

This Week at St Mary's

14th February 2021

BECOMING A HABIT

Humans are creatures of habits - in common with most others with whom we share this planet. When younger, I know I fought against this, it seemed 'boring' to be doing the same thing day by day. Waking up each morning with a blank sheet waiting to be coloured in seemed preferable.

During the lockdown(s) many have seen afresh the benefit of 'habits'. We have seen how helpful it has been to plan the day and the week to ensure certain important things are not squeezed out by the apparently urgent, to make sure we do things which enrich and nourish and to avoid slipping into negatives like substance abuse and comfort eating. It has always been thus, but there has been a sharpness to the issues.

Being a Christian is bound to involve proactive steps to develop good, godly habits. Lent is a relatively short 'burst' to help us 'kickstart' this, seen in the glorious context of all that God has done through Christ's death and resurrection. There are 7 weeks to develop whatever habit you decide on will help deepen relationship with God. You could get into a stimulating book; meet with God through the Bible; feast on God while fasting from food; explore new ways in prayer; move from a solo spirituality to a more communal one; engage with an injustice, nurture a new unexpected friendship, and more.

Developing habits usually takes a bit of time. Most of us can do something for a day or two. As we keep going, all of us will go through stages of feeling, 'what's the point', 'I can't be bothered' 'too much hassle' etc, etc. Habits, especially ones which really matter, are unlikely 'just to happen'. Once developed, the new liberating and life-giving avenues will be established.

Tom Gillman

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR LENT

Living His Story - the Archbishop of Canterbury's 2021 Lent book

(<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/books/9781781402320/live-lent>). In a warm and engaging way, Hannah Steele leads us through devotions centred on sharing God's love through Jesus in new ways, by being the persons God created us to be. By discovering the story of Jesus afresh, our own stories can be drawn into his to recount to others his love as we have experienced it. For each of the 40 days of Lent, this booklet includes a short Bible passage, a reflection and a prayer. The daily reflections follow weekly themes - each with an accompanying action.

The entire book is available here:

<https://spckpublishing.co.uk/living-his-story>

There are also additional resources on the **Church of England Lent site**:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/livelent-2021-church-resources-gods-story-our-story>

Why not download the **app** onto your smart 'phone or tablet and follow the devotions online?

Pilgrim Journeys: The Creeds explores what Christians believe in 40 short reflections, inviting us to read scripture, pray and respond to God's call on our lives (<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/books/9781781401941/pilgrim-journeys-the-creeds-single-copy>). Suitable for anyone at any stage of Christian growth.

Walking the Way of the Cross focuses on the Biblical narrative of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus (<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/books/9780715123447/walking-the-way-of-the-cross>). In addition to reflecting on scripture, we are challenged to consider our personal discipleship, mission and witness.

GRANT WALTON

ASH WEDNESDAY 17 Feb the start of Lent & preparation for Easter. On one of the most important days of the year, taking us to our fragility and mortality. Use our **online Ashing Service** either alone or with your household. The Service will be up on our website all day and all you **will need are some ashes**. Burning last year's palm cross is the traditional source, but even the ash from a couple of matches should be enough to cross your forehead.

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKES St Peter's and All Saints Overseas Committee warmly invite St Mary's members to their pancake evening on Tues 16th February 6.30 to 8.30 pm. This year it will be on 'Zoom', (so bring your own pancakes). Email liz.marsh@nottinghamchurches.org to request the Zoom link. The continued links with St Peters and All Saints we greatly value (as they do with us) so let's join this pleasant and convivial occasion. Join whenever you wish, from 6.30 pm; there will again be a quiz, during the second part of the evening.

LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH - an online course starting **18th February**, immediately following Evening Prayer ie **6.30-8.00**. Five sessions to talk through understandings of human identity, changing patterns in relationships and families, changing sexual attitudes and activity. All you will need is a **good internet connection**. If you haven't yet let us know you'd like to join in, please contact Tom.

THE ALPHA COURSE - starting on **Wednesday 24th online 7.00 - 8.30pm**. 8 sessions to explore the Christian faith together. **Good internet connection necessary**. It would be great to have a couple more join in please contact Grant if you're considering it. <https://alpha.org.uk>

THE MEADOWS FOODBANK Donations of the following welcome: **tinned meat/potatoes - coffee - cereals- sugar**, (white and preferably in 500g bags). Contact Beth Mitchell c/o St Mary's 0115 958 2105 tony.m1941@icloud.com

GIVING MONEY - Best done **online** via **Donate** button on the website. Preferable from St Mary's viewpoint is a **Standing Order** (NatWest St Mary's PCC 560061 00834602) For **one-off donations, cheque, cash** yellow envelope, in chest by South Porch Door (or by post - full address below).

Wherever you are, we extend a very warm greeting to you, especially if you've recently discovered St Mary's

11.00am SUNDAY SERVICE Audio Broadcast
Please see our website and follow the link,
including for Order of Service

ASH WEDNESDAY ASHING SERVICE Audio Broadcast via website

6pm THURSDAY EVENING PRAYER (skype) Contact Grant
(gwalton@stmarynotts.org)

Please note that all our public services have been cancelled
until further notice

**CHURCH OPEN for private prayer & reflection 11.30-2.30
but as staff may be isolating, please check with Tom
(07825 041 432) before coming to ensure we are open.**

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR
Estelle Barks, John Bowers, Harry Palmer, Mike Ridley

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