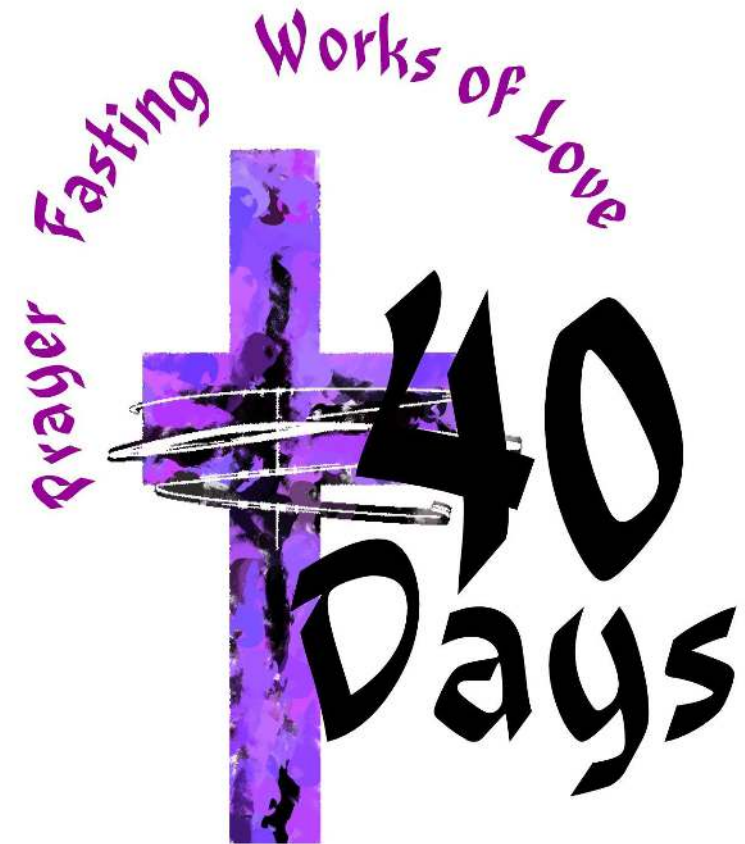


Ideas for Lent 2024

*Lent—a time to
Learn and
Love and
Grow*



St George the Martyr
Shirley

What Shall I Do?

There are many ways of observing Lent and we've included some suggestions in this booklet. But remember, whatever you decide to do, the whole point of it is to grow in faith and love, not to be thoroughly miserable for 7 weeks!

Traditionally Lent is a time to reflect upon Jesus' time in the Wilderness and upon the meaning of his suffering and death.

It is a time to prepare our hearts for the wonder and joy of Easter.

It is an opportunity to think more about our relationship with God, with those around us and with the world God has entrusted to us as stewards.

While 'giving things up' has long been seen as a way of observing Lent it is not the only, or even the most important, thing we can do. Almsgiving—sharing our resources of time, talents and money is also important and as well as thinking about giving something up we may well want to take something on:

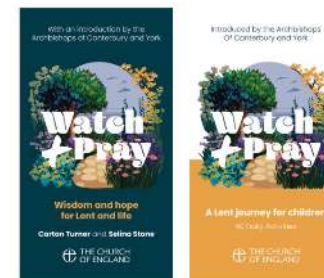
- a commitment to reading and reflection that will inform and deepen our faith
- following alone, or with others, one of the many Lent courses on offer
- Finding new ways to pray—or just finding more time to talk to God and listen to Him.

We hope you will find something in this booklet that helps you find a way to keep Lent that is meaningful for you and leads to a deepening of faith and love.



Church of England Lent Resources

This Lent we are encouraged to wait expectantly for God to meet us and sustain us through the storms and trials we all face.



The Church of England's Lent theme for 2024 is Watch and Pray: Wisdom and hope for Lent and life.

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus kneels in darkness in the Garden of Gethsemane. Though he pleads with his disciples, "Stay here with me ... Watch and pray," they all fall asleep, leaving him alone in his hour of deepest suffering.

This year's resources have been inspired and informed by the 2024 Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book, Tarry Awhile: Wisdom from Black Spirituality for people of faith by Selina Stone. The daily reflections booklet for adults exploring the same themes has been written by Carlton Turner, and there is also a daily challenge booklet for children and families. The booklets are available from Church House Publishing for £2.50 (adult book) and £1.50 (children's book)

Email Reflections

Sign up to the Cof E free daily Lent reflection emails (except Sundays) straight to your inbox from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day (31 March).

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/sign-our-emails>



Get the App

The material can also be downloaded as an App from the App Store—Apple. It's free. Look around, other Lent Apps are available!

community groups and businesses all over the country will count their plastic packaging waste and share their results.

It's simple to take part in The Big Plastic Count. Sign up and they'll send you a free counting pack with everything you need for the investigation.

When you submit your data at the end of the Count week, their whizzy data analysts will send you your personal plastic footprint. They'll use this to form a national picture of the state of plastic waste in the UK today.

Their video explains how it works. Take a look, and join the Count: <https://youtu.be/aJqqZ8dDtGQ>

Local Lent Talks:

St Mildred's Church on Addiscombe is hosting 'My Christian Journey' - a series of inspirational Lent Talks held on Wednesday evenings from 7.30pm—9pm with tea and coffee available from 7pm. There is no need to book—just go along.



21st February—Revd Moira Astin, Archdeacon of Reigate

28th February—Bishop Rosemarie, Bishop of Croydon

6th March—Revd Greg Prior, Archdeacon of Croydon

13th March— Bishop Peter Price, Retired Bishop of Bath & Wells

20th March—Revd Barry Goodwin, Retired acting Archdeacon of Croydon.

The speakers will share aspects of their Christian Journey including their challenges, what has inspired and motivated them and what parts of their ministry they most enjoy. There will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of each talk.

Contents

- Lent Course: 'Who Is Our Neighbour' p. 2
- Toilet Twinning & Tithing—*2 more ideas* p. 3
- Resources for study and growth - *recommendations for a good Lenten read* p. 4
- A Carbon Fast—*ideas for an action each day, or weekly* p. 5
- Sharing our blessings—support a food bank p. 6
- Lent Pilgrimages p. 6
- A Lent Project—The Big Plastic Count p.7
- Local Lent Talks p.8
- Church of England Lent Resources p.9
- Email Reflections & Get the App p.9

*Almighty and ever living God,
you invite us deeper into your world,
your people, your Lent.
May this time be one of outward focus;
seeking you in those we often ignore.
Help us live a Lent focused on freedom,
generosity, and encounter.
Give us hearts hungry to serve you
and those who need what we have to give.
Amen*



Lent Course: 'Who is Our Neighbour'

'Who is our neighbour?' This is a key question that is at the heart of the Parables in Saint Luke's Gospel. The parable of the Good Samaritan challenges us not to ask but to answer the question, 'Who is our neighbour?' My neighbour is not just the focus of my compassion and concern; my neighbour also teaches me what it means to serve. To be a good neighbour, I need to both give and receive, as Christ both gives and receives.

The Church is both the giver and the receiver in mission. In identifying and serving the needs of others, we find not only who our neighbours are, but they too welcome us as neighbours. We become Christ-like, as we should, for as the Church we are the Body of Christ.

This is the Lent Course we'll be using as a parish. We will be offering the course on **Tuesdays on Zoom** from 20th Feb at 7.30 and one 'in-person' course in the Lady Chapel on **Wednesday afternoons** from 21st Feb from 2—3.30pm. If you are interested in joining a group please contact one of the staff team.

You can access the material online via the following link:

<https://www.uspg.org.uk/resources/study-courses/>

There are six studies in this guide from Jerusalem & the Middle East, the Caribbean, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, and the Diocese of Europe. Our theme for this guide is informed by the Parable of the Good Samaritan, but you are invited to draw on other readings too, offering shared experiences in the Church, in all its diversity, of what it is to be a good neighbour today.

There are also plans to offer a different course, maybe based on a film, on **Sunday afternoons**. Details tbc.



- [Reigate and Tandridge Deaneries](#) [Farming, Biodiversity and Transport] 17 February
- [Kingston and Merton Deaneries](#) [Governance, Democracy and Citizenship] 24 February
- [Charlton and Deptford Deaneries](#) [Finance and Global Trade] 01 March
- [Tooting and North Lambeth Deaneries](#) [Racial justice, Cost of Living and Air Pollution] 8 March
- Schools and young people Wednesday [Intergenerational Justice] 20 March **Details to come soon**
- [Battersea to Southwark Cathedral](#) [Lay and ordained priestly and prophetic vocation] 28 March

Find Your Own Walks for Reflection:

You don't have to go on an organised pilgrimage. Create your own prayer walks, either following set routes, or finding random ones, for example by tossing a coin for left or right at a junction. As you walk be attentive – try to see the place through God's eyes. As you look, really look, at God's creation let God's spirit pray through you.

As well as mindful, prayerful walking you might consider signing up for the Big Lent Walk. CAFOD and SCIAF are teaming up to bring the Big Lent Walk to Great Britain! This is a walk of 200km over 40 days to help fight global poverty. Walk when and where you choose over 40 days, alone or with friends. Raise money to help people as they overcome poverty. Follow the link for more details:

<https://walk.cafod.org.uk/#gridContent>



A Lent Project:



Why not consider joining Greenpeace's **The Big Plastic Count** - the UK's biggest investigation into household plastic waste. By taking part, we can help them pressure the government to turn off the plastic tap once and for all. For just one week – 11-17 March 2024 – households of all shapes and sizes, schools,

sacrifice' on our contribution to climate change, and on those most impacted by it. It is an invitation to focus in making changes in our lifestyle and reducing our 'carbon footprint' (hence the name. You can download our 2024 Carbon Fast Calendar from the parish website or request a paper copy from the staff team.



Rather daunting? Why not try just one action a week—select a Saturday or Sunday option.

Support a food bank

As the cost of living crisis shows no sign of abating the numbers of people needing to seek help from Food banks across the country has grown. As a parish we support the Shrublands Food bank which provides advice, help and assistance to the Shrublands community and the surrounding areas. You might like to consider adding a few items each time you shop to donate. Details of what is needed are included regularly in our pewsheet or you can get an update from their website: www.shrublandstrust.org



Lent Pilgrimages

The Rt Revd Dr Martin Gainsborough, Bishop of Kingston, invites you to join him on a journey of prayer, repentance and vision for justice in our response to the climate and ecological crisis. Everyone is welcome, and walks are accessible to all ages. There are six separate walks taking place across the Diocese of Southwark during Lent. For further information visit:

<https://southwark.anglican.org/news-events/events/whats-on/lent-climate-pilgrimage/>

Each of the walks will explore a different theme in connection to the climate and ecological crisis. Numbers will be limited to 35 for each walk so please sign up soon to avoid disappointment. The 6 dates of the walks and the themes are as follows:

Toilet Twinning

Responsible use of God's precious gift of water is crucial. This is at the forefront of the Toilet Twinning Charity which is seeking to **'flush away poverty, one toilet at a time'**.



A donation of £60 to twin your toilet, helps fund a project in a poor community that will enable families to build a basic toilet, have access to clean water and learn about hygiene – a vital combination that saves lives. As a parish we have already twinned the toilets we have in church and want to suggest you might consider twinning yours at home.



As a suggestion, every time you, or one of your household, flush your toilet during Lent pop a 10p piece in a money box or make a note that another 10p is due. At the end of Lent count the coins and either continue until you have £60 or top up your takings and twin at Easter. You'll receive a certificate to hang in your loo – showing a photograph of your overseas toilet twin and GPS coordinates so you can look up your twin's location on Google Maps!

Tithing...

In days gone by tithing—giving a tenth of what you earned, produced or grew to the Church was a common practice. Some denominations and faiths still challenge their members to commit a percentage of their salary before tax to the church or faith community. This Lent, and perhaps beyond, why not consider tithing the cost of an activity you enjoy or necessity you purchase and at the end of Lent donating that to a charity. E.g. the coffee you enjoy at your favourite coffee shop, or a meal out... could go to Oxfam or the Akshaya Patra Foundation which provide meals, and the means of growing them, abroad and in the UK. Filling up your car? A tenth of the cost of your petrol/diesel could go to a charity such as Re-cycle for Africa or World



Cycle Relief. Grateful for the NHS care you or a family member has received? Organise a fundraiser for or make a donation to a healthcare charity. Filling the bath or doing a wash—consider a donation, or a tenth of your water bill to a charity such as Water Aid or a local river restoration project. You get the picture? This has the double benefit of helping others and ensuring we take less of our blessings for granted!

Resources for Study and Growth

Archbishop Justin recommends:

The Archbishop's Lent Book this year is "Tarry Awhile—Wisdom from Black Spirituality for People of Faith" by Selina Stone.

SPCK Publishing ISBN: 9780281090105

Available from Church House Publishing £9.59

Tarrying is a Black Christian spiritual practice in which believers actively wait to experience the manifestation of God's presence. It answers yes to the question Jesus once asked his disciples: will you tarry here and watch with me? Whether in the vibrancy of music and singing, or in the hushed silence of the congregation, people of all ages anticipate an encounter with God that will transform what they know, feel and experience day to day. This book makes the wisdom of Black spiritualities and faith available for all people.



Hilary Fife recommends:



"The Heart's Time: A Poem a Day for Lent and Easter" by Janet Morley

SPCK ISBN: 9780281063727 Available from Church House Publishing £10.99

Packed with riches yet highly accessible, The Heart's Time is at its core a series of short, resonant poems for each weekday of Lent and Easter. It will appeal to existing poetry lovers as well as those who want to start exploring how poems can be a resource for our spiritual lives, whether or not they are written with a consciously Christian intent. Poets often address subjects our culture seeks to avoid, and poetry demands that we 'slow down to

the heart's time' in order to discover deeper levels of meaning than at first appear.

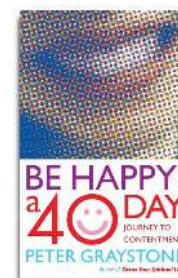
Ray Wheeler recommends:

"Let me go there – The spirit of Lent" by Paula Gooder

Canterbury Press, ISBN: 0781848259041

2016. Available from Eden £9.29

Paula Gooder, Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral, London, takes us on a journey of exploration into the wilderness for Lent and shows us that the desert can be a place of fear and desolation. It is also the very setting that God may choose to meet us and call us into a new way of being and living.



"Be Happy! A 40 Day journey to contentment" -

Peter Graystone

Canterbury Press ISBN 9781853119729. Available from Amazon £9.99

With his characteristic humour, realism, understanding and wisdom, Peter Graystone offers a 40-day step-by-step programme in how to be happy. Each day consists of a short, pithy reflection on a practical aspect of our daily lives, our emotions or our desires, and a 'happiness exercise' that will enable us to discover and keep hold of that 'glad to be alive' feeling.

Borrow a Book.....

With so many excellent Lent Books to choose from rather than buy one new just borrow one from our Lenten Lending table at the back of church. The name of the person sharing it will be in the front of the book so that you can talk to them about why they enjoyed it and then, if you borrow it, make sure the right person gets it back at the end of Lent.

Try a Carbon Fast

- One action for each day (or each week) of Lent

This is an invitation to focus our Lenten 'acts of love and