Spring and Summer to look forward to. Those of you who are keen gardeners will know that daffodils, tulips, crocuses and other Spring flowers will be in full bloom. It is also the time of the birth of calves, lambs and other rural animals. I will be getting up early to celebrate this wonderful day.

Whilst I will be enjoying the onset of Spring, I am also mindful of where we are as a group. I have included an article I recently saw in 'Humanistically Speaking' by Maggie Hall, 'Has Organised Humanism Had Its Day?' I must admit that her general description of local Humanist groups, does look a bit like ourselves in Coventry & Warwickshire? I do feel that we have had some excellent meetings over the past few years with some very interesting speakers – some of whom have travelled a fair distance to speak to us. I often feel a bit sheepish if there are less than 20 people in attendance. Added to which, myself included, but most of us are past retirement age. So, bearing that in mind as well as the article by Maggie Hall, I will definitely welcome any comments or suggestions regarding these thoughts. Separate to this Newsletter I will be sending out by email a survey of your thoughts on improving attendance and content at our regular monthly meetings. In the meantime, roll-on Sunday morning!

Whatever you are doing for the onset of Spring, I hope that it is enjoyable and fulfilling.

Thank you and very best wishes to you all

Brian Goredema-Braid

Chair of Coventry & Warwickshire Humanists

### Meetings:

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March:** This was an extra online meeting to our usual online meetings in January and February. Our former Chair, Bob Jelley had attended the Humanists UK Darwin Day Lecture – 'The Genetic Age' and gave us an interesting presentation of the lecture. Professor Matthew Cobb had kindly agreed to share his Power-Point slides from the lecture. It certainly opened up a different perspective on the concept of evolution. I am grateful to Bob in delivering this lecture. The only downside for me was that my wi-fi was very weak that night and unfortunately, I did miss some of the lecture – which also made it difficult for me to deliver the quiz! Nevertheless, a very good meeting.

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April:** We have invited Esther from Birmingham Humanists to share her professional and personal experience to lead a discussion on African Humanism. In this session, Esther will open a conversation about African Humanism, drawing on her familiarity with African atheism and the ways people with African heritage navigate belief, doubt, and cultural expectations. She'll explore how a humanist lens — focused on shared humanity, dignity, and ethical living beyond doctrine — can help make sense of the cultural traditions, values, and heritage that shape identity in many African communities.

Esther is a trained counsellor and humanist pastoral support practitioner. A former Christian, raised in a deeply religious Nigerian household, was a priest in training before finding Humanism. Esther supports people leaving religions, through deconstruction, loss of faith, and rebuilding identity. Esther is also passionate about supporting women, apostates, and those recovering from religious trauma.

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May:** Discussion to be determined - an opportunity for anyone to lead on a topic of interest.

### **Has Organised Humanism Had Its Day?**

I have copied this interesting and soul-searching article by Maggie Hall from a recent copy of 'Humanistically Speaking. I will welcome any comments, criticisms or suggestions



**Maggie Hall**

In this article, Maggie considers the future of organised Humanism at the local level, questioning whether campaigning and discussion are enough – or whether Humanist groups need to find new, more practical ways to serve their communities. Maggie is a retired teacher of speech and drama, a former Chair of Brighton Humanists, a member of the Humanists UK Dialogue Network, and a Humanist School Speaker. I have no doubt that Humanism itself does have a future. There will always be people who have a humanist outlook. People who have no religious beliefs but wish to lead fulfilled and effective lives based on reason, logic and empathy.

People with a strong sense of justice and compassion for others. People who are acutely aware that this life is the only one of which we can be certain and that this world is the only one that we know to exist. People who believe, therefore, that it is imperative we do our utmost to make it as good as we can for as many as we can, in the desperately short time that we are here. What I do have doubts about, however, is the future of *organised* humanism. Most Humanist groups that I know of are struggling to attract members, and those they do have tend to be largely in the older age group. Some groups have folded altogether, and even when new ones are formed, they often do not seem to last long. Humanists UK remains very active at the national level as a campaigning organisation, advocating changes in the law on issues such as assisted dying, faith schools and compulsory worship in schools. But at the grassroots level there does not seem to be much support. There are of course Humanist groups that are still strongly active in their communities and manage to attract members, but as far as I can see, they are very rare. The reasons for this are not entirely clear, but I do wonder whether one factor may be that being non-religious, yet still socially conscious, is now far more the norm than it was when the modern Humanist movement first arose in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Back then Humanists were in the minority, and the non-religious had to present a robust front simply to have their voices heard at all.

I am not suggesting that we no longer need to remain vigilant about religious privilege, or about insidious religious fundamentalism seeking to gain a foothold in our society, including within our

education system. But if organised Humanism is to flourish, it also needs to look beyond these issues and consider what it can do to remain relevant in today's world.



Simply holding a monthly meeting with a speaker no longer attracts people. They can find that online. There are many interesting lectures and debates available on YouTube for those who want them, without having to go out on a cold winters' night to sit in a draughty hall or a dark room above a pub. To remain relevant today, organised Humanism needs to stop appealing primarily to a relatively small intellectual audience content to be part of a talking shop, and instead find ways to connect with ordinary people at a grassroots level.

There is much to be done at the local level to help make this world a better place for everyone, whether religious or not. The threats to humanity – and indeed to all life – go far beyond religion alone. The greatest, and the one that worries me most, is the climate crisis. Unless that threat is addressed as soon as possible, questions about the legality of Humanist marriage ceremonies or whether there are prayers in council chambers will become irrelevant. We will be far more concerned about whether our homes are under water, or how we are going to survive increasingly inhospitable summer temperatures.

The ordinary person in the street, whether religious or not, is worried about the cost of living, whether their children are on drugs or involved in knife crime, whether they can get a doctor's appointment, and whether their ethnicity, sexual orientation, cultural background or gender makes them a target for far-right hatemongers. They are not interested in intellectual discussions.

I don't pretend to know what the answer is. Perhaps there is no longer a need for organised humanist groups, at least in areas where religion is not prominent. Or perhaps groups should become more visible in their local communities through practical initiatives – such as providing community kitchens, organising community larders with excess food from local supermarkets, pensioners' lunches, coffee mornings for the lonely, school uniform exchanges, and baby banks distributing essential items for babies and young children to families who can't afford them. After all, this is what many churches do, and it seems to work quite well for them.

Of course, many humanists are already involved in such activities and consider them part of their humanism. But is there, perhaps, a case for humanist groups to do them as a way of representing humanism more visibly? Alternatively, should those of us who involve ourselves in community activities take the opportunity to draw attention to the fact that we are humanists? Should we become evangelists for humanism? I know some humanists believe this, but personally I find evangelists of all kinds irritating, and I cannot think of a better way to put people off.

So, what this ultimately boils down to is whether those of us currently involved in organised Humanism at the local level have the will, the energy and the vision to keep going – or whether the most sensible course is to acknowledge that perhaps local Humanist groups have had their day? What do you think? I will welcome all comments

### **Scottish Assisted Dying Bill Fails**

The Scottish Parliament has today voted against Liam McArthur MSP's Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill, by 69 votes to 57, thereby rejecting legislation that would have legalised assisted dying in Scotland.

#### **The Bill:**

The Bill would have allowed eligible terminally ill adults in Scotland to legally request an assisted death. To qualify, a person would have needed to:

- Have lived in Scotland for at least 12 months
- Be registered with a Scottish GP

- Be terminally ill with six months or fewer left to live
- Have mental capacity



Individuals would first have signed an initial declaration, been assessed independently by two medics, including consideration of any pressure or coercion, and then have completed a reflection period of 14 days, reducible to 48 hours if death was expected sooner. If they still wished to proceed, they would have made a second declaration before being provided with an approved substance, which the Bill said must be self-administered.

### The scrutiny:

Liam McArthur MSP first set out his proposal in September 2021, after which it went through an extended period of consultation and development before the Bill was introduced in March 2024. That process included a full public consultation, which received more than 14,000 responses, the largest response to any consultation on a Members' Bill in Scottish Parliament history. This included detailed consideration of the evidence submitted, and around 18 months of drafting and policy work.

The Bill passed Stage 1 in May 2025 by 70 votes to 56. Over 300 amendments were debated during Stage 3, a high number by Holyrood standards, and a clear demonstration of just how much scrutiny this Bill has been given.

Recent constituency-level polling said support for a change in the law exists in every Scottish constituency, with 78% support overall.

### Andrew Copson, Chief Executive of Humanists UK, said:

'MSPs have failed suffering people and their families and denied the people of Scotland the compassionate choices that many around the world already benefit from.'

### What is secularism – and why does it matter?



**We live in a diverse society. Walk down any street in any British city and you'll encounter people with different backgrounds, different religions or beliefs, and different answers to life's deepest questions.**

That diversity is something to celebrate, but in relation to religion or belief, it can raise practical challenges when it comes to society and politics. Who should the government listen to and why? How do we come well together in spite of our differences? How do we build a society that works for everyone, regardless of what they believe?

**For many people, the answer is secularism.** It's a word that gets used a lot but which is still very misunderstood. So, what does it actually mean?

**Secularism (n.)**

*The principle of separating the state from religious institutions to promote fairness, freedom, peace, and equality for everyone.*

**Secularists (n.)**

*People who agree with, support, or advocate for secularism. Secularists can be religious or non-religious.*

**Secularism isn't what you might think**

One of the most common misconceptions is that secularism is itself a worldview. Opponents of secularism try often to equate it with atheism or claim that seeks to marginalise or suppress religion.

In fact, the opposite is true. First of all, secularism isn't a set of beliefs about the universe like a religion or a non-religious worldview. Secularism is a practical framework for organising society that can be shared by people of any religion or belief.

Secularism has three core aspects:

- **Separation of religious and state institutions.** When religion and state become entangled, the consequences can be serious: citizens who don't belong to the official religion can feel like second-class members of their own society.
- **Freedom of thought, conscience, and belief.** Everyone should have as much freedom as possible to follow their own path, within the limits set by others' rights and freedoms.
- **Equal treatment for all.** No one's opportunities in life should be restricted by what they believe, or by the fact that they've walked away from one tradition or another.

**Arguments for a secular society**

Why should we want a secular state? The case rests on three interconnected principles: freedom, fairness, and peace.

**The argument for freedom** was made by thinkers like John Stuart Mill who argued that human beings flourish when they are free to pursue their own goals and ideas. A secular state – one that doesn't try to dictate what you should believe or how you should live – is the best guarantee of that freedom. Only when the state remains impartial can people truly determine their own lives.

**The argument for fairness** is simpler: equal treatment is in everyone's interest. In a diverse society, no worldview should hold a privileged position, and no one should be able to use state power to advance their beliefs at others' expense. When it comes to religion and the state, secularism is simply the most equal approach.

**The argument for peace** is perhaps the most urgent. History offers a sobering lesson. When states adopt official religions, when religious authority and political power become fused, the result too often is persecution, discord, resentment, community tensions, and violence. Secularism offers a different path: a state that mediates diversity, that creates a fair and open society for all groups, so that no one is pushed to the margins, no one feels so alienated that conflict becomes the only outlet.

Our new animation, *What is secularism?* explores these ideas in accessible terms: secularism is about freedom, fairness, and peace.

**Not just for humanists**

It would be easy to assume that secularism is just a humanist project, but it very much isn't. While all humanists are secularists to some extent, secularism has some deep roots in religious thought as well.

Support for secularism is given historically and today by many Protestant denominations in Europe and America who believe that an individual's conscience is a matter between them and god, not something for the state to control. The Hindu Gandhi was a committed secularist, not for humanist reasons but for religious ones: he believed that spiritual paths were personal, and the state had no

business interfering in them. Arguments for secularism can be found in every major religious tradition, from Islam and Judaism to Hinduism and Buddhism.

Many prominent advocates of secularism have been devoutly religious. Historical figures include the Indian Buddhist B.R. Ambedkar, the Egyptian Islamic scholar Ali Abd al-Razig, and the American Christian civil rights activist Martin Luther King. Even the Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu argued for a secular state as the antidote to sectarian conflict in South Africa, insisting that 'God is not a Christian.' In America, the principle has been embraced by presidents across the political spectrum, from John F. Kennedy and Jimmy Carter to Teddy Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan.

Secularism, in other words, belongs to everyone. It's a framework that allows people of all worldviews to participate in public life on equal terms. As the new animation puts it, it's about making sure that no worldview holds a privileged position, and that everyone has a voice.

#### **Where are we now?**

Secularism had its great moment of global optimism in the mid-twentieth century. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, enshrined freedom of thought, conscience, and religion as universal values. The United States and France stood as prominent examples of secular democracies. The founders of newly independent India saw secularism as an essential feature of a modern state.

The picture today is more complicated. In parts of the world, religious nationalism is on the rise. In the Arab world, in Russia, in Turkey, governments have moved away from secular principles and towards religiously inflected governance. The backlash against universal human rights is real and growing.

And yet, the case for secularism is being made – often bravely – in every region of the world. Dissident groups in the Arab world, human rights activists in Russia and across Africa, civil society organisations in almost every country are working, under difficult conditions, to secure equal rights and open societies. Humanists everywhere are allies and active participants in that struggle.

#### **A resource for everyone**

Our new animation *What is secularism?* was created as part of Understanding Humanism, our charitable programme supporting teaching and learning about humanism in schools. Made for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils, it's designed to be a springboard for classroom conversation, but its clarity makes it valuable for anyone who wants to think through what secularism really means.

Director of Understanding Humanism Luke Donnellan hopes the film will help people 'understand how secularism protects freedom of belief for everyone, and how it enables people with different worldviews to live well together.'

In a world that feels increasingly fractured along lines of belief and identity, that message feels more relevant than ever. Secularism doesn't ask us to abandon what we believe. It asks us to build a society where everyone's beliefs and everyone's freedom are equally respected. Watch '*What is secularism?*' on the Understanding Humanism website, alongside a wider set of classroom resources and activities.

#### **School Speakers – Understanding Humanism:**

Humanists UK school speakers have made over 4000 visits to schools since 2015. To build on this terrific achievement, we would love to see more new speakers joining the network to help more young people around the country learn about humanism.

We are looking for people who are committed to a humanist approach to life, good communicators, and enthusiastic about using their knowledge and lived experience to help young people understand what humanism is.

The next free training course will be on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2026 from 09.30 to 17.00 at Bridge 5 Mill, 22A Beswick Street, Manchester M4 7HR

The application deadline date is 17.00 on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April

Prospective volunteers can read more about becoming a school speaker, and download an information pack and application form, on the [training web page](#).

People who would like to volunteer, but who can't make those dates, can be first to hear about future school speaker training opportunities by **joining our mailing list**

If potential volunteers are wondering whether school speaking is for them, or they'd like to hear from our trainers and experienced school speakers before applying, they can come along to our free **Introduction Session on Tuesday 24 March**. This short, informal online event will tell them more about what's involved and give them a taste of what being a school speaker is like. Places can be booked via the School Speaker Training page.

**Want to check knowledge of humanism before applying?**

If potential volunteers would like to explore or refresh their own knowledge of humanism before applying for school speaker training, they can book a place at our free, introductory **What is humanism?** webinar on **Thursday 19 March**. This informal lunchtime event will recap the key characteristics of humanism, and demonstrate how Humanists UK talks about humanism to education and other audiences. Places can be booked via the School Speaker Training page. Anyone interested in becoming a Humanists UK school visitor can read more about the school speaker programme's achievements and volunteers' experiences in this article.

We're grateful for your help to spread the word about being a Humanists UK school speaker. If you are able to share the information and encourage humanists in your network to get involved, please let us know how you're doing that - it helps us to understand how best to reach out to potential speakers. Thank you!

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us via [schools.training@humanists.uk](mailto:schools.training@humanists.uk).

Kind regards,

**Luke Donnellan, Head of Education, Humanists UK**

**Cinema Film Preview:**

*(Some are shown on the main cinema circuit, but most are available at the small art cinemas, Warwick Arts Centre, Midland Arts Centre and Leamington Spa Theatre)*

**The Magic Faraway Tree:** The much-anticipated adaption of Enid Blyton's fantasy novel. A modern family moves to the countryside where the children discover a magical tree containing some eccentric residents. They are transported to fantastical lands with exciting adventures. Starring Andrew Garfield and Claire Foy. Definitely one to take the grandchildren too!

**La Grazia:** Widower, ex-judge and President reflects on his past as he grapples with the next chapter of his life. Mourning the loss of his wife, he lives a secluded existence within the grand presidential palace, assisted by his lawyer daughter who is exasperated by the time it takes for him to make decisions. As the end of his presidency approaches, final duties and moral dilemmas become tangled with his private life. Starring Toni Servillo and Anna Ferzetti

**Hard Boiled:** Police and gangsters collide in this explosive Hong Kong genre-defining masterpiece. A vengeful policeman targets a weapons-smuggling syndicate in an operation that goes horribly wrong

**Pale View of the Hills:** An adaption of the Kazuo Ishiguro novel. A daughter is anxious to know about her mother's time in Nagasaki. A story of loss, exile and the generational impact of war and tragedy. Starring Camilla Aiko and Suzu Hirose

**The Killer:** A gangster hitman latest job takes a wrong turn when he accidentally blinds a nightclub singer during a shoot-out. He vows to restore her sight by taking one last job resulting in mayhem on the streets of Hong Kong

**The Drama:** A couple's bond is tested when an unexpected turn sends their wedding week off the rails. A black comedy of a picture-perfect couple sliding towards darkness. Starring Robert Pattinson and Zendaya

**Still on the Main Circuit:**

**Peaky Blinders: The Immortal Man:** The long-awaited feature film of the popular TV series.

Birmingham, 1940. Amidst the chaos of WWII, the dilemmas for Tommy Shelby with the future of

the family and the country at stake, Tommy must face his own demons, and choose whether to confront his legacy, or burn it to the ground. Starring the excellent Cillian Murphy as Shelby.

**The Secret Agent:** A Brazilian film set during the 1977 notorious military dictatorship is already receiving rave reviews. Marcelo is missing his ID and seeks asylum to be nearer to his young son. Arriving at Recife during a raucous carnival he is enveloped by the corruption and paranoia, especially from the sleazy local police chief and his deputies

**Sirat:** Described as an 'apocalyptic road movie' A father and his young son scour the Moroccan desert, searching for a lost daughter. Along the way, they join a nomadic community of ravers and are swept into a world of pounding techno, dust storms, and looming conflict.

**Wasteman:** Set within a claustrophobic and often brutal UK prison, a mild-mannered inmate whose hopes for an early release are jeopardized when his charismatic but menacing new cellmate forces a choice between prison loyalty and freedom. Starring David Jonsson and Tom Blyth

**Sound of Falling:** A German family farm in a region that saw both world wars and defined Cold War divisions between East and West Germany. As time moves both forwards and backwards, 4 generations of girls each faces her own particular fate. A sombre study of Germany's national trauma, the effects of violent patriarchy and of successive conflicts for young women and girls.

**Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die:** A wildly inventive sci-fi satire of a man claiming to be from the future who storms into a Los Angeles diner looking for volunteers to assist him in fighting against a coming artificial intelligence uprising. Is he crazy or the only sane person in the room? Funny, daring and completely off-the-wall, and some biting things to say about the AI revolution and a world where everyone is glued to their devices.

**The Tasters:** Based on Italian author Rosella Postorino's bestselling novel *At the Wolf's Table* and inspired by the true story of Margot Wölk, A woman flees Berlin to escape the bombs of World War II, she is recruited to become one of Hitler's food tasters - a group of young women whose sole job is to sample every dish prepared for the Führer and ensure it hasn't been poisoned. She finds herself torn in her loyalties divided between a handsome SS officer and the other food tasters.

**The Love That Remains:** Set against the sweeping landscapes of southern Iceland, a family facing the end of a marriage must find new ways to connect and create fresh memories - with a little help from moments of surreal fantasy.

**Project Hail Mary:** Based on the novel by Andy Weir, a science teacher wakes up on a spaceship light years from home with no recollection of who he is or how he got there. He realises he's been sent on a mission to solve the riddle of why the sun is dying out and save Earth from annihilation – but an unexpected friendship means he may not have to do it alone. Starring Ryan Gosling

**Broken English:** An inventive and soulful portrait of cultural icon Marianne Faithfull. The layered structure on which *Broken English* rests is the fictional 'Ministry of Not Forgetting' who take Marianne on a journey into a rich and event-filled past.

**The Bride:** A lonely Frankenstein travels to 1930s Chicago to seek the aid in creating a companion for himself. Reinvigorating a murdered young woman is born – but she's beyond what either of them intended, igniting a radical social movement. Starring Christian Bale and Jessie Buckley

**Midwinter Break:** Based on Bernard MacLaverty's novel, which follows retirees Stella and Gerry on a trip to Amsterdam at a crunch point in their marriage. Their city break has the potential to become something much more life-changing as the pair reflect on the past, their problems in the present, and consider their future together. Starring Lesley Manville and Ciaran Hinds

**Resurrection:** Spanning a century, and divided into six chapters, with each taking place in a specific cinematic era and genre. Characters in this time-travelling opus live forever, but often at a high cost.

**All That's Left of You:** In the occupied West Bank, a Palestinian teenager is swept into a moment of violence that rocks his family. Spanning 7 decades from 1948, tracing the experiences of one uprooted family and the pain of dispossession and survival.

**EPIC: Elvis Presley in Concert:** A definite one for Elvis fans! Elvis sings and tells his story like never before. Described as ‘one of the most exciting concert films you’ve ever seen’. Including unseen performance footage covering the latter years of Elvis’s greatness.

**The Testament of Ann Lee:** Maybe not one for atheists? In 18<sup>th</sup> Century England and America, visionary leader Ann Lee rises from obscurity to forge the Shaker movement. Driven by beliefs in social equality, she gathers followers who come to see her as the female embodiment of Jesus (yes, I know – I did warn you!!). Starring Amanda Seyfried

**The President’s Cake:** A young girl is faced with the challenge of baking a cake for her school’s celebration of Saddam Hussein’s birthday. Considered by some to be a great honour, but she feels it is an impossible task. She and her grandmother struggle to get by. The girl is determined to find the ingredients. A comic and tragic film through a child’s eye view of living in a dictatorship

**The Voice of Hind Rajab:** The last recorded words of a 6-year-old girl in Gaza into a vital act of remembrance. The film captures both the unbearable suspense of the complex rescue attempt and the impossible choices faced by first responders, creating a devastating and unforgettable portrait of innocence in the face of unspeakable violence. A definite ‘must-see’ film

**The Screening of Live Theatre Plays from the West End:**

**All My Sons:** Bryan Cranston and Marianne Jean-Baptiste feature in a five-star, triumphantly acclaimed new production of Arthur Miller’s classic play, from visionary director Ivo Van Hove

**Playboy of the Western World:** Nicola Coughlan joins Éanna Hardwicke and Siobhán McSweeney in John Millington Synge’s riveting play of youth and self-discovery.

**Les Liaisons Dangereuses:** Lesley Manville joins Aidan Turner in a striking new staging of Christopher Hampton’s celebrated adaptation of the classic novel, where among the glittering salons of the super-rich, one misstep can mean ruin.

**Art Exhibitions on Screen:**

**Frida Kahlo**

**Also look out for the re-screening of BAFTA Winners and Nominees and Oscar Nominees:**

- **One Battle After Another**
- **I Swear**
- **Marty Supreme**
- **Sentimental Value**
- **Sinners**

**TV Programmes and Films:**

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March:**

**20.00 – BBC1: Beyond Paradise** – A welcome return of this pleasant spin-off from Death in Paradise starring affable Kris Marshall and Sally Bretton

**21.00 – BBC1: Death in Paradise** – The final episode of the delightful detective series set on a beautiful Caribbean island starring Don Gilet and Don Warrington

**21.00 – BBC4: Elkie Brooks at the BBC** – Great for fans of Elkie Brooks now aged 80 looking back over her career – followed by 3 separate **Elkie Brooks in Concert at 22.10, 23.10 and 23.50**

**22.00 – Channel 4: The Last Leg** – These days, we need satire more than ever! Adam Hills, Josh Widdicombe and Alex Brooker provide the comic review of the news

**22.40 – BBC1: The Claudia Winkleman Show** – I was not too impressed after the first showing? But it can only get better? This week, Jimmy Carr, Chase Infiti and Lisa Kudrow are on the show

**22.50 – ITV1: Devil in Disguise: John Wayne Gracy** – The final episode of this true-life horror serial of the entrapment and murder of several teenage boys

**23.00 – BBC2: Femme** - Thriller starring George MacKay and Nathan Stewart-Jarrett. A young drag performer is brutally assaulted in a homophobic attack. While out of drag, he runs into his attacker and the two begin a sexual relationship - one that offers him the opportunity for revenge.

### **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March:**

**21.20 – BBC1: The Walsh Sisters** – The final episode based on the Marion Keyes bestsellers

**21.20 – Channel 4: Bill Bailey's Vietnam** – Another episode of the comedian and musician's journey through Vietnam. This week he is in the mountains of Sa Pa

**21.00 – BBC4: Hidden Assets** – The start of another series of the Irish made detective series starring Nora-Jane Noone and Aaron Monaghan – **next episode at 21.50**

**22.20 – Channel 4: Moonfall** - Sci-fi action adventure starring Halle Berry and Patrick Wilson. When the Moon's orbit starts to change, Earth is threatened with imminent destruction. Two former astronauts and an amateur lunar researcher blast off to try to save the day

**23.15 – ITV1: Fast and Furious 9** – Yet another 'Fast & Furious' – many people do like the all action series starring Vin Diesel – You know what you are going to get

**23.30 – BBC1: The Shallows** - Thriller starring Blake Lively. An emotional journey turns into a nightmare for a young woman when she becomes stranded on a rocky outcrop after being attacked by a great white shark that isn't going to give up on its prey.

### **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March:**

**20.00 – BBC1: The Other Bennett Sister** – I am enjoying this new spin on Pride and Prejudice, starring Ella Bruccoleri. **Next episode at 20.30**

**20.00 – ITV1: Grace** – A welcome return of the detective series starring John Simm

**20.00 – BBC2: Burma with Simon Reeve** - Two-part documentary series in which Simon Reeve travels to beautiful and troubled Burma. I do enjoy his approach to geographical documentaries

**21.00 – BBC1: The Capture** – Another episode of the conspiracy thriller starring Holliday Grainger

**22.00 – BBC2: Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World** – IMO one of Russell Crowe's best ever films, possibly even better than 'Gladiator'? Set during the Napoleonic Wars and the novels of Patrick O'Brian

**22.20 – ITV1: Creed III** - Michael B Jordan returns as boxer Adonis Creed in this pumped-up third *Rocky* spin-off. **(Repeated on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 22.50 on ITV1)**

**22.30 – BBC1: The Proposal** - Romantic comedy starring Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds. Uptight Manhattan book editor treats her assistant like dirt. So, when she's threatened with deportation to her native Canada because of an expired visa, she pressurises him into marrying her.

**00.05 – BBC2: Good Vibrations** - True life comedy drama starring Richard Dormer and Jodie Whittaker. Belfast in the 1970s: as the Troubles continue to escalate, an idealistic DJ opens a new record shop, Good Vibrations, to bring reggae music to the city and encourage peace. Instead he discovers punk rock and becomes a record producer to promote the new musical genre.

### **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March:**

**20.00 – BBC2: Mastermind** – We are at semi-final stage of the popular quiz programme

**21.30 – BBC2: University Challenge** – The last of the quarter finals of the top quiz

**20.00 – BBC4: Treasures of Ancient Egypt** - Historian Alastair Sooke relates the story of Ancient Egyptian art through 30 masterpieces. Along the way, he explores architectural wonders, exquisite tombs and a lost city.

**21.00 – BBC1: Babies** - Drama series, starring Paapa Essiedu and Siobhán Cullen as a couple dealing with the aftermath of losing a pregnancy.

**22.00 – BBC4: Pompeii: The Mystery of the People Frozen in Time** - Documentary in which Margaret Mountford visits the Roman town of Pompeii, where the eruption of Vesuvius encased its citizens in lava, creating body casts that populate the ruins. She dispels the myths surrounding the events in 79AD and explores the lives of the individuals who lived in the enigmatic city

**22.40 – BBC1: Trying** – This has been a very enjoyable series - The season finale. As the couple prepare to find out if they can keep the kids forever, they make an impulsive decision that requires their family's help. Starring Esther Smith and Rafe Spall. **Final episode at 23.05**

**23.00 – BBC2: The Prestige** - Period mystery thriller starring Hugh Jackman and Christian Bale. Two Victorian magicians have been bitter rivals since an onstage tragedy. However, their determination to ruin each other's reputation will only stop when one of them is dead.

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March: (There is a lot of international football on various channels tonight!)**

**21.00 – BBC1: Babies** – Another episode of the couple coming to terms with losing a pregnancy

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April:**

**23.25 – BBC1: 21 Bridges** - Crime thriller starring Chadwick Boseman and Sienna Miller. The murder of two New York cops sees A detective is brought in to catch cop killers before they get out of the city. He orders Manhattan into lockdown by sealing off all of its bridges, revealing further issues.

**23.45 – BBC2: Belfast** - Drama recalling Kenneth Branagh's childhood. In August 1969, a neighbourhood street in north Belfast is attacked by a Protestant mob seeking to force out Catholic residents. Starring Jude Hill, Caitriona Balfe, Jamie Dornan and Judi Dench.

### A Few Cartoons:



### **A Few Funnies to Finish With:**

I was having a brilliant time at the pass the parcel party last night, until I was told to leave because of “stealing”

The inventor of hard-boiled eggs wrapped in sausage meat has died. RIP Scott Chegg.

Some friends just had twin boys, named them Juan and Jamal. They look so alike it's like if you've seen Juan you have seen Jamal .

It's a shame nothing is built in the UK anymore. Just bought a new TV which says 'Built in Antenna'. I don't even know where that is...

I've overcome dyslexia, and qualified as a Funeral Director. I'll give my competitors an urn for their money.

While setting up a voice recognition password on my new phone, a dog barked nearby and ran away. Now I'm looking for that dog to unlock my phone...

I've lost so much weight recently I reckon I have a good chance of winning the no-belly prize.

I've just won an award for being the most secretive person in the world. I can't tell you how much this means to me.

Just a quick heads up. You pee on a jelly fish sting. Not a jelly stain. Once again, my apologies to the woman at my next-door neighbour's kids birthday party.

Fastest way to mess up someone's Knock Knock joke? “It's open”

I've been banned from the Secret Cooking Society... I kept spilling the beans.

“I'm 59 and people call me middle-aged. How many 118-year-old men do you know?”

A moth comes into a chiropodists.

'Can you help me, please?' the moth asks. 'I'm desperate. My wife has left me. My business has gone downhill. I'm in complete despair. You've got to help me.'

'But how can I help you?' said the chiropodist. 'What you need is a psychiatrist. Why did you come and see me?'

'The light was on,' said the moth.

A white horse walks into a pub.

'Wow!' the barman says. 'We've got a drink named after you!'

'What?' said the horse. 'Eric?'

My mother fell over, so I rang the hospital. I said, 'My Mum's collapsed

He said, 'Do you wanna stretcher? I said, 'I think that will make her worse!'