

Church News

Review:

The **community breakfast** was another great success this month and we were pleased to welcome several newcomers to the village. The start was a little quiet but we ended up running out of sausages and had to serve gluten free sausages to customers by the end of the morning! Thanks to all who helped.



Christmas hamper raffle: We were finally able to locate the winners of the hamper raffle when their phone was fixed – congratulations to the Jackson family! Thanks to Ray for running the pub hamper raffle which was won by “Diddy”.



Services: We were delighted to see so many youngsters at the crib service this year as well as our regulars, and hope they enjoyed the fun activities. Our midnight mass service was led by the very lovely Rev'd Val Plumb – our Area Dean for Rural Mission and Development. We all enjoyed sharing our Lord's Christmas peace and carols were sung lustily!

Forthcoming Events:

Community breakfast: We will be serving our Community Breakfast on **Saturday 10th February** between **8.30am and 10.30am**. Some may be under the impression that we only serve full English breakfasts, but our remit is to allow everyone to socialise, so if you don't normally eat breakfast, you're welcome to join us for a coffee, or if you're used to a light breakfast, just enjoy toast, cereal or a croissant. We're still looking for more helpers by the way!



Lent course: With Easter day falling so early this year – 1st April, and no, that's not an April fool's joke – that means Lent is even earlier than usual. We will be running a Lent Course starting on **Tuesday 20th February at 2pm** but the venue (definitely in Stoke Hammond) is still to be confirmed. The course will last 5 or 6 weeks as the content has not yet been completely finalised. Sessions are independent, so it doesn't matter if you can't make a couple of them. The course will be run using content developed by Bishop Stephen. The usual format is a reading or commentary which is followed by a group discussion and some prayer. We are also hoping to run an evening Lent group which may be held in another venue in the wider area (one of the Brickhill villages). In previous years this has been held on Wednesdays. The content will be the



same as the daytime course. Everyone is welcome, so if you are interested in either of these (free) courses, please contact the Rector (to leave a message) or one of the wardens below.

What is Lent? Some of you may remember from my report in November, that Lent is a period before Easter during which Christians reflect on Christ's life and spend time in prayer and contemplation. People eat simply and deny themselves pleasures to help them focus on their spiritual thoughts.

Why do Christians observe Lent? During Lent, Christians are preparing themselves for Easter by imitating Christ in the lead up to his death. In this period, Jesus spent 40 days and nights in the desert fasting and in prayer. The period between Ash Wednesday and Easter day is 46 days, but 6 days are Sundays which are not included in Lent as they are feast days. It is therefore perfectly OK to give up your denial on Sundays in Lent, although most people continue even on Sundays!



What happens at the start of Lent? In order to clear out their larder for the simple diet of Lent, people had a massive fry up on the day before the start of Lent. We know this as Shrove Tuesday or Pancake day (yum!). The next day - the start of Lent - is Ash Wednesday. The name Ash Wednesday comes from the tradition of blessing ashes made from palm crosses blessed on the previous year's Palm Sunday, and marking a cross in ash on the foreheads of penitents (anyone confessing their sins). Although less usual nowadays, you may still see people with an ash cross on their forehead on Ash Wednesday. There will be a short said service at St Luke's church on **Ash Wednesday 14th Feb at 10.30am**



We'd like to particularly thank all those who opened their gardens for the church last year as well as all those who help at the church in any way including those who clean, arrange flowers and help out at fundraising events: We couldn't do it without you!

Church Benefice Website: www.brickhillschurches.org.uk. If you want to come to a service, all church service times are listed on the website, along with contact details for the Rector.

If you would like to come to church but have mobility problems please ring John (see below) regarding transport. If you would like to volunteer to help, have a prayer request or enquiry, please ring **Harry: Churchwarden, on 07773065271, Diane: Assistant Churchwarden (unofficial), on 270409 or John: Treasurer, on 270202.**

THANK YOU!