





St. Gabriel

The Parish of The Good Shepherd, Ashton-under



St. James

Ashton-under-Lyne



St. Peter



St. Michael and All Angels

March 2019
Price 50p

Editorial

This month sees the start of Lent, the six-week period leading up to Easter. In the early Church, it was a time when new converts were instructed in the faith, ready for their baptism at Easter. Over the years, Lent has become a season of penitence, self-examination and fasting. Jesus began His earthly ministry by fasting in the wilderness for 40 days and taught His disciples to fast, 'when you fast..' (Matthew 6:17).

Fasting might involve missing one or two meals in a day, refraining from TV or alcohol, or whatever gets in the way of us fully focusing on God. What are the reasons for fasting?

- The act of giving up something is a tangible sacrifice to God, reminding us of our desire to put him first in our lives.
- Giving up things I value shows me how dependent I can be on other things rather than God. Fasting helps me to surrender my 'idols' to God.
- When fasting I am reminded of a deeper hunger and need for God in my life: 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.' (Matthew 5:6). I learn to be more dependent on God, while releasing the stuff I depend on in my life.

Lent can also be a time to embrace new spiritual disciplines eg joining a study group, 'random acts of kindness', giving more time to prayer and Bible study.

Whatever you do, have a great Lent!

If you would like to submit an article, we would love to hear from you!!

The views expressed in articles in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Parish of The Good Shepherd. The editor reserves the right to amend articles as appropriate, for editorial purposes. Please consider writing something for the magazine yourself! And, if you have any comments to make on the Magazine you can contact the editor, Roger Farnworth on 0161 330 2771 or talk to a member of your DCC or PCC who will pass on any comments that are made.

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The Parish Prayer

Father God, whose Son came to bring love and peace to the world, help us to grow in faith and share our hope and joy with all whom we meet, so that we can work together to build your kingdom in Ashton, welcome new people into our churches, and be relevant to those around us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

www.goodshepherdashton.org

Registered Charity Number 1134826

"Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow".... Roger writes

I love snow. There's something very comforting about sitting inside in front of a roaring fire while the snow is coming down outside. I like the way that snow can muffle all the usual noise. There is also something beautiful about pristine white snow glistening with sunlight. When my parents lived in Scotland, Jo and I usually spent the first week of January with them. One year, it was awe-inspiring to see the vast expanses of snow-covered mountains stretching as far as the eye could see.

However, once the roads start to be gritted and the snow starts to turn a dirty grey or brown colour, I wish it was gone. When the snow is no longer clean and white, it's spoilt and is no longer beautiful and worth having around.

One of the psalms set for Ash Wednesday, uses the imagery of snow to express the author's desire to be set right with God:

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalm 51:7 The psalmist's words bring alive the reality of what Lent is about.



For most of March we will be in the season of Lent, the time of the year when we are invited to spend time in self-examination and repentance; in prayer, fasting and denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word. It's a time when we are encouraged to work with God in stripping away the things that mess up our lives and to replace with a quality of purity.

The call to repentance is at the heart of our worship week by week as we confess our sins and hear God's promise to "forgive all who truly repent". So much so, that it is easy to be a little blasé about what repentance really means.

At its heart, repentance means submitting ourselves to God so that we can be restored to being the person he created us to be. It's not just about feeling sorry for what we've done. It's about

deciding that we want to live differently and asking God to change us, to take away the things which are stopping us fully being the person he created us to be.

In his book, "A Long Obedience in the Same Direction", the American theologian, Eugene Peterson, describes it like this:

"Repentance is not an emotion. It is not feeling sorry for your sins. It is a decision. It is deciding that you have been wrong in supposing that you could manage your own life and be your own god; it is deciding that you were wrong in thinking that you had, or could get, the strength, education and training to make it on your own..... Repentance is a realisation that what God wants from you and what you want from God are not going to be achieved by doing the same old things, thinking the same old thoughts. Repentance is a decision to follow Jesus Christ. and become his pilgrim in the path of peace."

Peterson says that repentance is about being practical, it's about

putting us in touch with the reality that God creates. It's not just about thoughts and feelings but about action and doing. Lent gives us the opportunity to look at our lives - not just to think about things but to do something about it.

You might like to spend some time on your own with the words of Psalm 51, letting the psalmist help you to decide what needs changing in your life.

Or you might want to join one of our Lent Groups which you will find details of later in this magazine.

However we spend Lent, may we arrive at Easter Day able to rejoice with psalmist who knew that repentance led to a changed life and a new desire to worship God:

"Deliver me from my guilt, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise" Psalm 51:15-16

Roger



Ask, Seek and Knock

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9)

Please choose a focus for each week of the month or pray for all of the following issues throughout the month, as you prefer. There is a prayer at the end to draw it all together if you're unsure how to start or finish your prayers.

This month:

- Please pray for our town centre here in Ashton. Pray that the businesses prosper and that people can find work to support their families. Pray also that the decision makers in the town make wise decisions with compassion for all.
- As we begin the season of Lent, Lord, forgive those things we
 have done which have caused you sadness, and those things we
 should have done that would have brought you joy. In both we
 have failed ourselves, and you. Bring us back to that place where
 our journey began, when we said that we would follow the way
 that you first trod. Lead us to the Cross and meet us there.
- Spend a moment to make a list of those that you know who are ill
 or in need of God's healing touch at this time. Please pray for
 God to heal them, take away pain, get rid of any illness and to
 bring them comfort.

Lord, we offer you our prayers. Hear us as we bring our concerns to you and help us to place them into your hands in confidence that you will hear us.

Amen

Scouts Please!

3rd Ashton Scout Group are looking for new members ages 10^{1/2}yrs to 14yrs. We meet every Tuesday at 7.15pm to 9.00pm at St James Church.



For more information contact Tina Group Scout Leader - 07411773336 or tina@dah.co.uk

St Gabriel's Place of Welcome

by Barbara Lee



A Place of Welcome is at St Gabriel's church So go every Monday morning No one will leave you in the lurch There's tea and toast, Competitions on cue

Plenty of chit chat
And Bingo too
Relax – you won't win millions
You'll be lucky if you win a line
A block of chocolate for a full house
I suppose that's just fine

'Cause you don't have to pay any money Everything's free you see I keep ordering a drop of rum But all I get is a cup of tea

I'm afraid I must be greedy
To think I'd get some rum there
Only communion wine is in t'
cupboards
And even that we'd have to share

Still it's only a joke you know We do have a lovely time Everyone's so kind and caring So come - and have a right good time.

Ash Wednesday - 6th March

St James' Church - a service with ashing at 1.30pm St John's Church, Hurst - a united service with ashing at 7.30pm

Children in Distress Charity - "The Lord will provide"

Derek Hodge received this email over Christmas 2018:

"A few years ago, during a stopover and flight delay, retiring Chief Executive of Children in Distress. Alisdair Barron, met and chatted to a charming Floridian couple, Mike (Dr Michael Janson) and his lovely wife, Varuni Roberts. Both were thrilled to hear of the work of Children in Distress, Varuni and Dr Michael were also intrigued to hear of the Charity's commitment and prime directive to spend donation and legacy income directly on the Charity's mission of care, rather than on marketing and back office administration.

Although they lost touch, this wonderful philanthropic couple remembered that brief encounter and, in setting up the Florida-based Dr Michael Janson Revocable Trust, ensured that Children in Distress was named as one of the eight beneficiaries. Sadly, both Varuni and Michael died recently and Alisdair has been contacted by the legal team administering the Trust. On his last day at work at the charity, Alisdair received an email from the Probate Attorney which said "The accountants involved hope to complete the accounting process

by early January and it is anticipated that the eight named beneficiary charities will each receive some hundreds of thousands of dollars"

As he left for the last time on Christmas Eve, Alisdair shared, "I can only give thanks this Christmas for the kindness and generosity of Michael and Varyuni. This is obviously one of the greatest and most substantial bequests that Children in Distress has ever received.

Alisdair is obviously thrilled that another of his "brief encounters" resulted in such a generous legacy bequest, one that will secure the future of the Charity and the continuance of its mission of care for some years to come. "This is perhaps the greatest Christmas gift that I and the Charity's care teams will ever receive. I am thrilled that, after decades of helping to deliver wonderful things on a relative shoestring. I leave safe in the knowledge that Children in Distress is at last financially secure and safe in the hands of Valentina Zaharia. I am sure that it will remain so."



Friends of Ashton Parish Church

Friends' Annual Lunch Thursday 28th March 2019

Broadoak Hotel Broadoak Road Ashton OL6 8QD 12-30pm for 1-00pm

This is the one event of the year when Friends can get together with their friends for an enjoyable meal - meet old friends and make new ones.

The cost is £14 for a three course meal.

Booking forms are available from the Treasurer. Alan Bacon 17 St Christopher's Avenue, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 9DT.

Tel. 0161 330 5829 and must be returned to the above address by Sunday 24th March

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Lent Groups - begin week commencing 11th March

This year's Lent Studies will use the The Church of England's 2019 Lent Book: "Pilgrim Journeys: Reflections on the Beatitudes." Revd Ben Brady will be leading these studies and it is intended to have them on two separate occasions in each week in Lent.

On both days discussion will take place while partaking in a bring-and-share lunch.

Tuesdays immediately after the 12.15pm service at St. Peter's.

Wednesdays at 12.15pm at St. James before the afternoon Eucharist. Please let Ben know if you would like to be part of one of these groups.

Children and Communion

We plan once again this year to prepare children for taking Communion before Confirmation during Lent, so that participants can take their first Communion on Easter Day. Revd. Ben Brady will be leading this preparation. Please contact him if your child is interested.

Continuing our journey through the Psalms

Psalm 63 – or how to cope with the pressures of daily life

If you had to describe our society in a single word, the most appropriate one would be *pressure*. We live with pressure in every aspect of life, from our school, work or family life, to the big issues facing our world.



King David knew what it meant to live under pressure. His son, Absalom, led a rebellion against him, resulting in David fleeing for his life into the wilderness of Judah. It was there that he wrote Psalm 63. The psalm demonstrates the priorities a person of God under pressure.

God my desire: 'You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.' (v1). David's physical thirst was an expression of his deeper thirst to know God. Even though separated from the worship of the sanctuary, he chose to seek God. When God seems distant or silence in our lives, we too can choose to seek him; this can be a vital path of growth in our relationship with him.

God my delight: 'Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.' (3). David 's delight in God is expressed in praise, as he recognises God's love for him. What gives us delight in our lives? Does it come from the things of this world or from God himself?

God my defence: 'I cling to you; your right hand upholds me.' (8). David is surrounded by enemies, but confident in God's defence and purpose for him. God uses our troubles and disappointments to fulfil his will, as he develops our character and trust in his purposes.

'Don't worry about locating your purpose. If you are seeking after God, your purpose will locate you.' (Tony Evans).

By the Rev Paul Hardingham

PCC / AGM NEWS

Our next PCC meeting will be on March 7th at 7.30pm at St Peter's. The AGM has been set for April 4th at St James. There will be a PCC to approve the Parish Accounts at 7.00pm and the AGM will begin at 7.30pm.

What's On?



Shop to Drop Fashion Show and Clothes Sale

Lots of high street fashions at bargain prices – get your tickets now for this popular, fun evening! Refreshments and wine available on the night – enjoy a night out with friends and family!

> St Gabriel's Church Friday 5th April 2019 7.00pm for 7.30 start

Tickets £5 - available in advance from Sandra Kiy 07740 766687

Café Church at St James' Church

Wednesday 13th March 1.45pm Informal worship with tea, coffee and a chat. Everyone is welcome

St. Michael's Open Days

St. Michael's is open every Thursday 10.30am to 3.00pm The Eucharist will take place as usual at 11.00am



"Hi and Pi"

7.00pm Saturday 9th March
The "Hi" is a card game and the
"Pi" is a potato pie supper!
Admission - £3.00 for adults
£1.00 school children
- includes supper



16th Ashton Brownies

16th Ashton Brownies meet at St Gabriel's Church on Mondays from 6.30 till 8.00 pm.

They have new leaders and have some places available for girls between the ages of 7 and 10 years.

Please contact
Sharon Oldham 07795957114
Chloe Hammond 07450572303
if your child is interested in joining.

3rd Ashton Scouts Annual Race Night

2nd March at the Broadoak Hotel £5.00 adults - children £3.00 Includes potato pie supper Tickets from Tina 07411773336



A Place of Welcome

St Gabriel's Church are opening their doors every Monday morning from 9.30 till 12.00 to invite people from the community in to our building to enjoy a free drink and refreshments. This is not just for church members but for everybody in the neighbourhood who would like to come along.

We hope that people will come along to socialise and just enjoy each other's company. During the morning we aim to provide simple entertainment such as a quiz sheet, some armchair aerobics, bingo, craft activities etc. We are sure that some of you may even have your own skills to share!

However, none of these are obligatory - you may prefer to just sit and chat - and that is perfectly fine! There is no charge for anything – all welcome!



St Peter's Church Designated Red Cross Drop-in Centre

For Refugees and Asylum Seekers Thursdays 10.00am – 2.00pm

The Red Cross will be providing grants to Refugees and Asylum Seekers who meet eligibility requirements. Also providing ESOL classes;

a hub for other organisation such as NHS, Action Together etc; and a signposting service to other organisations.

Refreshments available

All are welcome!

Give your garden birds a feast!

March is a hungry time for birds, but you can easily help them. Here are some things they will love:

Seed and grains like nyger, millet, oats, and sunflower seeds.

Finely chopped unsalted peanuts fit for human consumption.

Cooked pasta, rice and boiled potatoes.

Grated cheese, unsalted uncooked bacon rind,

Raisins and sultanas (be careful! These are poisonous for dogs) Suet and fat balls

Mealworms and waxworms.

Apples, pears and soft fruits, cut small.

Can you solve these homophone puzzles?



1	be walking down the on my wedding day.
2	The man was so hungry, he sandwiches.
3	The was tied properly, so it came undone.
4	The film's final had to be to be believed!
5	The family was in the after the funeral
6	I can't to put on and become a wrestler.
7	The police me to the roof – to show me the was missing from the church roof.
8	A spreads the news of God without earning a
9	is a cheap metal so not worth trying to
10	My and I don't see each other often, as we have drifted apart.
11	What a noise! Have you that of cows?
12	The they charge to get in the is really un!

Some miscellaneous observations on life......



A sharp tongue can cut your own throat.

Keep smiling - it makes people wonder what you've been up to.

If you want your dreams to come true, you mustn't oversleep.

The heaviest thing you can carry is a grudge.

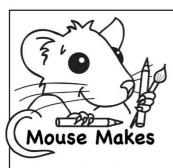
One thing you can give and still keep...is your word.

You lie the loudest when you lie to yourself.

If you lack the courage to start, you have already finished.

One thing you can't recycle is wasted time.

It is too late to become what you might have been?



During Lent read through the Gospel of Luke and each day pray for God to help you become more like Jesus Lent is the name given to the 40 days before Easter and is a time to pray, to read the bible and to turn to God. The first day of Lent is Ash Wednesday, a day to repent and say sorry to God for the wrong things we have said or thought or done.

P W R P W O R D O R G F
I S C R I P T U R E O O
T O O A L R E A D F D R
E R K Y D I T H E L P T
M R E M E M B E R E R Y
P Y F O R G I V E C E D
T S L E N T N R J T P A
A S H W E D N E S D A Y
T W O R S H I P U E R S
I E J E S U S E S N E D
O F A S T H I N K Y E Y
N I B I B L E T G I V E

Can you find these words in the word search above?

LENT • ASH WEDNESDAY • FORTY DAYS

JESUS • WILDERNESS • TEMPTATION • PRAY • FAST

DENY • REPENT • SORRY • FORGIVE • GIVE • HELP

PREPARE • REFLECT • THINK • READ • SCRIPTURE

BIBLE • WORD • REMEMBER • WORSHIP • GOD



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Help a toad to cross the road!

This month common toads all over the country will be on the move, heading back to the breeding ponds where they themselves were spawned. Sadly, many will never make it, because of busy roads.

If you like toads, you can help them by joining the Toads on Roads project. It keeps a sharp eye out for 'migratory crossings' on certain roads. It helps the toads to cross safely, by coordinating local Toad Patrols who will actively help the toads get across the road, and also putting up road warning signs for motorists.

Toads on Roads has been running for more than 20 years, and saved thousands of toads. If you would like to know more, become a Toad Patroller, or register a toad crossing, please go

to: https://www.froglife.org/what-we-do/toads-on-roads





The Cold Caller

I sit me down for evening food After a day at work The phone then rings, I think, "How rude! "I've barely raised my fork!"

"I'm sorry to disturb you, sir," (Now that's a fearful lie!) "But I would like now to confer "About your PPI."

I try to be a Christian, real. And, though it isn't fair To interrupt my evening meal, I really mustn't swear. So, if the chappie wants to chat Well, that is fine by me: "I have good news for you in fact -"Christ died to set you free!"

Usually I hear a click And then there's no-one there But then I follow up this trick By offering a prayer:

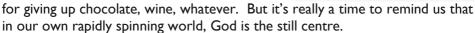
"Dear Lord, I thank you very much "I can resume my food
"But in your mercy, would you touch
"His heart, and do him good?"

By Nigel Beeton

The Rev Dr Gary Bowness considers the aim of Lent...

Round, like a circle in a spiral, like a wheel within a wheel...

We have just started the Church's season of Lent. It's generally thought of as being a time



All around God is motion, sound, change and decay – galaxies circling, seasons and years rotating, life developing and decaying. And at the still centre, where there is no variableness, is God, the same yesterday, today and forever.

At Christmas, we thanked God for entering the ever moving and changing life of the world. But one great characteristic of Jesus was His stillness. Busy, harassed, injured people found someone with neither clever chat nor idle gossip, neither vulgar boasting nor loud opinion. His life always seemed to rotate round a still central point, which gave Him His balance and authority. "Be still then and know that I am God" wrote the Psalmist. Lent is a time for us to stop and remember that. Lent is a good time to be a little more silent than usual – quicker to listen and slower to speak. And the more silent spaces we give ourselves, the more we'll give that still, small Voice within.

God's stillness is still full of energy. That still centre of the spinning disc is also the point which drives the rest of the rotating circle. Equally, when we're in touch with that still centre, we'll be able to give strength and support to those who feel they're spinning at the edges.



Being still does mean that we need to take time to pause, to take stock, to take a critical look at our lives. That's what Lent is about. On the spinning discs of our own lives, we need to remember that there is a still centre, calm and yet full of energy – which is where God is.

There is no higher priority in the believer's life than to delight himself in the love of Christ.

Maurice Roberts

Of all the things that will surprise us in the Resurrection morning, this I believe, will surprise us most: that we did not love Christ more before we died.

J C Ryle

Man's way leads to a hopeless end – God's way leads to an endless hope.

Anon

March 2019 - Parish Sunday Services

Sunday before Lent	9.30am	St James	Holy Communion + Baptism
Sunday 3 rd March	9.30am	St Gabriel	Holy Communion+Junior Church
	11.00am	St Peter	Baptism & Service of the Word
	11.00am	St Michael	Holy Communion + Baptism

Ash Wednesday – 6th March

7.5. Treamesacy o march					
Lent 1 Sunday 10 th March	9.30am 11.00am 11.00am	St James St. Gabriel St Michael St Peter St James	Holy Communion All Age Service of The Word Holy Communion Holy Communion St James on Sunday Afternoon		
Lent 2 Sunday 17 th March		St. James St Gabriel	Family Communion Holy Communion+Junior Church Holy Communion		
		St. Michael	Morning Prayer		
Lent 3	9.30am	St James	Holy Communion		
	11.00am	St Gabriel St Peter St Michael	All Age Service of The Word Holy Communion Holy Communion		
		St James	St James on Sunday Afternoon		
Lent 4 Sunday 31 st March	9.30am 11.00am 11.00am		Holy Communion All Age Service of The Word Holy Communion Holy Communion St James on Sunday Afternoon		
	4.00pm	St James	St James on Sunday Afternoon		

Regular Weekday Services

Tuesday: 12.15pm St Peter's Morning Prayer/Holy Communion

(followed by optional bring and share lunch)

Wednesday: 1.30pm St. James **Holy Communion**

(except 2nd Wed of the month, which is Café Church)

Thursday: 11.00am St. Michael **Holy Communion**

4.00pm Holy Trinity Evening Prayer *

^{* (}This will be a Eucharist Service on the 1st Thursday of the month)

Parish Notices

From the February registers:



Baptisms:

We give thanks with the family of: Keanu Oliver Smith

Weddings:

There were no weddings in February

Funerals:

There were no funerals in February

Book Review:

The Story of the Holy Land -a visual history

By Peter Walker, Lion Hudson, £12.99

This is a highly illustrated, visually led guide through the story of the Holy Land, from Bible times to the present day. The Holy Land frequently features in today's headlines as a much fought-for territory. Many know part of its story, as recounted in the Bible, but what happened after Jesus' time? This book explores the OT and NT history of the Holy Land, as well as everything that happened later – the Muslim conquest, the crusades, and the modern rediscovery of Bible sites – unearthing the rich layers of history of this sacred place.



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CONTACT DETAILS

CLERGY: (*usual day off)

Revd Roger Farnworth, Team Rector (*Tues.)

The Vicarage, Westbury Street, Ashton OL6 9NL 330 2771

Revd Ben Brady, Team Curate (*Fri) 400 1556





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The Parish of the Good Shepherd, Ashton-under-Lyne is a Fair Trade Parish. Our churches have promised to serve only Fairly Traded Tea and Coffee and to work for justice for the world's poor

