



*Newsletter
March 2017*



L E N T

*Lord, who throughout these forty days
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with thee to mourn our sins,
And close by thee to stay.*

*Claudia F. Hernaman
Hymns and Psalms 131 verse 4*

Welcome to the March Newsletter
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## *A Message from our Minister*



You may have seen other articles on the prayer spaces for Lent: Six local churches, including ours, are setting aside rooms for people to reflect and pray, with various creative prompts for help. Each Saturday morning in Lent, one Prayer Space will be available, each based on the person or persons that Jesus encountered ‘on the way’ during his journey to the Cross, according to the Gospel of Luke (chapters 10-19).

How long Christ’s final journey to Jerusalem actually took is a mystery. But it is clear that he believed it would end with his own suffering and death. This fact surely must have affected how he thought about each of his encounters along the way. Each person and place would be significant. When we are facing something we dread,

it may be helpful to remember that Jesus knows what that is like. If we ask him, he will journey with us also.

Whatever you do for your Lenten journey this year, may you meet Christ in those you encounter and know him with you every step.

Graham

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Church Family News

Congratulations and best wishes to Margaret Pounds for her 80th birthday on 22nd March.

We pray for Rosemary as she continues her recovery. May God bless you and keep you in his care.

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## *Church Flowers in March*

We thank those who have agreed to donate the flowers to enhance our worship this month.

- |            |                  |
|------------|------------------|
| 5th March  | Frances Impey    |
| 12th March | Janet Watts      |
| 29th March | Barbara Fenney   |
| 26th March | Rosemary Gregory |

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Holiday Club

Please continue to pray for the preparations for the Holiday Club, the Guardians of Ancora, which will be held from Monday to Thursday, 10th to 13th April.

Women's World Day of Prayer

Friday 3rd March

*Services at Ampthill Parish Church at 10.30 am
and at Flitwick Methodist Church at 7.30 pm*

Everyone is welcome to come to these services, men as well as women.



On Friday 3rd March over 5,000 services will be held in the British Isles on the theme of 'Am I Being Unfair to You?' The Christian women of the Philippines have written the service which has been translated into 1,000 different languages and dialects, to be used throughout the whole world, on Friday 3rd March, starting at sunrise over the island of Samoa and continuing until sunset off the coast of American Samoa.

The Philippine Islands comprises a group of islands close to the Equator. Climate change has contributed to an increase in storms, droughts and severe typhoons.

In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan – named locally as 'Yolanda' – struck the Philippine Islands in the western Pacific Ocean. This is mentioned in the service but you will also hear the stories of a girl, a mother and an older woman, recounting their situations and their hopes and fears. The Philippine Constitution provides for equal rights, yet in practice Filipino women are often discriminated against and treated as subordinates in the home, in the church, and in society.

Today many women take on the role of breadwinner, often working abroad as service crew, domestic helpers, or skilful professionals in the medical field.



Churches Together Lent Prayer Spaces

On each Saturday morning during Lent between **10 am and 12 noon** one of the churches in the Churches Together in the Ampthill and Flitwick group will be open for prayer. The theme will be **People Jesus encountered 'on the way' to the cross.**



Our church will be open on the first Saturday in Lent, 4th March, and there will be prayer stations based on the story of Martha and Mary from Luke 10 verses 38-42.

You will be welcome to 'drop in' at any time between 10 am and 12 noon. This is an opportunity to slow down and to come and spend some time with God in the peaceful atmosphere of the church.

The dates, churches, and themes for the remaining Saturdays in Lent will be:

- March 11th Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Large crowds following Jesus (Luke 14:25-27)
- March 18th Ampthill Baptist Church
Ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19)
- March 25th Flitwick Parish Church
A blind man receives sight (Luke 18:35-43)
- April 1st Ampthill Methodist Church
Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)
- April 8th St. Andrews Church, Ampthill
The triumphal entry and the crowds
(Luke 19:28-44)

Refreshments will be available at each of the venues.



1st Flitwick Boys' Brigade



As promised from last month an update on the Battalion competitions Anchor Boys took part in Potted Sports and our team finished 6th. Then the Junior Section had Unihoc finishing 5th and maintaining their 2nd place in the Battalion.

Coming up in March the Anchor Boys and Junior Section have 10-pin Bowling, Junior Section have the Bible Competition, and

Company Section have Table Tennis, First Aid and Unihoc so some busy weekends ahead.

Company Section have been learning about history of BB and also we have had some very good discussions about bullying. Anchor Boys and Juniors have been making Bird Feeders and were encouraged to take part in the RSPB Big Garden Bird watch.

Junior Section in BB this year celebrates its centenary and there will be a number of special events to mark this both locally and nationally.

I have located our item to be swapped as part of the new Battalion Chaplains challenge – 2 old double saucepans – could be made into planters in the garden or maybe an umbrella stand - if anyone can make use of them please offer us a swap!

That's all for now – thank you for your continued prayers.

*Angela Brydon
Company Captain*



Our Circuit

At the recent Church Council meeting it was felt that our church would like to be kept more informed about Circuit matters. Many of you read the Circuit Magazine and if you have access to the internet and are able to look at the Circuit website there is much information available that way. However it was felt that one way of communicating regarding the Circuit meeting would be to put the minutes of those meetings on the Circuit Notice Board in the foyer. There you will find the minutes of the September Circuit meeting, the latest meeting for which we have minutes.

The most recent Circuit meeting was held at Wilstead on 13th February and the minutes of that meeting will be available in due course. During that meeting there was a presentation of slides showing the churches lit up for Christmas. You can see many of these pictures, including our own church, on the circuit website.

The difficulty of ministerial staffing for 2018 was highlighted due to a national shortage of ministers as well as the problems the circuit already faces in the Biggleswade, Beeston and Sandy part of the circuit. Please pray for the Circuit Leadership Team as they seek the way ahead for the whole Circuit.



Shoebox Update

On Friday 2nd December 2016 our 73 shoeboxes were among the 6,949 that had all been checked, sealed, and packed into cartons, and then loaded onto a lorry to start their journey from Woburn to Romania. The boxes will be distributed through partner churches in Romania to many of the country's poorest children.



Prayer Leaflet

March 2017



LENT

*When we face temptation's power,
lonely, struggling, filled with dread,
Christ, who knew the tempter's hour,
come and be our living bread.*

*By your grace, protect, preserve us
Lest we fall, your trust betray.*

*Yours, above all other voices
be the Word we hear, obey.*

*Herman G. Stuempfle
Singing the Faith 237 verse 4*

Prayer Suggestions for March

4 days beginning 1st March - Women's World Day of Prayer

- Wednesday Thank God that there will be services all round the world on Friday.
- Thursday Pray for the women of the Philippines, the focus of the service this year.
- Friday Pray for the Women's World Day of Prayer services being held today, especially locally.
- Saturday Pray for women in all places where they are exploited by men.

Week beginning 5th March - Fairtrade Fortnight 27/2-12/3

- Sunday Thank God for the Fairtrade Fortnight, highlighting the need for fair prices to be paid to workers.
- Monday Thank God that many do benefit from fairtrade agreements.
- Tuesday Pray that more workers will be paid a fair price for their produce.
- Wednesday Pray for more shops to be willing to sell fairtrade goods.
- Thursday Pray that more fairtrade goods will become available to us locally.
- Friday Pray that we, as a fairtrade church, will promote the use of fairtrade goods.
- Saturday Pray that we will do what we can as individuals to use fairtrade goods.

Week beginning 12th March - Lent

- Sunday During this time of Lent we pray that we will make time to remember the time Jesus spent in the wilderness.
- Monday Thank God that Jesus was able to resist temptation.
- Tuesday Pray that as we face temptation we will resist with the Holy Spirit's help.

Wednesday Lent is a time for giving more time to God. Pray that God will help us to do this.

Thursday Lent is a time for repentance. Ask God to help us to repent of our sins and make a fresh start.

Friday As we reflect on our relationship with God during Lent may we grow closer to Him.

Saturday May the season of Lent be a time of learning more about God's love.

Week beginning 19th March - Equality

Sunday Jesus treated everyone equally. Pray that as individuals, as churches and as a country we may do the same.

Monday Pray for equality between people of different ages.

Tuesday Pray for equality between people of different backgrounds.

Wednesday Pray for equality between people of different races.

Thursday Pray for equality between people of different sexual orientation.

Friday Pray for equality between people of different religions.

Saturday Pray for equality between men and women.

6 days beginning 26th March - Mothers

Sunday (Mothering Sunday) Pray for all mothers especially new mothers.

Monday Thank God for our own mothers.

Tuesday Pray for single mothers.

Wednesday Pray for mothers who have children with special needs.

Thursday Pray for mothers who are struggling to feed their children.

Friday Pray for pregnant women looking forward to a birth.

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Services in March

Please remember in your prayers those leading our worship this month, especially during the week prior to the service.

|            |          |                                          |
|------------|----------|------------------------------------------|
| 5th March  | 10.30 am | Perlynn Thomas                           |
|            | 6.00 pm  | Rev. Kath Pawlett<br>(Holy Communion)    |
| 12th March | 10.30 am | Craig Gaffney (All Age)                  |
|            | 6.00 pm  | Rev. Andrew Hollins                      |
| 19th March | 10.30 am | Local Worship                            |
|            | 6.00 pm  | Richard Crane                            |
| 26th March | 10.30 am | Thea Lee – Mothering Sunday<br>(All Age) |
|            | 6.00 pm  | Paul Cooper                              |

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Monday 20th March

3.30 pm to 5.30 pm

All families welcome.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Donations welcome to cover costs.

Contact Rev. Graham Claydon-Knights for further details.

Next month's Messy Church

Monday 24th April

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Circuit Services during Lent

**Ash Wednesday**

**Holy Communion**

**1<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

**7.30pm**

**Howard Memorial Church, Cardington**

**Bedfordshire MK44 3SH**

**All Welcome**



**Circuit Taizé Service**

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

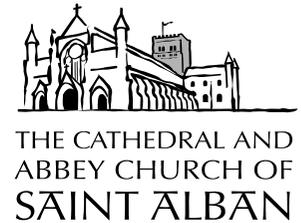
**7.30pm**

**Trinity Methodist Church Biggleswade**

**Bedfordshire SG18 0AP**

**All Welcome**

**You are invited to attend a  
Free Church Service in the  
Lady Chapel on following  
Wednesdays at 11 am:**



**Wednesday 1st March 2017**

**Preacher: The Reverend John Steele**

Minister of the United Reformed Church, Thames North Synod.

**Wednesday 5th April 2017**

**Preacher: The Reverend Meryl Court**

Minister of the United Reformed Church, Thames North Synod.

**Wednesday 3rd May 2017**

**Preacher: Major Heather Poxon,**

The Salvation Army, International Projects Officer.

**All services are followed by a fellowship lunch  
in the Abbots Kitchen**

**All are Welcome**

**Free Church Ecumenical Chaplain: Reverend Simon Carver**

**Email: [simoncarver@btinternet.com](mailto:simoncarver@btinternet.com)**



*Circuit Prayer Meetings*

You will be welcome at the Circuit Prayer Meetings on  
Monday 13th March at 4.15 pm at Putnoe Heights

and

Monday 27th March at 10.30 am at Willington.



Clophill News

**Tea and Chat**

Every Wednesday 10.30 am to 12 noon

**Coffee and Croissant Morning**

Saturday 4th March  
10.00 am – 12 noon

**Messy Church**

Saturday 18th March  
4.00 pm to 6.00 pm

All Age Craft Activities, Worship and a Meal  
Children must be accompanied.  
Contact 07920 568861

**Good Friday Service**

**14th April at 10.30 am**

Led by Rev.Graham Claydon-Knights



The Upper Room

**at Amptill Methodist Church on alternate Thursdays**

**Dates in March – 2nd, 16th and 30th**

Coffee or tea and cakes from 10.00 am.

Light lunches from 11.30 am to 1.00 pm.

Proceeds after expenses for local charities.

All are welcome.



News from Paraguay

21st January 2017

Still pretty hot here - in old money it is up past 100 every afternoon. So not the best week of weather to be working in the garden clearing weeds. Yesterday I did manage half an hour as the sun went down - but even that was very hot!

I have still got my pet lizard. He has taken to sleeping behind some wood I have stacked up in the outside kitchen. He is very safe there as it is locked up every night. I see him most mornings but not often in the day as he is off exploring and finding things to eat.

Oh... and poor old me....it looks like I only have about half a dozen mangoes left so I might have to go and pick some more next week. They were good while they lasted - some as big as coconuts.

Evangelina is good at being 'two'. At the moment her favourite word above all others is NO.

30th January 2017

I see my photo disc has arrived. So to answer a few of your questions..... The church was the little chapel down by the school. The large Christmas Tree was in the shopping centre in Asuncion. The children at Evangelina's birthday party were some of the local children along with friends and family. My ceiling in the hall was not painted especially for Christmas I did it sometime ago. I thought you might like to see a photo of my new tv, everyone thinks it is very posh and Ramona has taken to bringing her two little sisters over to my house for Sunday afternoon cinema.

The rules for renewing the driving licence have been made far too complicated this year. Hardly a step that is going to encourage those who haven't bothered with any of their paperwork to get it in order! Also, of course, they have doubled the price.

I visited Ramona's tiny little hospital about the silly hearing certificate but I get the impression that I would have to be there at

four in the morning to get a number low enough to ensure I was seen that day. So it appears I will have to end up going to a private clinic. Going to visit Ramona's hospital I was able to see what a tiny place it is. If ever she saw your Flitwick surgery she would get quite a shock!

### 3rd February 2017

I hear they are rationing broccoli in that third world of yours. I doubt Dad is too disappointed!

### 6th February 2017

The weather has been cooler for a few days but then got very humid so it was good that it rained for most of the day yesterday as it is now much fresher.

All the buildings that were built when the school I volunteered at are still standing although they have been repaired and rebuilt over the years. My hut is a chicken coop these days.

My book is coming along now, in truth over the hottest of the summer months not a lot of work has been done as even just sitting very still you were dripping with sweat. Now that it is a bit cooler I can get on with it once more. As for the courses, the internet seems to be working currently so if it stays that way I will have a look for something else to study.

On Friday it was San Blas Festival, which is the national saint and everyone cooks a meal. Alicia and Alberta both came home so I went over there for their pig roast and afterwards they insisted I bought home a plate a food. Later in the afternoon I went down to Emilica's and they also insisted that I had a big plate of food and would not let me go home without more food to bring home. So all in all I was very well fed!

### 8th February 2017

It is very frustrating here that often a big pile of paper needs to be collected together in order to get anything done, and very often most

of those bits of paper are pretty worthless and do little more than tick of boxes!

So it is with renewing the driving licences this year. I can see the sense of what they are trying to do to get everything better - however as always it has not been thought through very well.

I went into town yesterday with the hope of sorting that out. First I had been told I needed a hearing certificate so I went to the private health clinic rather than waiting all morning as I would have had to at the local little hospital and I was seen immediately. The doctor thought that the council had not known what they really wanted and that I was actually going to need an eye test as well - which seemed sensible to me. The only testing he did was asking if I wore glasses or had a hearing aid before writing me out a certificate to say all was well with my eyes and ears.

I took that to the council who said that the eye and hearing test was all very well but also needed was a proof of residency (which is easy enough to get from the police station and just confirms that I do live in Piribebuy) and a driving test certificate. He know nothing other than that there was nowhere in Piribebuy to get a driving test certificate but told me there was a driving school in Caacupe.

As it was a nice sunny day I carried on over to Caacupe and found the driving school. It was a little office set out like a classroom with chairs, blackboard and pictures of signs on the walls. Once again no testing was needed so I was issued with a test certificate there and then. So I now have a smart driving test certificate that says I passed all sorts of tests. I had sort of had enough of getting forms together so I came home and will sort out the proof of residency next time I am in town and I do really hope that they will be happy with all my bits of paper!

All this has to be completed by the end of March - so mid March there will be a panic when that fact suddenly sinks home and I really cannot see how everyone will be able to get all their various bits of paper by then even if they do have the time and money to waste chasing paperwork.....

13th February 2017

My lizard has moved out of my outside kitchen and now lives in a burrow in the bank and is around the patio most days as long as the sun is shining. He has been here for a couple of months now so must be getting settled in.

I have had a fair bit of rain - it poured very heavy for a whole day so everywhere outside was very wet and muddy. Now the sun is back and all is drying out - no need to worry about watering the plants as it was good straight down rain without any wind so it all soaked into the ground.

My neighbour came out to his country house for the weekend to get rid of the housekeepers who burnt everything down and get some new ones. So soon I should have new people living next door. To apologise for burning my ground he gave me a great big fish. Rather than sticking the whole thing on a barbecue - which is what the locals do - I think I will cut it up into steaks and have a look on the internet for ideas of how to cook it. I have just found out what sort of fish it is - it is a Golden Dorado.

Best wishes to one and all.

Simon

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The Newsletter

Thank you to you all for reading this newsletter and thank you to those who contributed items.

Please let me have your items for the April newsletter by **Sunday 19th March**. Thank you very much.

Janet Watts telephone: 717492 email: janetwatts14@btinternet.com

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