

The Buzz

February 2023

Monthly information for the Parish
of Ifield



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Thought for the Month



The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on 22nd February. Nowadays we may think more about the day before that – Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day. Traditionally the Tuesday was the day to feast on all the sweet things in the cupboard, finishing them up before we had to give them up anyway for Lent.

But what does Lent mean to you?

For many it has associations with giving something up, an opportunity perhaps to kick that habit we wish we did not have or to finally get round to going on that long-intended diet. Chocolate and alcohol are probably the two most favourite things to give up! But, if we are choosing to give something up for Lent, then we need to keep in mind our reasons for doing so.

Lent is the period of 40 days that precedes the celebration of Easter and it has its origin in the early days of the Church. Converts seeking to become Christian, who at that time were mostly adults, were all baptised at Easter and they spent the 40 days beforehand as a period of preparation for that. The rest of the Church began to observe the season of Lent in solidarity with these newest Christians. It became an opportunity for all to recall and renew the commitment of their baptism.

Today we know Lent as a season of change or conversion. We acknowledge the ways we have turned away from God in our lives. Hence the giving up of something that might have distracted or derailed us. We can deny ourselves some small pleasure or indulgence or we might “give up” a bad habit as a way of positively turning our life in a different direction and focusing on turning our hearts and minds back towards God.

Rather than giving something up, some people prefer to take up something new. That doesn't mean taking on work for work's sake or looking for extra demands and responsibilities. Rather it is about resolving to follow Jesus more faithfully. The name Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for spring, that time of rebirth and new beginnings. It is a time to take stock, to re-commit ourselves to our relationship with God and to ask ourselves some questions. How much of our hearts are turned

to God? Is it just a small percentage for a short time on Sundays? Or a few minutes night or morning whenever we can find the time?

Whatever we think of ourselves, Lent is a good time of year to try and do something differently. Jesus said to his disciples “where is your faith?” Now could be the time to do something about ours, something to increase our understanding and devotion, something to increase our service and effectiveness. Try a programme of Bible study. Read a book. I would be happy to suggest some titles to choose from if you need some ideas. Come to the Lent groups. All are welcome. Details of our Lent courses are below.

Making a change, doing something different, however temporary, can help us to appreciate the true abundance in our lives. And a small positive change can have a big impact that lasts beyond the 40 days of Lent.

Whatever Lent is about, it is more than giving something up. It is a rare chance to re-evaluate our lives, to think about what we might want to do next and to find a way to reconnect with God.

With God’s grace Lent can for us be a season of positive growth and joyous preparation for the renewal of life which is the Easter gift of our Risen Lord.

Yours in Christ,

Christine

SERVICES AT ST. MARGARET’S

1 st Sunday	8.00 am 11.00 am	Said Eucharist Sung Eucharist
2 nd Sunday	9.30 am 11.00 am	FIISH for young families Sung Eucharist
3 rd Sunday	9.30 am 11.00 am	Family Worship Sung Eucharist
4 th & 5 th Sundays	11.00 am	Sung Eucharist
Wednesdays	9.30 am	Said Eucharist

Sunday School on 1st, 4th and 5th Sundays

WEDNESDAY LENT COURSE FOR 2023



Every Wednesday, we're going to be looking at an aspect of Christian discipleship which can often seem daunting: evangelism – sharing the 'good news' of Christ with those who have yet to receive Jesus into their lives and offering to accompany enquirers as they set out on the journey of faith.

As someone currently exploring a vocation to ordained ministry and required to give my own testimony as part of that process, I've been reflecting on how to develop our ability to speak about the faith that gives meaning and purpose to our lives. I've come to realize just how precious these personal testimonies are, and – no matter how 'ordinary' they might seem to us - how powerful they are in encouraging others to come and see what it *truly* means to follow Jesus.

This Lent course is all about valuing and nurturing our personal faith stories and thinking creatively about how we might share them with others. Combining a mixture of discussion-based activities, meditative scripture-reading and prayer, this course sets out to deepen our understanding of what sustains each of us in our faith, and to embolden us in our shared calling to be evangelists of the gospel.

If you're free on Wednesday mornings, please do come along and join in. I look forward to welcoming you to the course and setting out on this Lenten journey together.

Lucy

Venue:	St Margaret's Church
Day and Time:	Every Wednesday, 10:30 - 11:45 am
Duration:	9 weeks
Course start and end date:	01/02/23 – 29/03/23

Please note: there is no requirement to attend all nine sessions. Feel free to attend as many or as few as suits your diary. All materials will be provided, so just bring yourselves. All are welcome!



PARISH HOUSE GROUPS

Mondays 10.30 am–12 noon at Tree House, Rusper Road
Current Study Course: The Bible

**Lent Course (from 27th February): Who then is this?
Chichester Diocesan Lent Course 2023 (see below)**

Please contact Jill Bell on 521699 for details

Tuesdays 7.30-9.30 pm

**Lent Course (from 7th February – 21st March): Finding
Jesus in the Psalms (see below)**

Venue may vary.

Please contact Jo Strutt jo@bridgeham.com for details

PLEASE NOTE: You don't have to commit to being a regular house group member in order to join a group during Lent. Please come along. If you choose to stay on you will be very welcome.

FINDING JESUS IN THE PSALMS

A meaningful encounter with Jesus and the Psalms through the season of Lent with Barb Roose.

Barb Roose guides the reader through a meaningful encounter with the Psalms through the season of Lent. Combining an interpretation of the psalms with real life stories, the study moves through the familiar words of Psalm 23 toward the painful cries of Psalm 22 uttered by Jesus on the cross. The study includes reflections on the life of King David and the original context of the writings, along with connections between the psalms and the life and death of Jesus the Messiah.

“The Psalms provide a perfect framework for experiencing Lent through the verses that were Jesus’s own scriptures, offering both him and us strength and wisdom in a painful and redemptive season. The Book of Psalms hums with the heartbeat of our humanity with divinely inspired words that find purchase in the tenderest places in our hearts when our human words or wisdom fails us.” *Barb Roose*

WHO THEN IS THIS?

A welcome from the Bishop of Chichester:

The title of the course, ‘Who than is this?’ invites us to answer the question that the disciples asked about Jesus when he calmed the storm (Mark 4:41). Just when they thought they were getting to understand him, some astonishing thing happened that made them think again.

We look back to people and events in the Old Testament to help us answer this question with the exploration of our minds and with the devotion of our hearts.

Artists, hymn-writers and Christian teachers have searched the Old Testament for stories that indicate how God's mysterious presence is evident in Jesus in a new and compelling way.

In this Lent Course we shall use their work to explore how accounts of a miraculous birth, a hidden identity, and the capacity to speak the truth wisely and with authority all point to Jesus, who is fully human and fully divine.

LITTLE DRAGONS

It's church, it's messy, it's for little ones, their parents and carers!

9 till 10.30am every Monday in term time
St Margaret's Church



We help families in Sussex to overcome their difficulties and prevent crisis. We support families struggling with issues such as poverty, ill health, learning difficulties, bereavement, family break-up and domestic abuse.

For more information, or to donate, please visit: familysupportwork.org

EASTER TEAM FOODBANK

Thank you everyone for your New Year generosity. Current greatest needs are for:

Rice pudding
Tinned fruit

Custard
Instant Mash

Please leave items in the basket in church or contact sue@ifieldparish.org for collection.

WHO'S WHO IN IFIELD PARISH

Rector	Revd. Christine Spencer	561283	rector@ifieldparish.org
Reader	Jill Bell	521699	reader@ifieldparish.org
Parish Wardens	Andy Ironside	07758 168411	andy@ifieldparish.org
	Chris Bell	521699	chris@ifieldparish.org
PCC Secretary	Clare Wilson	416438	pccsecretary@ifieldparish.org
PCC Treasurer	James May	529146	treasurer@ifieldparish.org
Safeguarding	Amy Wilson	07701 098350	safeguarding@ifieldparish.org
Youth and Children	Naomi Gater	852763	ycofficer@ifieldparish.org
Lychgate Bookings	Lisa Hull	532337	lmhull@virginmedia.com

REST DAY

Please note that Friday is our Rector's rest day

PLEASE NOTE

St. Margaret's weekly notices can be viewed on the parish website

IFIELD PARISH WEBSITE

www.ifieldparish.org

Please send any information/photos for publication on the website to
Carl Peirce carl@ifieldparish.org

Follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stmargaretsifield>

IFIELD PARISH OFFICE

Mondays-Thursdays 9.00 am – 12 noon

1 Lychgate Cottage, Ifield Street, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 0NN
Parish Administrator: Mave Eshun Tel: 537578 Email: office@ifieldparish.org

Please send any updates for the March 2023 issue to Jill Bell
reader@ifieldparish.org by 15th February