



Skinner Street  
United Reformed Church  
Poole February 2024

*Guided by the Holy Spirit we aim to show the love of God the Father for everyone by sharing the work of his Son, Jesus Christ, among our neighbours in Poole and the wider world.*



WEDNESDAY 14<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY  
FIRST DAY OF LENT

**Dear Friends,**

**February 2<sup>nd</sup> marks the Christian festival of Candlemas.**

Although this is not something that is part of our own tradition I think it can, sometimes, be interesting and helpful to note the celebrations observed by other denominations which are part of the cycle of the Christian year.

Candlemas marks the presentation of Jesus at the temple, and event recorded for us in Luke's Gospel (Ch2)

*22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), 24 and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.' [NRSVA]*

There are several things that come to mind about this. Firstly Mary was steeped in her own, Jewish, religious tradition. Indeed it is easy to forget that Jesus was brought up in this context – something that we know he took seriously. Sometimes, when things are tough and we face challenges and doubts, it is the pattern of our religious habits that can carry us through to the next occasion when God reaches out to us and renews our realization that we are in God's care.

Secondly it emphasizes the temple as a focus for community as well as religious life. When I have visited Hindu temples in India I have been struck by the way that religious observance is a normal and everyday aspect of the lives of Hindus.

It is right that Sunday worship should be a special occasion that is prepared for and undertaken in a way that signifies the importance of gathering together in God's name. The many and varied things that take place in our church premises are, however, also opportunities to help people to engage with God.

Thirdly there is a mention of sacrificing doves. It is easy to judge practices in the past by standards of the present. What matters here is that there is a sense of giving something in response to God. The difference for us, after Martin Luther's theological discoveries that are the bedrock of our reformed tradition, is that our response is in the light of God's grace freely given.

Folk at Skinner Street have, and continue, to give to God in many & varied ways. The church is very much at the heart of its community and will continue, I am sure, to be a focus for the life of that community.

**Tim**

Revd. Tim Meachin



CCL544280

**WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY      Sundays at 10.30am**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Mrs Mary Chipping  
11<sup>th</sup> Mr Andrew Hirst  
18<sup>th</sup> Revd Peter Clark      ***Holy Communion***  
Servers: Shirley Marden & Chris Proudley  
25<sup>th</sup> Revd Tim Meachin      *with a Baptism*

**DUTY ELDER and VESTRY PRAYER**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Chris Proudley  
11<sup>th</sup> Muriel Coombes  
18<sup>th</sup> Shirley Marden  
25<sup>th</sup> Janice Williams

**DOOR STEWARDS**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Vera Brown  
11<sup>th</sup> Wai Ching  
18<sup>th</sup> Alan Knapp  
25<sup>th</sup> Jill Campbell - Dyke

*Please let me know if you would be willing to join the Door Steward rota.TK*

**THURSDAY PRAYERS 10.15am**

*(Followed by coffee and fellowship)*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Vera  
8<sup>th</sup> Dave  
15<sup>th</sup> Chris  
22<sup>nd</sup> Sally  
29<sup>th</sup> Shirley

**DIARY FOR FEBRUARY**

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> – Elders Meeting- Please let an Elder know if there is anything you would like them to discuss and bring to the next church meeting on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> – 10 to 11am- Craft and Chat.

## FEBRUARY 2024! TREASURERS TALES

Crikey, another month to write a few words for the Skinner Street Newsletter. But when you read this, I will not be 'at home' so this is being 'penned' (well typed on the computer) in mid-January, on a very cold day! As I am still away in February, there may be no note for March. I am leaving the church account matters in the very capable hands of Shirley and Chris! Thank you to you both.

It does mean there is not too much to report. The church finances have started the year with a positive balance but we cannot relax just yet. We all know that taking care of our building is an expensive task. Sometime in the future, we may have to consider if this can continue, without a lot of help from the Synod.

We are working to find openings for more community use. So far, the garden project, led by local Pioneer Minister, Sally Taylor, is going well. All are welcome to help out with these 'get togethers' even if you just chat and drink tea! Dates should be in this newsletter.

Last month I mentioned the 2024 car park permits and they are available from Shirley. You must display them clearly when parking.

So, not much to report this month, but I hope you all have a peaceful and enjoyable February.

Gail Nuttall Treasurer

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## **Buildings Report**

We continue to seek to have repairs to roof/guttering and portico of the Sanctuary and wall in the garden carried out, but have so far only been able to achieve the clearance of gutters and the resetting of some lead flashing that had lifted. We will continue to pursue.

We are continuing to press the Wessex URC Trustees to carry out major repairs to the Sanctuary roof etc.

We are submitting an application for CIL funding to improve the Community Garden, hopefully to be carried out in the Spring.

Lettings of the hall continue with, in addition to our regular users, Annual Thinking Day for the Trefoil and a number of children's birthday parties".

**Chris Proudley**

## **Pastoral Notes**

Our thoughts and prayers are with a number of our very good friends, who are not well. It is a difficult time when love and care cannot make health return to our loved ones. Please remember you can call on any of us, at any time (contact details are on the back page) as you are in our thoughts.

All friends, and relatives and friends of our Skinner Street family are held in our prayers. GN

## **Bill Deans**

It was with sadness we heard that Bill had passed away on January 24<sup>th</sup>. He had not been well for a while but came to church with Elaine when he felt able. He always had time for a chat and I shall miss his dry sense of humour and twinkling smile.

Our prayers are with Elaine at this time. TK

**What is Lent?** 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 replicate Jesus Christ's sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert for 40 days.

**Why 40 days?** 40 is a significant number in Jewish-Christian scripture:

- In Genesis, the flood which destroyed the earth was brought about by 40 days and nights of rain.
- The Hebrews spent 40 years in the wilderness before reaching the land promised to them by God.
- Moses fasted for 40 days before receiving the ten commandments on Mount Sinai.
- Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry.

**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.

**The colour purple:** Purple is the symbolic colour used in some churches throughout Lent, for drapes and altar frontals.

Purple is used for two reasons: firstly because it is associated with mourning and so anticipates the pain and suffering of the crucifixion, and secondly because purple is the colour associated with royalty, and celebrates Christ's resurrection and sovereignty.

**East and West:** Both the eastern and western churches observe Lent but they count the 40 days differently.

The western church excludes Sundays whereas the eastern church includes them.

The churches also start Lent on different days.

Western churches start Lent on the 7th Wednesday before Easter Day (called Ash Wednesday).

Eastern churches start Lent on the Monday of the 7th week before Easter and end it on the Friday 9 days before Easter. Eastern churches call this period the 'Great Lent'.

## *What is Love?*



Love never gives up.  
Love cares more for others than for self.  
Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.  
Love doesn't strut,  
Doesn't have a swelled head,  
Doesn't force itself on others,  
Isn't always "me first,"  
Doesn't fly off the handle,  
Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,  
Doesn't revel when others grovel,  
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,  
Puts up with anything,  
Trusts God always,  
Always looks for the best,  
Never looks back,  
But keeps going to the end.

### **Useful phone numbers**

For church matters or to discuss arrangements for a Baptism, Wedding or Funeral: Shirley Marden 07980 923217

To arrange a Pastoral visit or Home Communion:

Tricia Knapp 01202 632399

For Hall Lets and Carpark: Gail Nuttall 07774 283179

*Deadline for March newsletter Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February*