

**Lent, Holy Week and Easter**

**St John the Evangelist**

**2020**

Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before Easter in the Christian calendar. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, Lent is a season of reflection and preparation before the celebrations of Easter. By observing the 40 days of Lent, Christians prepare for Easter.

Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus after his death on the cross. Lent recalls the events leading up to and including Jesus' crucifixion.

*Why is it called Lent?*

Lent is an old English word meaning 'lengthen'. Lent is observed in Spring, when the days begin to get longer. Lent is also a time when Christians move closer to the light of Christ, by fasting, by prayer and through reflection and study.

At St John’s we are offering a wide range of activities and opportunities to make the most of Lent and prepare for Easter.

**LENT AT ST JOHN’S**

**Wed 26th February 7pm - ASH WEDNESDAY**

Ash Wednesday service: Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent.

It's a day of penitence to clean the soul before the Lent fast.

At this service worshippers are marked with ashes on the forehead with a cross of ashes as a sign of penitence and mortality. The service draws on the ancient Biblical traditions of covering one's head with ashes, wearing sackcloth, and fasting. The ashes are made by burning palm crosses from the previous Palm Sunday.

**Lent groups and Reflection**

We are offering 4 different ways to engage with Lent this year. Fasting to support Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness, house groups, personal reflection and a 40-day environmental challenge.

**Fasting**

If you choose to give something up for Lent, why not put the money you have saved aside to donate to our Lenten charity; Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness (KCAH).

You could support the charity in several ways:

* **Donation of goods**

KCAH current needs are: sleeping bags, Oyster cards (so that service users can get to appointments), coffee shop cards (for one to one client/support worker meetings outside of the office and for when we take clients on outings), asda vouchers and good condition men’s jogging bottoms.

* **Financial support**

Any money raised will go towards all the ways in which KCAH work to support people facing homelessness in our borough.

* **Prayer support**

Camilla Wheal from KCAH will be joining us at our 10:00 service on 8th March to tell us more.

**House groups “Broken”**

Some of you will have seen the powerful six-part BBC Drama “Broken”, starring Sean Bean as an inner-city Catholic priest facing ethical, social, spiritual and personal crises. It won the Sandford St Martin Award for Best Religious Programme of 2018, although it is a long way from traditional Songs of Praise broadcasting!

Following its success – and the discussion its subject matter generates – the Diocese of Birmingham’s Theologian Paula Gooder produced a simple study guide for group discussion, following the watching of the programme. It provides a great way for a group to get into the issues raised by the story of Fr Michael Kerrigan and his parishioners and it is to form the study material for our Lent Course in 2020,

We are running 2 house groups. The first will be an evening group, 7:00pm. Thursday evenings.

The second is a daytime group at Church House each Wednesday between 10:00 – 12:00, starting on Wed 4th March.

If you would like to attend either of these groups, please talk to Mark Stafford or Julie Bishop.

**40 day challenge - #liveLent**

Live Lent: Care for God's Creation will help broaden your view of Christ's redeeming mission - a mission Christians are called to share.

With weekly themes and prayers shaped around the first Genesis account of creation, it explores the urgent need for humans to value and protect the abundance God has created.

For each day of Lent, it offers a Bible reading, a short reflection and an action to help you live in greater harmony with God, neighbour and nature.

We have several copies of the booklet and we also have copies of a special children’s edition too.

Please ask Mark for a copy.

**Reflection**

This is a course of personal meditation, of disciplined reflection on some passages taken from the Gospels. The point is not to generate argument or discussion, but to deepen our intimacy with the figure of Jesus as he is presented in those texts.

The passages have been chosen because often they convey a Jesus rather different from his churchy stereotype; there is often a sense of strangeness with which we must struggle.

Please ask Mark for a copy.

**HOLY WEEK AND EASTER**

**AT ST JOHN THE EVENGELIST**

**Sunday 5th April 10am - PALM SUNDAY**

Joint service with Kingston Methodist Church.

The service will start with praise in Kingston Methodist Church and then process to St John’s for a reflective communion service (with Children's Church) that opens Holy Week and starts our journey into the new life of Easter.

**Monday 6th April 7:30pm – Taizé worship service**

This type of worship involves sung and chanted prayers, meditation, a period of silence, liturgical readings, and icons. There is no preaching. This will be a joint service with the United Reform Church.

**Thursday 9th April 7.30pm - MAUNDY THURSDAY**

Maundy Thursday service and supper followed by Vigil. An act of worship based on a shared meal. During our time together we will reflect on Jesus meeting with his disciples to share the Passover meal. The service will lead into the vigil, when people can prepare for Good Friday and Easter through private prayer and reflection. (Please let us know if you would like to come for the meal, so we can prepare enough food).

**Friday 10th April - GOOD FRIDAY**

10.30am Children’s Workshop - A brilliant event for Children and young people

12 noon Diddy Disciples service for Good Friday

2pm Good Friday service: A service of reflections and prayer focusing on Jesus’s words from the cross

**Sunday 12th April 10am - EASTER DAY**

Parish Communion with Easter Ceremonies, and Easter Egg hunt for the Children



