

St Paul's Church

Dear all,

This update will cover two weeks as I am away for my daughter's wedding in the New Forest– I need to take time off to write my speech and pay a cheeky visit to the motor museum at Beaulieu!

My return will see us enter the new church season of Lent as we count down to Easter. Tuesday 1st March will be 'Shrove Tuesday' and the Wednesday will be that point at which we enter this new season. That day is referred to as Ash Wednesday and there will be services at St Nicholas (10am) and St Paul's (7pm) to mark the occasion, at which those attending will be offered the opportunity to be 'ashed'.

Ashes are an ancient sign of 'penitence' (sorrow) and from the Middle Ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked with the sign of the cross on your forehead using ash. There is also a tradition that the ash is made from burning palm crosses that were given out on Palm Sunday in the previous year. If you have any such crosses, please do leave them at the back of church and I can use them accordingly.



Lent is a time associated with 'giving something up' that is founded on the principle of taking a time of self-denial as a spiritual discipline that is about focusing more fully on God. In a busy world it is often difficult to focus on what is beyond ourselves but there may be moments where we can take time, with a little creativity e.g. you've just parked the car – before getting out just sit for a moment, possibly make a habit of it every time you park somewhere.

As we work our way through Lent, so we approach Holy Week, the final days before Easter and the bible readings for the season begin to anticipate the story of the suffering of Christ. They remind us that these words were not written by people living in comfort but by those surrounded by struggle and terror. Such things still inhabit our world and currently we hold up to God the unfolding situation in the Ukraine and pray for calm, peace, and right thinking.

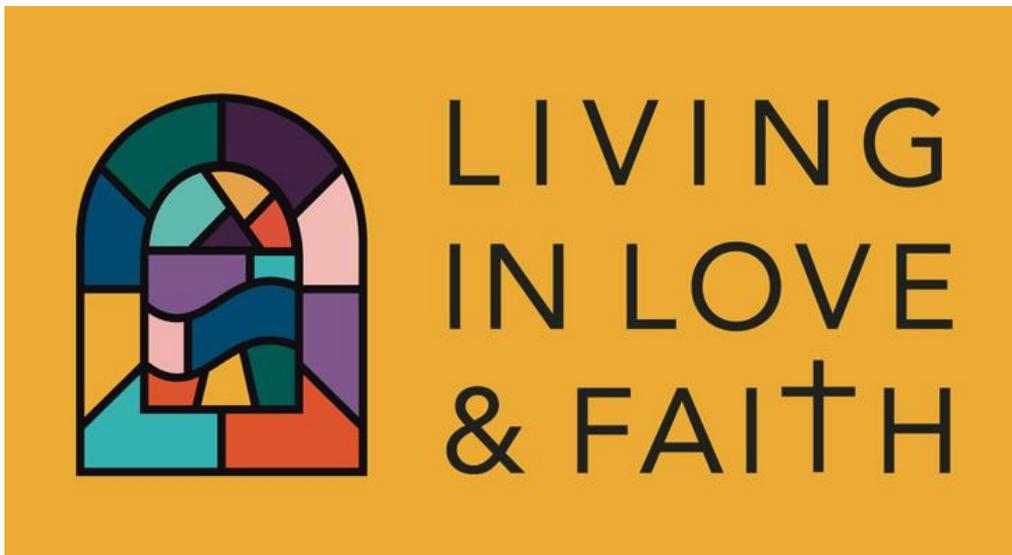


Rev Chris

LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH - A FIVE WEEK COURSE FOR LENT

An exploration of Christian teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships, and marriage. The church is very aware that issues of gender and sexuality are intrinsic to people's experience, their sense of identity, their lives, and their loving relationships.

BEGINS WEDNESDAY 9th MARCH, 7.30pm, ST NICHOLAS CHURCH



INTRODUCTORY VIDEO

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith/about-living-love-and-faith>

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

All services are in church, zoom is available on some services.

SUNDAY 20th FEBRUARY

10 am ALL-AGE WORSHIP – Rev Anthea (Zoom)

SUNDAY 27th FEBRUARY

10 am HOLY COMMUNION – Rev Robin Williamson (Zoom)

WEDNESDAY 2nd MARCH

10 am ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE WITH ASHING & COMMUNION - Rev Chris (St Nicholas)

7 pm ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE WITH ASHING & COMMUNION - Rev Chris & Rev Anthea (St Paul's)

SUNDAY 6th MARCH

10 am CAFE WORSHIP – Gwyn McPherson

SUNDAY 13th MARCH

10 am ALL-AGE COMMUNION – Rev Chris (Zoom)

EASTER FLOWERS AT ST PAUL'S

Easter is an appropriate time to remember a loved one, relative or friend who has died.

If you would like to contribute in this way, please complete a slip and place it with your donation in the envelope provided which you will find at the back of church.

PRAYER RESOURCE

week beginning Sunday, 20th February 2022

'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path' (Psalm 119:105)

This week we give thanks for:

- All who pray for us; may we each promote love, hope, joy and peace in our prayers for others.
- Each new person we meet this week and consider how we can be the light of Jesus to our family, our friends and to strangers.

Please pray for:

- Peace in our world: this week we pray for the Ukraine-Russia crisis, for the withdrawal of troops from the border, for the easing of tensions and for a peaceful outcome.
- More love and understanding between all people in the world, so that we embrace our differences and have patience before we speak and act.
- The lives of those who are pushed to the brink of survival by climate change and precarious livelihoods; pray for the people of Wales following the recent announcement that flooding there is becoming the 'new reality'.
- Our Church family: all who are struggling, and for Joan, Gilly, Barbara, Hazel, Edith, Peter, Sheila, Pat, Alice, Jill and Trevor; and in our wider church for Ruth, Joan and Helen.
- Each one of us to draw closer to God and to be inspired to pray for all in need across the world.

You may like to use this prayer during the week:

God of all people, thank you for your desire that all people should know and love you. Help me to live today in a way that shows your love to everyone.

Amen.