



Outlook

**The magazine of
St Mark's Church
Longwood**



March 2022

From Fr Simon: What is Lent?

We all know that there are four seasons in the year. At the moment we are in winter and eagerly waiting for spring. In the church we also have seasons, which lead one into the other.

In April we will celebrate Easter Sunday, but the season of Easter which follows is a full 50 days long. In this season our services focus on the joy of the resurrection and we sing and say lots of Alleluias.

Easter is very important, because it is when we remember that Jesus rose from the dead with new life, and that he brings the whole world into that new life with him. Entering Jesus' new life is a bit like entering the promised land. God shares his kingdom with us, where there is over-flowing goodness and endless possibilities.

You might be familiar with the story of Moses: he rescued his people from Egypt, and led them through the wilderness for 40 years in preparation to enter the promised land.

The 40 years in the wilderness helped the Israelites to be ready for their new land, it prepared them individually and as a group. The wilderness years were not always easy, but they were good. During that time, they learnt to rely on God for their daily needs, they learnt to recognise how God was always with them, and they didn't have the distractions of possessions, land and wealth.

In the same way, Christians have found it helpful to have a time of preparation before Easter. We call this season, "Lent". Fortunately for us, it is not the full 40 years that the Israelites had; Lent is 40 days. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and is one of the yearly seasons in the church. We use the season of lent: to focus on saying sorry to God, to live a more simple life, and to journey with Jesus towards his death on the cross and the resurrection beyond. Lent can feel a bit of a wilderness for us, but at the other end is the glory of new life in the resurrection.

What should we do in Lent?

There are no strict rules, but here are some ideas that you could consider:

1. **Make some time.** We live such busy lives, which for many of us seem to get busier and fuller each year. Lent is a good time to create some time and space to do less.
2. **Give something up.** This is not to help us to lose weight, but to appreciate all that we have and to focus on God a bit more. It can help us to reflect on all that God gave up in order to give us new life.
3. **Go green.** In recent years people have used lent as a particular time to be more environmental such as use cars less, walk more, go plastic free, or go vegetarian.
4. **Read the bible.** Probably not the whole thing! Choose a book, maybe one of the gospels, and read a passage each day. There are publications to help you read and reflect on daily bible readings, speak with Betty T or Fr Simon if you're interested in these.
5. **Read a book.** There are lots of good books, some written specifically for lent, that you could read. Ask Fr Simon or others in church for ideas of good books to read.
6. **Attend a lent group.** This year we will be using the "Living in Love and Faith" course which looks at issues of sex and sexuality within the church. All are welcome to this – whatever your opinions. No previous study/knowledge is necessary. Details are in the diary.
7. **Prayer.** There are many different types of prayer. The important thing is to do it! Let Fr Simon know if you want to be included in his of people who pray for specific requests.

If you choose to do something new in lent, take care not to do too much. During lent we should try to be less busy, and not more, if at all possible.

Whatever you decide, I hope it goes well.

God Bless

This month's joke:

Q. What did pirates call Noah's boat?

A. The arrrrrrk.

This cartoon was in the Church Times,
I hope it inspires you as it did me.



Gerald was despondent when only one came to
evensong

NOTICES

Our **services** are on Sundays at 11am.

Sunday 13th March and Mothering Sunday (27th March) are **Family Services**, these are more interactive with live band, suitable for people of all ages.



The Annual **Pet Blessing** service will be on Sunday 20th March, 3pm. Bring along your pet to celebrate animals everywhere and show them how much they mean to us. In partnership with RSPCA Halifax, Huddersfield and Bradford District.

Our **gardening team** meet most Wednesdays 2-4pm. We bring our own drinks and someone usually shares a cake. We're a friendly bunch and are pleased to see you if you drop by.

Many thanks to everyone who sponsored an environmentally friendly **LED bulb**. We reached our target in double-quick time. And by the time you read this, they should have been installed.



The **By and Buy Shop** desperately needs new volunteers. This is a wonderful community charity shop which provides a hub and contact point for local people, sells affordable clothing and goods, and gives out grants to local good causes and charities. Without new people volunteering this valuable place may have to close. If you can't volunteer yourself, think about asking someone you know.

Confirmations will be on Easter Eve (16th April) at Bradford Cathedral. If you wish to explore confirmation please contact Fr Simon who will be pleased to discuss it with you.

DIARY

Ash Wednesday 2nd March. 6pm. Holy Communion with ashing.

Sunday 6th March

- 11am Sung Eucharist
- 6pm Confirmation preparation – first session. Ask Fr Simon for the venue

Monday 7th March. “Living in Love and Faith” lent group. All are welcome.

- 2pm in St John’s church, Golcar
- 7.30pm on Zoom – 82175052779

Sunday 13th March

- 11am Family Service, with live band and interactive worship

Monday 14th March. “Living in Love and Faith” lent group. All are welcome.

- 2pm in St John’s church, Golcar
- 7.30pm on Zoom – 82175052779

Saturday 19th March, Visit to Wakefield, including activities in the cathedral.
If you’d like to go sign up in church.

Sunday 20th March

- 11am Sung Eucharist
- 3pm Pet service

Monday 21st March. “Living in Love and Faith” lent group. All are welcome.

- 2pm in St John’s church, Golcar
- 7.30pm on Zoom – 82175052779

Mothering Sunday 27th March

- 11am Family Service, with live band and interactive worship

Monday 28th March. “Living in Love and Faith” lent group. All are welcome.

- 2pm in St John’s church, Golcar
- 7.30pm on Zoom – 82175052779

Morning prayer is usually said in church Monday – Thursday, and is available on live-stream:

- Mondays and Wednesdays 9am St Mark's, Longwood
- Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am St John's Golcar.

You are welcome to join in with these services in church or on-line.

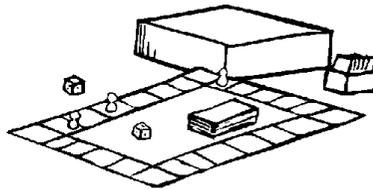
LOOKING AHEAD

We have some interesting and exciting events in the pipeline, including:

Queen's Jubilee **street party** Sunday 5th June from 12pm

Heritage Open Day, stalls, activities and tower abseil Saturday 17th September

On Friday 1st April (no joke) we start our monthly **family games evening** in the Parish Centre. We'll start at 6pm with a drink and snacks. There will be a selection of games to play (and some experts to remind us of the rules). We expect to finish by 7.30pm. All Welcome.



Please send magazine contributions to revscrook@gmail.com



**For Weddings,
Baptisms, Funerals or
any other enquiry**

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Sunday services are at 11am