

Pastoral Letter for March 2023

As I write to you this month, we find ourselves in the season of Lent. This ancient Christian season is often characterised by the question 'What are you giving up for Lent?'

When I was about 12, I gave up sweets. I can still recall the joyful breaking of the fast with a packet of liquorice wheels.

I eschewed daytime TV for Lent when my eldest was a baby. What I recall from that time was how much more time I found I had to do both useful and meaningful things, and how much I appreciated the quiet in the house when he was napping – as opposed to filling the quiet space with the noise of the outside world!

As a 12 year-old exploring faith, I didn't really think too deeply about my reasons for my fast – it was more a feat of self-control than an exercise in spiritual growth.

As a young 26 year-old mum, I used the time to pray more, and found it enriching and soul-feeding. But I went back to daytime TV noise after Lent. It didn't produce a lasting shift in my way of life.

I wonder if, rather than asking 'What are you giving up for Lent?' a better question might be 'WHY are you giving up for Lent?'

Often, Lent is used to kick-start some self-improvement that needs to be done, or to break a habit that has a hold on us. While these are valid reasons in many ways – and helpful and positive too - at its heart, the Lenten fast is not about improving 'us' at all. In the Church, we believe it is about focussing our lives on the life of Jesus as we mirror – albeit in a tiny way - the 40 days of fasting that Jesus undertook as he prepared to begin his world-changing cross to the magnificent glory of the resurrection.

It is part of the on-going journey that brings us to the joy of Easter – a reminder and a recognition that our pilgrimage as people here on earth will not always be easy, joyful and abundant; there are hard times to walk through, times where we experience want and frustration. But it's a reminder and an encouragement too – that trying times won't last forever – change is possible... And that hope is at the heart of the message of Jesus.

Psalm 30:5 says 'Sorrow lasts for a night, but joy comes in the morning...'

I pray for us all that we will know true hope in our hearts and lives as we journey through Lent towards the celebration of Easter.

Lorna

Contact Details

Rector Revd. Lorna Faulkner 01622 747570

Revd. David Jones Hon. Associate Rector 741474




If you have an item for the April News Letter please contact Marian on 743977 or david.marian@btinternet.com by **Tuesday** 28th March (The April news letter will be available on Sunday 2nd April)

Holy Trinity Church March 2023



Sunday 5th March **Holy Communion** **2nd Sunday of Lent**
11.00am Led by: Rev David Jones
Readings: Genesis 12.1-4a, Romans 4.v1-5,13-17, John 3.v1-17

Sunday 12th March **Morning Worship** **3rd Sunday of Lent**
11.00am Led by: Sue Elliott
Readings: Exodus 17.v1-7, John 4.v5-42
Giving Sunday supporting Christians Against Poverty

Sunday 19th March **Holy Communion** **4th Sunday of Lent**
11.00am Led by: Rev Lorna Faulkner
Mothers' Sunday 
Readings: Exodus 2.v1-10, Colossians 3.v12-17, John 19.v25-27

Sunday 26th March **All Age Worship** **5th Sunday of Lent**
11.00am Led by: Rev Lorna & Becky Parnham
Readings: Preacher's Choice

Each Sunday the 11.00am service from Coxheath will be available on zoom <http://bit.ly/UnitedBenefice>

*Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction,
faithful in prayer*
Romans 12 v12

Set your clocks forward one hour

Don't forget to put your **clocks forward** on Saturday evening 25th March

Diary Dates

Friday 3rd March 10.00am World Day of Prayer at Coxheath
(please note the time change for this year)

Our Benefice Churches join together with the Linton Road Free Church for this annual service. The service this year will be held at Holy Trinity, Coxheath. The service is entitled 'I have heard about your faith' and has been prepared by Christian women of Taiwan. All are very welcome

Saturday 11th March 10.00am – 12.00noon Holy Trinity Church Coffee

Morning A warm and friendly welcome awaits you at the **Scout HQ, Westerhill Road**. Admission £1 which includes tea/coffee, biscuits and refills. You can also buy from the popular cake, bric-a-brac and card stalls. There are usually members of the Coxheath Parish Council there to chat to
April Coffee Morning Easter Food and Drink Raffle Please hand any prize donations to Sandra Baker on a Sunday morning. Thank you



Sunday 12th March Giving Sunday Supporting Christians Against Poverty

Sunday 12th March Soup on Sunday following the morning service
Do join us for soup and fellowship and consider inviting someone who may otherwise be on their own. Contact Margaret on 07729 176762 if you could offer to make soup or help on the day. Thank you.

Mothers' Union members and friends will meet again on **15th March** with a visit to Greensands Health Centre 1pm, to find out more about The Greenery Cafe, Social Prescribing and Activity groups available. If you would like to join us, or for transport, contact Lesley 07814 817204 **25th March** Lady Day Service. Please see notice board for details

Saturday 18th March 8.30am Beacon Men's Breakfast at The Scout HQ, Westerhill Road, Coxheath. Our Guest speaker is Michael Cooper who will be talking about his work with the Church Army. To book a place please email beaconmen.coxheath@gmail.com or contact Mike on 07595 428639 or Steve on 07904 212245. Leaflets at the back of the church.

Saturday 18th March 3.00 – 4.00pm Muddy Church at St Nicholas, Linton
Muddy Church is open to anyone and is 'Walking and Wondering' in the open air so weather appropriate clothing is a must. Becky Parnham 07949 646865

Monday 20th March 7.30pm PCC Meeting

To members of the PCC this is a reminder of the next meeting.

Other News and Information

Lent

If you would like to join a Lent course please contact Lorna.

The church will be open on Wednesdays evenings during Lent between 7.00 - 8.30pm for prayer, worship and listening to God. You don't have to be there for the whole time but feel free to drop in at any time.

Easter Flowers and Memorial Page

This Easter we will be decorating the church with lilies and spring flowers. If you would like to make a donation in memory of a loved one and have their name written on a memorial page then please contact Sandra Baker by Sunday 2nd April at the latest

Giving to Maidstone Street Pastors

Thank you to all those who donated to this Giving Sunday charity. £386.93 has been sent to support the work of Maidstone Street Pastors which included a £100 donation from church funds.

Revision of Church Electoral Roll

For anyone who is not on the Church Electoral Roll, but would like to be, registration forms will be available at the back of the church from Sunday 26th March. Forms will need to be completed by **Saturday 8th April** and handed to Marian Simpson 01622 743977. The Electoral Roll is then closed until after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting which is being held on Sunday 23rd April.

Brew and A Bite (until the end of March)

Open every Tuesday 8am – 5pm.

Pop into Holy Trinity, Coxheath for a free warm drink

and a bite to eat. 3.30 – 5pm School Run Tuck Shop

The church will also be open during March between **11am – 1pm on Thursdays** for a warm drink and a bite to eat.

Rochester Cathedral – Peace Doves until the 21st April

Rochester Cathedral will be transformed by 'Peace Doves' an artwork by sculptor Peter Walker. For more information please refer to the Rochester Cathedral website.

Other Services in the Benefice

	9.30am	
Sunday 5 th March	East Farleigh Hunton	Morning Worship Holy Communion
Sunday 12 th March	West Farleigh Linton	Holy Communion Morning Worship
Sunday 19 th March	East Farleigh Hunton,	Holy Communion Morning Worship
Sunday 26 th March	West Farleigh Linton	Morning Worship Holy Communion

Every Thursday 10am Holy Communion at Holy Trinity Coxheath
Last Wednesday of each month 12.00pm Holy Communion at Linton

To find out more information about our Benefice and five Benefice Churches go to www.unitedbenefice.church