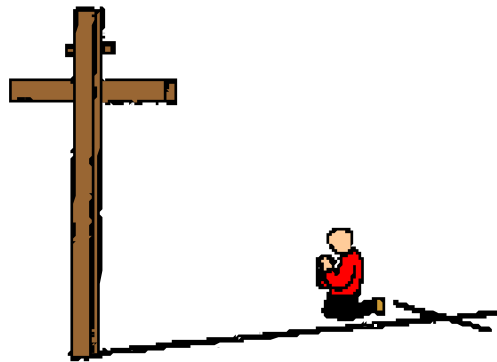


A Positive Lent

When I think of Lent it is hard not to think of New Year's resolutions. I think of getting a bit more discipline in my life, giving up chocolate or coffee, going to the gym more regularly, remembering to write letters and that kind of thing. But surely this is not the way to look at it.

Lenten discipline is not about self-improvement and willpower. It is not about giving things up in order to gain favour with God.

Rather, it helps us to remember three important truths, to learn them by action as well as in words.



First, as we fast, we remember what God gave up for us when Jesus came to die. Paul catches this perfectly. Jesus *"made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant and being made in human likeness he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross."* Lent is an opportunity to give thanks for the extravagant self-giving of the God who is love.

Second, fasting reminds us that there are things that we should be quick to give up in response to God. The grudges that we cherish, the wrong attitudes and habits that we feed, the concern we have for

our good reputation, all seem so tawdry in comparison to the loving generosity of the God who came to die. Lent asks if we will abandon those things in our lives of which we know we should be ashamed.

Third, fasting helps us to remember that even good things, even God's own good gifts to us, can come to be a barrier between us and him. During Lent, we recognize that all we have - our things, our gifts and talents - are 'lent' to us. They are

God's loan to us. Lent reminds us that God is the source of all that we have and are.

So Lenten discipline is easier and

harder than New Year's resolutions. It is easier because it is merely remembering what Jesus has done for us, and where we stand in relation to him. It is harder, because understanding what Jesus has done for us, we also understand how complete a claim he has to the whole of our lives. Lent is not just forty days of abstinence, but a life time of praise and grateful response.

Beth

Chronicle

Ministry of Healing

A monthly service on the first Tuesday of the month,
alternating between St James and St Francis Churches

Healing Services:

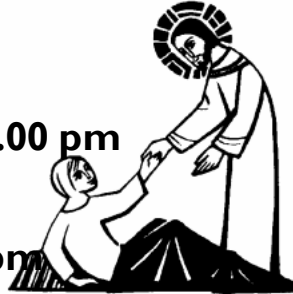
Thursday 9th February 7.00 pm

St James Church

Tuesday 9th March 7.00 pm

St Francis Church

The ministry of healing is available at St James' Church every Sunday during the 10 o'clock service. Please go to St Luke's Chapel after you have received Communion where members of the Healing Team will be available to listen and to pray in complete confidence.



SNOWDROP SATURDAYS

St James' Church
11th & 18th February

10.30 am - 4.30 pm

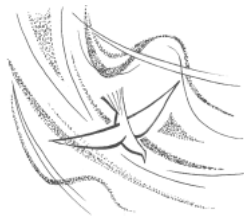


We are inviting people to see the wonderful display of snowdrops and aconites in the churchyard. If you've got time - drop in and bring a friend

St James' Weekend Away

Friday 2nd – Sunday 4th June

Offa House, nr Leamington Spa



**the power of
pentecost
discovering gifts of
God**

with David & Clare McInnes

Marathon

Rob Butler (of Rosanne and Frank fame), is running in the Flora London Marathon, 23 April 2006, in aid of the Child

Poverty Action Group:

Fighting the injustice of poverty

CPAG is the leading charity campaigning for the abolition of poverty among children and young people in the UK and for the improvement of the lives of low-income families.

CPAG aims to:

Raise awareness of the extent, nature and impact of poverty;

Bring about positive income policy changes for families with children in poverty;

Enable those eligible for benefits and tax credits to have access to their full entitlement.

In order to realise these aims,

CPAG:

Researches and publishes the latest facts and figures of family

and child poverty in the UK;

Lobbies government and leads and

supports campaigns for policies to prevent, alleviate and abolish child and family poverty;

Provides up to date information and advice on the complexities of the social security and tax credits systems;

Undertakes test-cases to extend the interpretation of law in favour of claimants using, where appropriate the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights.

If you would like to sponsor Rob please speak with Rosanne - 453257



LENT AT ST JAMES

ASH WEDNESDAY - 1ST MARCH

9.30am Holy Eucharist

7.00pm Sung Eucharist

both services include the Imposition of Ashes

THURSDAY LENT EUCHARIST & LUNCH



Thursdays (note change of day this year) at **12 o'clock** beginning on March 9th. The Eucharist (with short address) is followed by a simple lunch of soup, bread & cheese, fruit, tea or coffee in Church. Proceeds will go to USPG - serving overseas missions.

The Tuesday Eucharist and Lunch Club will meet as usual

LENT GROUPS



Where is God ...when we seek happiness? ...when we face suffering? ...when we make decisions? ...when we contemplate death? ...when we try to make sense of life?

This year's Lent Course looks at the place of God within our lives with the help of the Archbishop Rowan Williams, Patricia Routledge, Joel Edwards, Pauline Webb and Bishop David Hope.

This year there will be **FIVE STUDY GROUPS** each meeting for the five sessions:

- ◆ Monday Morning at 10.15 am at Una Dean's, 66 Fern Hill Road
- ◆ Tuesday Afternoon at 2.15 pm at Eric & Connie Uren's, 13 Clive Rd
- ◆ Wednesday Evening at 7.30 pm at Brian & Barbara Brown's, 58 Lytton Rd with Stephen
- ◆ Wednesday Evening at 7.30 pm at The Rectory with Tony Beetham
- ◆ Thursday Morning at 10.30 am in the Church Centre with Beth

WORSHIP IN CHURCH –

WHAT'S IT REALLY ALL ABOUT?

Many of us meet with others on a regular basis, often in a church building, to formally worship God. When we come together in worship are we taking part in an activity, adopting an attitude, or both?

Worship begins where we are and takes place in God's real world. It is about coming closer to God, but not just as an individual. We come as a community and the act of worship therefore needs to be right for that community. We venerate God and offer him praise, thanksgiving and petitions. We confess our sins and seek absolution, teaching, inspiration and blessing. Sometimes we come to Christ's table to share with and in the body and blood of Christ as one community and one church.

However, our collective worship activity may, in how it is carried out, or in the attitude we adopt before, during and after, include or exclude others. We may make assumptions about the value of how other

people worship God based on our own familiar and comfortable way. We may believe our worship is the 'right way'.

John Robinson in 'Honest to God' wrote, 'The test of worship is how far it makes us more sensitive to the beyond 'in our midst', to the Christ in the hungry, the naked, the homeless and the prisoner. Only if we are more likely to recognise him there after attending an act of worship is that act of worship Christian rather than a piece of religiosity in Christian dress.'

When we worship God with all our senses, with our whole body and mind, and invite the Holy Spirit to work within us, we can recognise and fulfil our role as the church in the world today, and come to people where they are when they are in need.

By Elizabeth Goodridge and Ian Yearsley





Rosanne interviews

Tom Walker - Head of Church Cowley St James

It is very refreshing in the modern working world to meet a person who is "at home" in the job he does. That is not to say that Tom doesn't recognise the stress which is part and parcel of the current life in education. However he manages to face it realistically and beyond it finds pleasure and great satisfaction in what he does. He told me during our recent interview that he had "felt ready" to take on the headship of Church Cowley St James school when he applied for the post last summer. Like Alison Holden (head at St Christopher's school) he was deputy head-teacher at his school for seven years before his appointment, so he knows his customers well. He was quick to point out that he deems himself privileged to have a team of able and dedicated staff to support him and appreciates the years of experience some of them can offer.

It is easy to see that Tom is an outdoor kind of person. As a child he excelled as much at sport as academic subjects. He told me that one of his favourite places in Oxford is Port Meadow, where he and his family can wander at will. He was born in Ealing, in London, the third child of a family of four children. His mother worked for a government department during World War II and

married comparatively late. His father taught history at St Benedict's School, attached to Ealing Abbey. The school had an infant department, which as a small boy is where Tom began his schooling. He stayed at the school right through to the Sixth Form. He recalls that he was a "clingy" little boy and really did not want to be separated from his mother for the first few mornings. However he told me about a lovely infant teacher who met him in the playground with a small watering can, asking him to help her water the school pot plants. That clever technique of distraction has been used over and over again in his career. He knows it works - It did for him.

Although he could read before he was five he assured me that all through St Benedict's it was at sport that he excelled rather than academic subjects. He loved rugby and football and played in the school teams. He had a very happy childhood both at home and school so no one can imagine what a jolt it was when his father suddenly died. Tom was only twelve. The monks were very supportive. One in particular was an inspirational history teacher. It was he, Fr. Stanislaus who had christened Tom and became such a personal friend, that he was asked to do the same for two of Tom's own children.

In the Sixth Form art became the favoured subject for further study, though by this time the idea of teaching was beginning to appeal. He had a friend, a teacher in London who he describes as "inspired". A young man who spoke with enthusiasm about his young pupils and whose flat at Christmas was full of charming letters and cards from them. He persuaded Tom to visit the school getting him involved in a variety of tasks and even asking him to help with a residential visit to Swanage in the summer. It was a great week and Tom was hooked.

A degree at Brighton in history and the history of art preceded his post-graduate teaching certificate at Oxford Polytechnic College (now Brookes University). Once qualified he began his career in London schools, where street-wise kids were a tough challenge but where he learnt the "mechanics" of ensuring orderly behaviour and routes to learning. Having moved to a second school he met Lucy who also taught there. They were married soon afterwards and she turned to nursing. Lucy is now a qualified midwife. A new job in Bicester in 1994 brought Tom and Lucy to the Oxford area. He had been teaching there for four years when the deputy-head's post at Church Cowley St James was advertised. By

the time he was appointed the first baby of their family of four had been born. He is the proud father of George (8), Charlie (6), Isabella (3) and six-month old William. The baby arrived just as Tom got his promotion. I suggested that the last six months must have been pretty hectic. He agreed!!

Now living in Headington and keeping fit by cycling to work each day, he obviously feels he is in the right place at this point in his career. We swapped stories about teaching in London, about residential weeks with Cowley children at Hill End Field Study Centre and other subjects dear to teachers' hearts and we could have gone on longer, but at the end of a busy day, he had been more than generous with his time. As I left I guessed he still had a pile of tasks waiting on his desk for his attention, yet by his easy manner and warm handshake you'd never have guessed.

How would you describe yourself as a small child?

Quite shy. I had a happy childhood. I felt very loved and now I realise how important that was. I look back with a great degree of happiness.

Have you any significant childhood memories to share?

I was running through our kitchen (pre-school age) and I tripped. My teeth severed my bottom lip and it had to be stitched and restitched. I still have the scar to this day!

Has God been part of your

life since childhood?

Yes. We were all brought up as Catholics. Mass was part of family life. God has always been part of my life and continues to be.

In modern society is there anything which disappoints or angers you?

I think the whole information overload coming at you from so many different places. Also frenetic activity – feeling you always have to be doing something.

Is there anything about life today which you find encouraging or positive?

There's a lot more understanding about the ways that children behave and learn and I think there is more support for teachers in addressing their needs.

What is your most treasured possession?

My mother was given a cine-camera as a wedding present in 1958 in Panama. A couple of years after she died my brother had all the film she took of us, her young family, transferred on to VHS and there we all are. Priceless.

How do you like to spend your leisure time?

Gardening – I grow my own vegetables. Spending time with the children. I especially like walking with the children. I like to take Lucy out for a meal.

What makes you laugh?

I love Laurel and Hardy, they never fail, and "David Brent" in "The Office" on television.

Do you have an ambition for the future?

I'd really love an allotment! (Reach for the sky!!! – said with a wry smile –RB)



The Very First

Valentine Card - a legend

The Roman Emperor Claudius II needed soldiers. He suspected that marriage made men want to stay at home instead of fighting wars, so he outlawed marriage.

A kind-hearted young priest named Valentine felt sorry for all the couples who wanted to marry, but couldn't. So secretly he married as many couples as he could - until the Emperor found out and condemned him to death. While he was in prison waiting execution, Valentine showed love and compassion to everyone around him, including his jailer. The jailer had a young daughter who was blind, but through Valentine's prayers, she was healed. Just before his death in Rome on 14 February, he wrote her a farewell message signed 'From your Valentine.'

So the very first Valentine card was not between lovers, but between a priest about to die, and a little girl, healed through his prayers.



Lent at St Francis

Ash Wednesday - 1st March

7.00pm Sung Eucharist with the Imposition of Ashes

Parish Lent Course

Where is God?

Where is God ...when we seek happiness? ...when we face suffering? ...when we make decisions? ...when we contemplate death? ...when we try to make sense of life?

This year's Lent Course looks at the place of God within our lives with the help of the Archbishop Rowan Williams, Patricia Routledge, Joel Edwards, Pauline Webb and Bishop David Hope.

Thursday Evening Group led by Lorne at 3 Bulan Road at 7.35 pm after the 7.00 pm Eucharist in church



Services during Lent

these will all take place in church - Sundays - **Stations of the Cross** at 6.00 pm, followed by

Evening Prayer

Morning Prayer continues on Saturdays at 9.15 am followed by breakfast.

As we keep the important season of Lent, why not join in one of these times of prayer and devotion? - if you can't come to church, you could always set aside one of these times for prayer at home.

EVER WONDER ABOUT THE ABBREVIATION A.S.A.P.?

Generally we think of it in terms of even more hurry and stress in our lives. Maybe if we think of this abbreviation in a different manner, we will begin to find a new way to deal with those rough days along the way.

There's work to do,
deadlines to meet;
You've got no time to spare,
But as you hurry and scurry-
Asap - always say a prayer

In the midst of family chaos,
"quality time" is rare.
Do your best; let god do the rest-
Asap - always say a prayer

It may seem like your worries
Are more than you can bear.
Slow down and take a breather-
Asap - always say a prayer

God knows how stressful life is;
He wants to ease our cares,
And he'll respond
to all your needs
Asap - always
say a prayer



Hope in Today's World

In today's society the tangible symbols of hope for many are the scratch card and credit card. The lottery scratch card expresses peoples' aspirations for a better life and secure future. In a world where many have lost confidence in the future and the present is the only thing they can be sure about, the credit card expresses the all encompassing power of consumerism. It enables us to live for the present by 'taking the waiting out of wanting'.

To a large extent we have lost the 'big story' that makes sense of the world in which we live.

Individual choice has replaced progress as a core value and belief in society. Christianity is viewed sceptically when it comes to offering a coherent 'grand narrative'. However, there is still a genuine desire to find hope in an uncertain world, as often seen in the response to high profile deaths, most notably that of Princess Diana.

In the light of this, how does the Christian Faith offer hope in our current culture? The challenge involves Christians living a lifestyle which can offer an alternative image of the 'good life', based in the hope of a future that is worth living for.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is the key, for God 'has anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come' (2 Cor. 1:22). Within the Christian community, we can encourage each other to live in the Spirit to express our future hope. This means looking together critically at our lifestyle, spending, habits, giving, ministry to the poor, response to God's call etc and asking: to what extent are we witnessing to a hope in the future? How can this impact on the people around us?



January's Solution



WHEN YOU'VE LOST THE ONE YOU LOVE

Written by a grieving husband



There are moments in life when you miss someone so much that you want to pick them from your dreams and hug

them. So dream what you want to dream; go where you want to go; be what you want to be, because you have only this one life and one chance to do all the things you want to do.

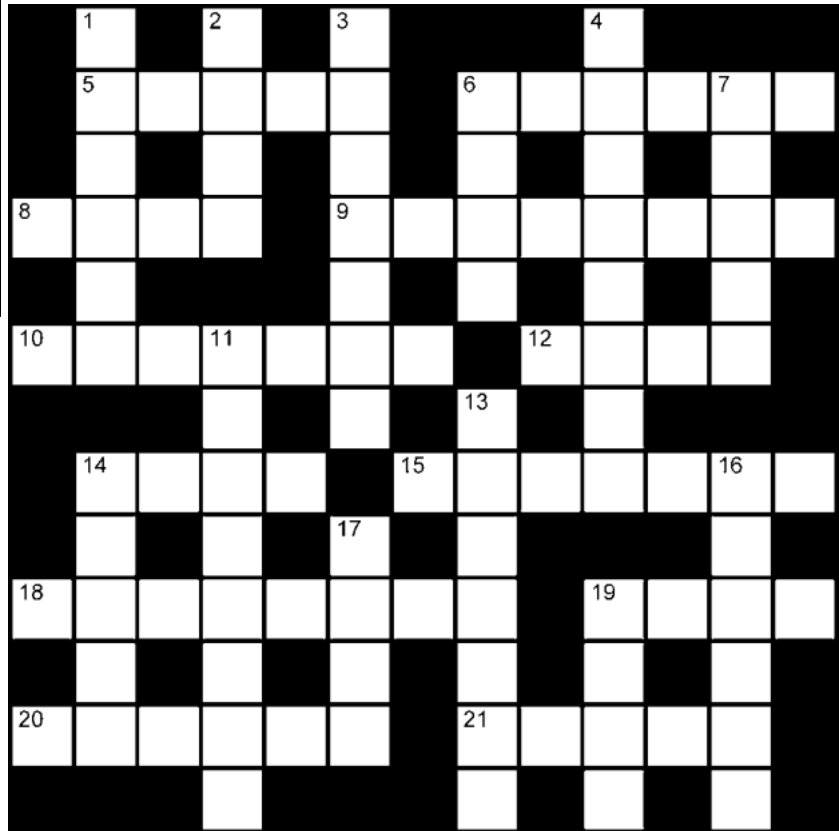
May you have enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorrow to keep you human, enough hope to make you happy.

Always put yourself in others' shoes. If you feel that it hurts you, it probably hurts the other person, too.

The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes along their way.

Happiness lives for those who cry, those who hurt, those who have searched, and those who tried, for only they can appreciate the importance of people who have touched their lives.

February's Crossword



Across

- 5 Place of sacrifice (5)
- 6 Seek (6)
- 8 Tenth of an ephah (4)
- 9 Cloth (8)
- 10 Deal with (7)
- 12 Form (4)
- 14 Grit (4)
- 15 Spear (7)
- 18 Stories told by Jesus (8)
- 19 Ferocity (4)
- 20 Tune (6)
- 21 Goodwill (5)

Down

- 1 Pound (6)
- 2 Celestial body (4)
- 3 A verbal commitment (7)
- 4 Bearing (8)
- 6 Fill to satisfaction (4)
- 7 Map (5)
- 11 Aromatic bark used as a spice (8)
- 13 A journey, usually by ship (7)
- 14 Relative magnitude (5)
- 16 Zion (6)
- 17 Water soaked soil (4)
- 19 An anxious feeling (4)

Love begins with a smile, grows with a kiss and ends with a tear. The brightest future will always be based on a forgotten past. You can't go on well in life until you let go of your past failures and heartaches.

When you were born, you were crying and everyone around you was smiling. Live your life so that when you die, you're the one who is smiling and everyone around you is crying and smiling.

Sunday Services

ST JAMES' CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Sung Eucharist (<i>exc 2nd Sunday</i>) All Age Eucharist (<i>2nd Sunday</i>)
1.00 pm	Cowley Asian Christian Fellowship

ST FRANCIS' CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30 am	Parish Eucharist <i>[Family Eucharist - 2nd Sunday of the month]</i>
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Mid-Week Services & Meetings

Monday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Toddler Group – <i>St Francis</i>
	2.30 pm	Parish Mothers' Union - <i>St James (3rd Mon)</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Tuesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Seashells Baby & Toddler Club - <i>St James</i>
	10.00 am	Toddler Service – <i>St Francis</i>
	12.00 pm	Eucharist - <i>St James</i>
	12.30 pm	Tuesday Lunch Club - <i>St James</i>
	2.30 pm	Friends of St Francis - <i>St Francis (2nd & 4th)</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	2.30 pm	Tea Break - <i>St Francis (1st Wed)</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
Thursday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	11.00 am	St Francis Prayer Group
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Eucharist - <i>St Francis</i>
Friday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	5.00 pm	Evening Prayer – <i>St James</i>
	7.00 pm	Friday Club – <i>alt Fridays at St Francis</i>
Saturday	9.15 am	Morning Prayer & Breakfast - <i>St Francis</i>

sDay Off

Stephen has Friday off, Except in emergency, please try and respect this day of rest. Lorne can be contacted in the evenings and at weekends.

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