

CHRIST CHURCH NEWS

MARCH 2022



THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

- Pick up a Lent offering envelope
- Join a Lent study group
- Volunteer to deliver cards advertising our Holy Week & Easter services
- Pray for peace

LENT

SUNDAYS

8am Holy Communion
10am Parish Eucharist

Making time for God

MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY

8.30am Morning Prayer

WEDNESDAYS

10am Holy Communion

MONDAYS 7.30pm

THURSDAYS 11am

LENT STUDY

Rediscovering the beatitudes

LENT OFFERING MOTHERING SUNDAY PASSIONTIDE

THIS MONTH – more details will
be found on our Sunday sheets

Tuesday 1st March Shrove Tuesday
4-6pm Pancakes at the Vicarage

Wednesday 2nd March
Ash Wednesday

10am Holy Communion according to the
Book of Common Prayer

8pm Holy Communion
The imposition of ashes will be offered at
both services.

Thursday 3rd March

11am Lent Study

Living with openness to God

Sunday 6th March

First Sunday of Lent

8am Holy Communion

10am Parish Eucharist

(followed by refreshments)

God's Gang meets during the service

12pm and 1pm Holy Baptisms

Monday 7th March

7.30 to 9pm Lent Study and Compline in Church

Tuesday 8th March

7.30pm Mothers Union Games night

Wednesday 9th March Ember Day

10am Holy Communion

2pm First Steps service. If you are a family with pre-school children, please come and join in the fun.

Thursday 10th March

11am Lent study

Thirsting for what is right

Saturday 12th March

9.30am Church Working Party – come and help keep the church tidy clean and fit for purpose.

Sunday 13th March**Second Sunday of Lent**

8am Holy Communion

10am Parish Eucharist (followed by refreshments)

Monday 14th March

7.30 to 9pm Lent Study and Compline in Church

Wednesday 16th March

10am Holy Communion

7.45pm Parochial Church Council Meeting

Thursday 24th March

11am Lent Study

Living transparently

Thursday 17th March

2.30-4pm Mustard Seed

Sunday 20th March Third Sunday of Lent

8am Holy Communion

10am Parish Eucharist Prayers for healing and wholeness will be offered after communion (followed by refreshments)
God's Gang meets during the service

12pm & 1pm Holy Baptism

Monday 21st March

7.30 to 9pm Lent Study and Compline in Church

Wednesday 23rd March

10am Holy Communion

Thursday 24th March

11am Lent Study *Peacemaking*

Saturday 26th March

10.30am Preparing Mothering Sunday
Flowers in Church

2.30pm – 5.30pm Thinking Afternoon in the church hall

Sunday 27th March

CLOCKS GO FORWARD

Mothering Sunday**Fourth Sunday of Lent**

8am Holy Communion

10am Parish Eucharist (followed by flowers & refreshments)

Monday 28th March

7.30 to 9pm Lent Study and Compline in Church

Please remember while legal restrictions have been lifted, we still ask that you keep your mask over your mouth and nose, particularly when singing.

MORNING PRAYER will be said in church on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 8.30am You can join us on Zoom – see Church website for link

‘The cross of ashes, traced upon the forehead of each Christian, is not only a reminder of death but inevitably (though tacitly) a pledge of resurrection...The cross, with which the ashes are traced upon us, is a sign of Christ's victory over death.’ Thomas Merton

Lent Offering

Envelopes will be available in church for your Lent offering. Think of a way you can put something aside each week during Lent. We will be collecting for our charities, particularly: Delmeza, Langley House, Farm Africa and Shelter Box. See leaflet for more details.

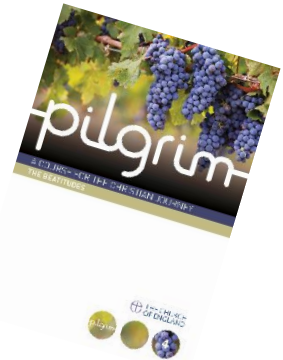


In 2021 Christ Church's giving (Lent & Advent envelopes, Jar of Grace etc) amounted to £2558.

£511 each was distributed to Water Aid, NSPCC, Motor Neurone Disease Association. £255 each to Gravesham Sanctuary and Ellenor Hospice. £69 each to Holy Trinity CE School, Whitehill School, Gravesham Street Pastors, Gravesham Street Pastors, Larchwood Grove and Osteoporosis Support Group. £100 to Embrace the Middle East emergency appeal.

Lent study

This year our Lent Study will be exploring the beatitudes – the words of Jesus we find at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. 'Blessed are you....' So who is blessed? What does it mean to be blessed? We will be using the Pilgrim course material – if you would like your own copy of the book they are available for £5. There will be two opportunities to meet.



On Thursdays (beginning 3rd March) at 11am in the choir vestry (this will be in the format of the Pilgrim Group) and on Mondays (beginning 7th March) at 7.30pm in church ending with the service of compline.

'the beatitudes are probably the most important, subversive and revolutionary text in the Bible. In order to live the Christian life we need to enter into the challenging but beautiful world of the Beatitudes'.

Frugal Lent Lunches at Shorne Church

All are welcome to join us in Shorne church for Lunch on Wednesdays at 12 noon. A simple soup and roll lunch followed by speaker. Some of the speakers already booked are from the following organisations –

Eleanor Hospice; Gravesend Street Pastors; Our Lady of Walsingham, and a young man whose life has been turned around when he had a close encounter with God.

You are invited to make a donation to help us cover the cost, any surplus is shared between the charities the speakers come from.



Dates:- March 9th; 16th; 23rd; 30th April 6th; 13th.

DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

In the words of Pope Francis

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| • Fast from hurting words | <i>...and say kind words.</i> |
| • Fast from sadness | <i>...and be filled with gratitude.</i> |
| • Fast from anger | <i>...and be filled with patience.</i> |
| • Fast from pessimism | <i>...and be filled with hope.</i> |
| • Fast from worries | <i>...and have trust in God.</i> |
| • Fast from complaints | <i>...and contemplate simplicity.</i> |
| • Fast from pressures | <i>...and be prayerful.</i> |
| • Fast from bitterness | <i>...and fill your hearts with joy.</i> |
| • Fast from selfishness | <i>...and be compassionate to others.</i> |
| • Fast from grudges | <i>...and be reconciled.</i> |
| • Fast from words | <i>...and be silent so you can listen.</i> |

PRAYERS FOR WHOLENESS & HEALING

In our service on 20th March prayers for healing and wholeness will be offered. Luke's gospel reminds us that Jesus went about preaching the good news and healing. He commanded his disciples to do the same and it is in obedience to his command that we offer this ministry.

The church's ministry of prayer is in addition to, not a substitute for the work of doctors and the health services. You do not need to be "ill" to receive prayer for healing; each one of us needs to grow in wholeness and holiness, and these prayers can be God's way to restore strength, peace and vitality into our lives or those about whom we are concerned.

Of course, there is no pressure to receive prayer for healing. While we believe that receiving Holy Communion is physically, mentally and spiritually beneficial, laying on of hands with prayer is another scripturally attested means of receiving God's grace.

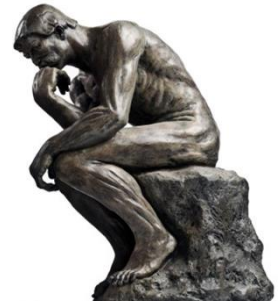
At this time the laying on of hands will not be offered but prayers will be said individually in the chapels after communion.



We thank you Lord for your healed and healing church; set our minds at rest through trust in you; to serve you in the wholeness which Christ brings, until we share the fullness of his life in heaven. Amen.

Thinking afternoon 26th March 2.30-5.30pm

An opportunity to reflect on our life together at Christ Church and look forward to the future. Each church is asked to regularly prepare (and review) a Mission Action Plan. You can see Christ Church's most recent plan on the website – a lot has happened since it was prepared! With a new Vicar and the experience of the pandemic (increasingly behind us) we are looking to the future, and beginning to explore how our worship, our buildings, our learning together, and our outreach can be part of God's mission in Gravesend.



- What are the challenges of the moment?
- What are the strengths we can build on?
- What type of Church do we want to become (and how might we get there)?
- What opportunities can be grasped now?

Come and join in the conversation and the thinking!

Mothering Sunday 27th March



MOTHERING SUNDAY 27th March

We will be celebrating Mothering Sunday at our
10am service.

Flowers will be given out, and there will be refreshments in the hall afterwards.

*We hope you will come with your family
you will be most welcome.*

CHRIST CHURCH
near **Echo Square**

IT'S RUN-TO-CHURCH- SLIGHTLY-LATE SUNDAY: THE DAY THE CLOCKS GO FORWARD



Planning for the Jubilee Weekend

We have started planning for the Jubilee Weekend at the beginning of June. Watch out for more details. We are hoping to show the St Paul's Cathedral service on the big screen in church. We are starting to plan a special big-sing concert celebrating nautical connections with a Jubilee twist. Sunday 5th June is Pentecost Sunday with a festival Eucharist followed by a community lunch. And (as if that wasn't not enough) – there will be a crown competition!



Recycling

Please bring your old inkjet cartridges to Church. They can help us raise money for Christ Church.

WAKING UP TO WAR

The Archbishop's Thought for the Day 24th February

To wake up to the news of war is terrible. To wake up to its reality is orders of magnitude worse. Shakespeare refers to war as chaos - the loosing of the dogs of war - and calls for one of his characters to cry out the warning about what it means.

Those in the Ukraine will be thinking about their relatives on the front lines, or the friends on the front lines. We are thinking, where is it going to go next? Politicians are thinking, what do we do?

In all of the thinking, in all of the responses, there is the great uncertainty which is the worst enemy of good decisions. Uncertainty leads to fear, fear leads to overreaction. How do we react well? How do politicians in the cloud of war, not really knowing what's going on, but knowing they have no opportunity to wait – how do they make up their minds?

They will rightly call for all of us, and for themselves, to have resolution, courage, determination, a willingness to sacrifice whatever is necessary in order to ensure that peace may come and justice may be done.

Peace and justice. They often seem to contrast, and yet they are opposite sides of the same coin. We seek peace and justice, and that must end with those involved in conflict not having solutions imposed on them but finding for themselves the way forward to reconciliation and peace.

Right at the end of his life, Jesus Christ, on the eve of his crucifixion, spoke to his disciples and he said something very memorable. 'In the world you will have trouble, but do not be afraid, I have overcome the world.'

For me and for many of faith, the great certainty in the world, the only certainty, is that we know that God does not change. Let us find our resolution, our peace, our certainty not by screwing up our courage, but in the knowledge of the eternal arms that hold us.

May God be with those who suffer today.

NEWS



It was good to welcome The Revd Mark Ball =from the Kent Workplace Mission (KWM) as our preacher on 20th February. KWM has been supported by ChristChurch for a number of years financially and through members involvement as committee members and chaplains. Mark works out of the Quiet Space in Bluewater – where he supports shop and centre workers.

KWM engages with the working life of Kent through chaplaincies and a Christian presence in places of work. You can find out more at: www.kentworkplacemission.org

OPPORTUNITIES

Our Annual Church Meeting will be on Sunday 15th May. Its never too early to think about what role you might play in Christ Church in the coming year. Our Church is dependant on people being willing to contribute and stand for offices. We will be

looking for two churchwardens, for Church Council members. Steve has indicated that he would like to have someone working with him with a view to taking on responsibilities as treasurer. Please think and pray about this, and speak to the Vicar, to Jan our Churchwarden or Steve our treasurer if you would like to know more. These are real opportunities to make a difference to our Church community. Nomination papers will be out in April.



PRAYER DIARY

	THE COMMUNITY	CHURCH
1	The Elderly	Those who use our hall
2	Those with poor mental health	Our preschool
3	The armed services	Our clergy
4	GPs and community health workers	Our Churchwardens and PCC
5	Schools	The children in our church God's Gang and First Steps
6	Young people at university & college, or in work or apprenticeships	For vocations in the church, and those in training for ordained and lay ministry
7	The unemployed	Street Pastors
8	Our parliament and MP	Churches Together in Gravesend
9	The police	Our companion dioceses in Estonia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania
10	Social workers	Neighbouring Parishes
11	Children	Our lay ministers
12	Prisoners and prison staff	Prison chaplains
13	The victims of racism and discrimination	Christian Aid
14	Those who support people in the workplace	Our Bishops and Archdeacon Those choosing the new Bishop
15	Our neighbours of other faiths	Those who are new in our church
16	Our local hospitals	Hospital chaplains
17	All who work with young people School pastors	Inclusive Church and all who work for inclusion and equality
18	Those living with dementia	Our safeguarding team
19	Musicians and artists	Our organist, choir & Semiquavers
20	Family life	Our Mothers Union
21	Our councillors and council	Those who are persecuted for their faith
22	All involved in the production and distribution of food	Mustard Seed
23	All who work on the river	Those preparing for marriage
24	Victims of domestic abuse	Those who care for our buildings
25	Those who care for green spaces	That we may be more aware of our impact on our planet
26	Those who are affected by modern day slavery	Baptism families
27	Foodbanks and those who use them The homeless	Those who prepare our notice sheet and communications
28	Local businesses	The bereaved
29	Those fighting addictions	Uniformed organisations
30	Refugees and asylum seekers	Those who are housebound or isolated
31	Care Homes	Give thanks for our diversity

From our registers:

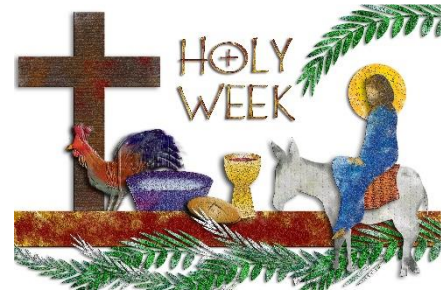
BAPTISMS

16th January Alfie Pearce
6th February Maddison Parish
Albie -Parish

FUNERALS

25th January Kenneth Grigg
22nd February Sheila Bowe

HOLY WEEK -coming soon Look out for our Holy Week and Easter cards. Please help us deliver them to local homes.



We are looking forward to an engaging Holy Week this year.

On **Palm Sunday 10th April** we will be using a dramatic version of the Passion reading – please let the Vicar know if you would like to take part.

On Monday 11th we will be joining the other churches of the East Gravesend cluster for **Stations of the Cross** at Holy Family. On Tuesday 12th the Mothers' Union are hosting an **Agape** meal. On Wednesday 13th there will be a Holy Week reflection and a service of compline.

On **Maundy Thursday 14th** we will meet to recall Jesus final meal with his friends, moving into a time of prayer and vigil.

On **Good Friday 15th** in the morning we will be exploring the meaning of this holy day with readings, songs crafts and hot cross buns. From noon there will be reflections on the women we find in the passion story, finishing with the liturgy of the day

The solidarity of the shaken – beginning the Lent journey



We are too aware of anniversaries as we reach the beginning of March and the threshold of Lent. We recall the moments in 2020 when we heard of a new virus, which was to become a pandemic, the initial elbow tapping precautions and how we learnt of fatalities that came closer and closer to us each day. We have lived for two years in the shadow of the pandemic. There have been moments when, perhaps, we have looked prematurely beyond the restrictions and dreamt

of a liberty that even with the vaccination and booster programme being rolled out now seems some way off.

Living with the virus has, will, changed as people – individually and collectively. In some ways we are more compliant as guidance is reformulated, in others ways we feel more resistant as we question what may seem to contradict directions we have only just got used to. We live more cautiously, and have to trust others do the same. Some of us have experienced the virus very recently – we know it has not gone away.

I'd like to borrow a phrase from the philosopher Gillian Rose who wrote of the 'solidarity of the shaken' (she was actually reflecting on the deep

trauma that comes through the experience of war and other evils). In the past years our collective confidence has taken a knock but we carry on. We have discovered social and spiritual solidarity with a new determination as we 'keep things going' and try to maintain relationships.



As we begin Lent on Ash Wednesday we stand together. Ashes are a forceful reminder of the precarious nature of human existence and the seriousness of human sin. We are shaken by the images as we grasp at the possibilities of grace – 'Create and make in us new and contrite hearts', we will pray in our collect. We review our true situation in the world and before God.

It is not yet clear what impact the war in the Ukraine will have on us directly. It may seem a long way away but our media brings those events into our homes as they unfold. What our government does on our behalf matters. How we in due course respond to those who have been injured or forced to flee

their homes will matter. How we stand in solidarity with the shaken. In these early days offering our prayers, aligning ourselves to God's peaceable Kingdom are first steps. Our calling as Christ's disciples is encapsulated by St Paul's description of Christian living as 'Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor yet making many rich; having nothing yet possessing everything.' That sounds like the right way to begin Lent.

In recent years our Lent observance and Holy Week devotions and Easter celebrations took a very different form to that which we anticipated at the beginning of Lent 2020. This year there will be the opportunity to live Lent together. We will be continuing Morning Prayer and our midweek service, Lent study materials will be available for two study groups.

As we continue to walk in solidarity may the grace and mercy at the heart of God embrace and defend us as we walk in faithfulness and emulate God's mercy, faithfulness and compassion in the world, and proclaim that outrageous, reconciling, universal love in the places we are called to repent and follow Christ.

Andrew

HOMES AND GARDENS

During the summer we are hoping some of you will open your gardens to members of the congregation. You can choose your own date and time when you think your garden will be at its best.

This year if you are not a gardener perhaps you would invite us round for coffee and biscuits, tea and cake or a glass of wine and nibbles. Again at a date and time suitable to you.

The money raised by donations will be for Christ Church general funds.

Please speak to Julie Hill if you would like to help or for more information.



