



From the Curate

The Reverend Sonia Marshall

Dear Friends,

As many of you are aware I have the last two months been struggling to cope with a fractured wrist. I now know exactly what St Paul meant when he said ‘the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”’. I have had to (excuse the pun!) get to grips with what I could and couldn’t do, driving from A to B being one of them – although I can’t say I missed the washing up too much! It was however an exercise in patience and in learning in practice to take gratefully as well as to give.

We use hands so much – to grasp door handles and levers to open things up ... no wonder we use the expression to say that we have understanding or control of a situation. More than that, we use hands to express our feelings, to comfort and to reassure those around us. On occasion we might even use them to pull someone out of danger, to save them as Our Lord did Peter when he tried to follow him across the waves ... or to heal as Jesus did with Jairus’ daughter.

Yes hands are not the least of God’s wonderful creations. St Julian of Norwich had a vision of all creation as a hazelnut in the palm of God’s hands. Though small, God made it, God loves it, and God will keep it in his hands surrounding it with his love. To place ourselves in God’s hands is to know and trust that he has our best interests at heart. May you know God’s love around you always.

With every blessing,

Sonia Marshall.

Parish Directory

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	Tony Masters Adrian Hallam	
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Hon. Secretary	Roger Bridgeman	
Hon. Treasurer	Simon Marshall	treasurer@dsj.org.uk
Covenant Secretary	Peter Wilde	
Electoral Roll Officer	Kim Hallam	
Synod Members		
Diocesan Synod	Canon Niccy Fisher	
	<i>The above plus</i>	
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Choir Master	John Worthington	music@dsj.org.uk
Organist	Philip Spratley	
Organisations		
Bellringers	Richard Muspratt	ringers@dsj.org.uk
Church Hall Bookings	Tony Masters	churchhall@dsj.org.uk
Church Ladies' Fellowship	Anthea Wray	
Church Coffee Group	Carole Mills Margaret Flegg	
Church Flowers	Pauline Brooksbank Christine Masters	
House Group	Doris Warner	
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Just People	Richard Gamman	youth@dsj.org.uk
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In this Month's Priory News ...

Dear All,

This month's edition offers a wide range of items, which I hope will help to brighten those grey days and chilly evenings that seem to be all too prevalent at this time of

year.

On a personal note, I'm busy organizing a surprise party for my dear Mum's 90th birthday on the 28th of February. It's a good job she wasn't born on the 29th or she'd be younger than me!

It's good to know that both Sonia and Tony are on the mend. I'm sure you'll enjoy the humour they bring to their tribulations. Thanks to Janet for her jottings - a welcome addition to Priory News.

As Lent approaches, be sure to make a note of all the Lent Lunches times and venues. Ours will be held on March 26th, organized by the ever-active Social committee. Details of the others can be found in the Church Calendar.

Warmest wishes,

Bet.

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Janet gives us an insight into her first month with us (P9).	Liz invites everyone (not just women!) to the Women's World Day of Prayer in March (P8).
Earth Hour – how you can join many churches and cathedrals in this important event (P13).	Remembering 'Ernie' (P10).
Marathon Man – Richard tells us about Just People's charity fundraising (P7).	Philip is on track again! Forward notice of an exciting event in April (P13).
Margaret's mouth-watering recipe for fruity coffee pancakes (P13).	Cover picture: Priory Church organ and window. [Photo courtesy of John Marsh.]

Thank you to those who have sent in articles for Priory News. Contributions and suggestions are very welcome. Please let us have your prayers, poems, pictures, comments, reminiscences and anything else you'd like to share. **NB: pictures containing recognisable children must be accompanied by authorisation to publish from their parents or guardians. We will not publish the names of children pictured unless specifically requested to do so by their parents or guardians.**

Please send copy to:

priorynews@dsj.org.uk

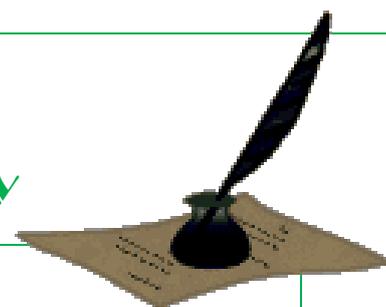
Please let us have your contributions for the **April** edition of Priory News **BEFORE** the deadline, **Friday 18th March**. Thank you for your help.

Church Calendar for March

1 st	Tuesday	<u>David, Bishop, Patron of Wales, 589</u>	
2 nd	Wednesday	<u>Chad, Bishop, Missionary, 672</u>	
3 rd	Thursday	9:30am Holy Communion 10:30am Home Communions 7:45pm Church Ladies' Fellowship: AGM & Beetle Drive	
4 th	Friday	<i>Practice Night:</i> 6:45pm Choir 7:30pm Ringers	
5 th	Saturday	1:30pm Church Ladies' Fellowship Jumble Sale	
THE SUNDAY BEFORE LENT (<u>QUINQUAGESIMA</u>)			
6 th	SUNDAY	10:00am Sung Eucharist 6:00pm Evening Prayer	
7 th	Monday	<u>Perpetua, Felicity and their companions, martyrs, 203</u> 7:30am PCC Meeting	
8 th	Tuesday	<u>Edward King, Bishop, 1910</u> 7:00pm Pancake Party	
<u>ASH WEDNESDAY</u>			
9 th	WEDNESDAY	7:30pm Sung Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes	
10 th	Thursday	9:30am Holy Communion 2:00pm Visit of Peterborough U3A	
11 th	Friday	Noon Church Ladies' Fellowship Fund Raising Lunch <i>Practice Night:</i> 6:45pm Choir 7:30pm Ringers	
12 th	Saturday	Noon - 1:30pm: Lent Lunch at the Open Door Church	
THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT			
13 th	SUNDAY	8:00am Holy Communion 10:00am Sung Eucharist with Holy Baptism 6:00pm Evening Prayer	
16 th	Wednesday	7:30pm Deanery Clergy Chapter at Moulton	
<u>Patrick, Bishop, Missionary, Patron of Ireland, 493</u>			
17 th	Thursday	9:30am Holy Communion 10:15am Church Coffee Group AGM 7:45pm Church Ladies' Fellowship: Swines Meadow Plants	
18 th	Friday	<i>Practice Night:</i> 6:45pm Choir 7:30pm Ringers	

19 th	Saturday	<u>Joseph of Nazareth</u>	
		Noon - 1:30pm: Lent Lunch at the Methodist Church	
THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT			
20 th	SUNDAY	10:00am	Sung Eucharist
		6:00pm	Evening Prayer
21 st	Monday	<u>Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop, Martyr, 1556</u>	
24 th	Thursday	9:30am	Holy Communion
<u>The Annunciation of Our Lord to The Blessed Virgin Mary</u>			
25 th	Friday	<i>Practice Night:</i>	
		6:45pm	Choir
		7:30pm	Ringers
26 th	Saturday	11:30am - 2:00pm: Lent Lunch at the Priory Church Hall	
THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT			
27 th	SUNDAY	8:00am	Holy Communion
		10:00am	Sung Eucharist
		6:00pm	Evening Prayer
3 ^{1st}	Thursday	9:30am	Holy Communion
		<i>Practice Night:</i>	
1 st Apr	Friday	6:45pm	Choir
		7:30pm	Ringers
2 nd Apr	Saturday	Noon - 1:30pm: Lent Lunch at the Catholic Church	
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT			
3 RD APR	SUNDAY	10:00am	Sung Eucharist with Holy Baptism
		6:00pm	Choral Evensong

Registers for January



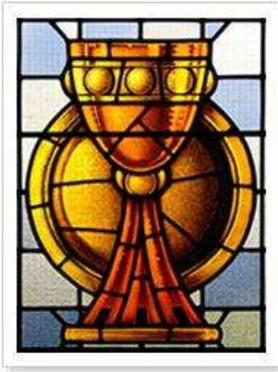
FUNERALS: *We commend to God's keeping:*

28 th	Interment of the ashes of Carol Ann Askew in the parish cemetery
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HOUSE GROUP

7:30pm Wednesdays
at 45 Crowson Way, DSJ.
All welcome!



Wardens' World

We've had a problem with the church heating recently, which turned out to be due to the failure of a tiny transducer. "What's a transducer?" I hear you cry. Well basically, it is anything which converts one form of energy to another, in this particular instance converting the pressure of gas and exhaust in to the electronic control information. Fine when it works but our transducer told fibs, saying that the pressure in the system was too high when it wasn't, and promptly shutting everything down. The maintenance technician took the transducer out pending a replacement and simply bypassed it, saying that the system was safe without it since the boilers are fitted with their own pressure valves. So why have all the extra complications? That beats me dear reader and our heating controls at home are a case in point. We used to have a simple dial timer in the utility room at a convenient height and opposite a window; plenty of light, easy to read and accurate to a quarter of an hour so perfectly adequate for our needs. When our new boiler was installed the new electronic timer was installed in the airing cupboard in the dark about two feet above the floor, together with enough pipework and valves to operate a uranium enrichment facility. The timer is so awkward and complicated to operate that I always have to refer to the instruction book, as I kneel in the cupboard stabbing at the buttons with my right hand while my left hand tries to hold the torch steady and my left ear is pressed up against the hot water tank. I think, when I eventually keel over, this is where they will find me, slumped in the airing cupboard; cause of death, technological complexity. The real joke is that the maintenance technician at the church confessed that his own system at home is a 1974 boiler with a simple time switch.

One of the advantages of writing this 'blog', as it seems to have become – well actually the only advantage – is that I can whinge about my own problems to the readership at large, rather than having to waylay people and annoy them individually, thereby saving time and effort. Last month I was recounting the problems created by my infected right hand and my experiences in A&E at the new Peterborough hospital. I can't recommend the coffee in A&E because it comes out of a machine in to a cardboard cup – ugh. However only about 200 yards away is the main entrance with the atrium and a branch of Costa Coffee (why does a hospital need an atrium? This isn't Goldman Sachs). During my final visit to A&E, waiting to be collected by Christine, out of boredom and desperation I trudged out in to the biting cold and found my way to the main entrance for a decent cup of coffee. To my surprise I found some of A&E's walking wounded already in there. Obviously we all had the same idea. Several of us huddled together around a table, a sort of pathetic refugee camp of the wretched and slightly infirm, trips to the counter being organised around those with two good legs doing the carrying and those with two good arms handling the goods and change. It occurred to me that we had accidentally stumbled upon a simple and effective system of triage, which could go along these lines:

- Patient Category 1: Gone to Costa Coffee, obviously a malingerer looking for sympathy; provide perfunctory medical attention and a packet of pills 5 minutes within government target.

- Patient Category 2: Unable to make journey to Costa Coffee so possibly a genuine illness; give medical attention when convenient.
- Patient Category 3: Purple in the face, neither moving nor breathing; early medical intervention may be advisable, consult medical handbook and advise legal team.

I offer the above to the NHS in the spirit of cutting costs by eliminating the need for a triage nurse – and if you think I am joking dear reader just wait until the cuts really start to bite!

Obviously, with my right hand out of action I have been forced to work with my left hand much more than usual, with some unexpected results. I find I can shave perfectly well left-handed, much to my surprise. In fact now I seem to have become permanently left-handed as far as razor and toothbrush are concerned. However, the washbasin has presented a challenge. It has mixer taps, the hot tap being on the right. Normally my right hand falls quite naturally on to the hot tap and my left hand on to the cold tap, but the first day I was forced to use my left hand for both taps I reached across to the hot tap and turned it on, result no water followed by immediate annoyance and self-pity ‘Oh great, I am not well and now there is no hot water, life is so unfair’ – then after a second or two the dawning realisation that my left arm was becoming extremely heavy because the nozzle of the mixer tap was up the sleeve of my towelling dressing gown.

As I mentioned last month, I have taken over as manager of the church hall now that Bill Flegg has retired from the post. I know I won't be able to do the job as well as Bill. He is a hard act to follow but I am gradually working myself in to it. As far as possible I am adopting my usual style of masterly inactivity which I have honed to perfection down the years. I have, of course, been receiving lots of phone calls for bookings, usually fairly routine ones for birthday parties, but one or two enquiries stand out; e.g. “How will we find it? Is the church hall somewhere near that old church?” and “Is the hall suitable for tap-dancing?” (How would I know. My granddaughters can tap-dance but percussive terpsichory and I are strangers!) Seriously though, the hall is a wonderful facility and perfect for all sorts of functions; so if you know anyone who is looking for a venue please suggest the church hall and put them in touch with me.

Tony Masters.



Please make a note in your diary that we will be holding an Easter play at 6:00pm on Sunday 10th April in the Church Hall. Everyone welcome.

Just People are working to raise money for [Winston's Wish](#), a national charity supporting bereaved children and their families. I've worked with this charity for a number of years through my work as a psychologist. I've been involved in helping many children who have lost their parents in all sorts of circumstances and



the staff at [Winston's Wish](#) have always been available to offer support and information that has been invaluable in guiding children through the most difficult of times. Just People are organising a family morning on Friday 15th April, when parents will be able to bring their children to the Church Hall and leave them to be entertained by members of the Youth Group (supervised by appropriately qualified adults!). Meanwhile, parents can enjoy a cup of coffee and cake. Put the date in your diary and look out for more details nearer to the time.

I'm also in training to run the Brighton marathon on April 10th and if you do feel inclined to sponsor me I'd be very grateful. You can do this online at www.justgiving.com/Richard-Gamman or I have sponsor forms if you'd prefer to donate the traditional way.

Richard Gamman.

Church Ladies' Fellowship

A fund raising lunch will take place on Friday 11th March at 12:00 in the Church Hall. Tickets (£6.50) will be available from committee members after 17th February.

A jumble sale will be held on Saturday 5th March at 1:30pm in the Church Hall. Please bring items to the hall from 10:00am onwards. Thank you.

Margaret Flegg.



Priory Church Coffee Group

The AGM of the Coffee Group will take place in the Priory Church Hall on Thursday 17th March at 10:15am.

Margaret Flegg.



Pancake Party

This year's party will start at 7:00pm on 8th March in the Church Hall, if you wish to attend please add your name to the list in the Church.

Homemade soup, rolls and pancakes will be served at £3 per head. Johanna will make leek and potato soup. The quiz will be organised by Bill.

Margaret Flegg.



Women's World Day of Prayer

This year's service will take place on Friday 4th March at 2pm at St Guthlac's Church, Market Deeping. The speaker will be the Rev Ann Bossingham from the Methodist Church. The service this year has been prepared by the Christian women of Chile. It is an ecumenical service and all are welcome to attend. If you would like to go and require transport please see either Joy Cunningham or Liz Spratley.

Liz Spratley.



Rose and Sweet Pea Show 2011 (25th June)



The Grand Draw

Having taken on the role of co-ordinator of the Rose and Sweet Pea Show again this year I am trying to get the Grand Draw up and running. Sue has had to step down from organising the Draw due to pressure of work and other commitments. We are still looking for someone to take over as the main organiser (you wouldn't be by yourself so please don't feel shy in stepping forward).

The profits from the Grand Draw have been over a £1000 for the last couple years and are a significant part of the money made at the Show which goes towards the running costs and maintenance of the Church. This has been, in large part, because we have managed to get most of the prizes donated and also sponsorship for other costs such as ticket printing.

We need to identify the main prizes before the end of March as we have to get the draw tickets printed shortly after that. So this is a request to members of the congregation for prizes that we can use for the Grand Draw or, alternatively, money towards buying prizes. In previous years members have been very generous – so please don't let us down this year.

If you feel that you can donate a prize could you let me know either at church or phone (347330) or by e-mail dsj.marshes@btinternet.com

Any contributions gratefully received.

Many thanks.

John Marsh.

Janet's Jottings

Now that Alistair and I have been here a whole month, you may be wondering what we have been doing, apart from the various social events where you may already have seen us around. Alistair is a keen bellringer so, as well as supporting the "home" tower, he has visited other towers' practice nights: Spalding, Rippingale, West Deeping and Market Deeping, to name a few. I have been known to ring bells myself and went along to the practice night here at the Priory Church last week, as well as joining the choir beforehand for their practice. Alistair even persuaded me to accompany him to the ringing practice night at Peterborough Cathedral on Monday; quite an experience, as there are 12 bells. Ringers are let into the door into the darkness of the empty Cathedral before signing in the fire register and climbing over 100 stairs, traversing across just inside the roof, then climbing more stairs to reach the ringing chamber.



Back at the office, I have booked personal visits with all 12 wedding couples so that arrangements for their special days begin to take shape, and taken my first funeral at the local Crematorium. My sat nav took me the pretty way round through Helpston on a beautiful spring day; a most enjoyable drive. I thought the Crematorium itself was a most attractive building in a very pretty setting (well, compared to others I have known!). I was also made very welcome at the Deanery Synod meeting.

Revd Janet.

The Electoral Roll



Following last month's item regarding the updating of the electoral roll before this year's Annual General Meeting. I wish to advise you of an error in the age of eligibility to be added to the roll, is SIXTEEN, and NOT EIGHTEEN, as previously stated.

The roll will close for updating on 20th March 2011 so anyone who wishes to be added will need to complete and return an application form to me by this date. Anyone who will be 16 on or before the Annual General Meeting on 11th April 2011 can be included from the date of their birthday. Alternatively, if someone wishes to be removed from the roll please confirm this in writing to me by the 20th March 2011.

If you require any information or would like a form to complete, please see me in Church or ring me on 348178.

Many thanks.

Kim Hallam.

Canon Ernest Orland

Those of us who remember Ernie will be sad to hear of his passing on the 28th January this year. He was a good friend to us during the interregnum before Mark's ministry, often taking services here.

Ernie served his entire ministry in the diocese of Peterborough. After serving as Reader, then Curate, he became incumbent at Gayton with Tiffield in the late 1960s. He was a Minister in Corby for twelve years and for a further dozen served as Vicar of All Saints, Peterborough. He was very active in his retirement and, until only a few weeks before his death, was conducting services regularly in Barnack and nearby parishes. An organist as well as a bellringer, he was familiar with a large number of church towers. He rang regularly in many places, including Peterborough Cathedral.

We thank God for his ministry and hold in our thoughts and prayers his widow, Janet, and all his family and many friends.

Bet Washbrooke.

Thank You

[Photos courtesy of John Marsh.]



On behalf of my family I would like to thank everybody for providing a wonderful lunch and also the vouchers to mark my retirement from looking after the Church Hall.

Bill Flegg.

A special thanks to fellow members of the social committee for coordinating the event.

The Cross in My Pocket

Bill and Margaret contributed this anonymous poem, which was read at a service they attended during their recent cruise.

I carry a cross in my pocket
A simple reminder to me
Of the fact that I am a Christian
No matter where I may be.

It's not for identification
For all the world to see
It's simply an understanding
Between my Saviour and me.

It reminds me too to be thankful
For my blessings day by day
And to strive to serve Him better
In all that I do and say.

So, I carry a cross in my pocket
Reminding no one but me
That Jesus Christ is Lord of my life
If only I'll let Him be.

This little cross is not magic
Nor is it a good luck charm
It isn't meant to protect me
From every physical harm.

When I put my hand in my pocket
To bring out a coin or a key
The cross is there to remind me
Of the price He paid for me.

It's also a daily reminder
Of the peace and comfort I share
With all who know my Master
And give themselves to His care.



Social Events: Dates for your Diary

March	Tuesday 8 th	7:00pm	Pancake Party
	Saturday 26 th	11:30am - 2:00pm	Lent Lunch
April	Saturday 16 th – Sunday 17 th		Model Railway Exhibition
May	Sunday 15 th		Christian Aid Week Coffee Morning and Cake Stall
July	Sunday 3 rd	2:00pm - 4:00pm	Music on the Lawn with Kirton Brass Band



Thanks for the above information, Jane and Johanna.

Bet Washbrooke.

Cooking with Margaret

Fruity Coffee Pancakes



Ingredients

- 110g plain flour
- 1 tsp instant coffee granules
- 1 egg, beaten
- 300 ml milk
- 25g butter
- 2 oranges
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 2 tsp clear honey
- 2 bananas, peeled & chopped
- Greek style natural yogurt to serve

Method

1. Place the flour and coffee granules in a mixing bowl and gradually stir in the egg, then the milk, to form a smooth batter.
2. Heat a little butter in a frying pan. When hot, pour in 3 tbsp of the batter, tilting the pan to cover the base. Cook the batter until the pancake moves freely, then flip it over and cook the other side until golden. Repeat to make 8 pancakes, keeping them warm whilst making the filling.
3. Remove the rind from the oranges with a zester. Using a small sharp knife take away as much of the pith as possible. Holding each orange over a bowl, slice in between each segment to release the flesh and juice into the bowl. Mix the orange juice, cornflour and honey and heat in a small pan until thickened. Add the fruit.
4. Fold the pancakes into triangles and fill with fruit. Serve immediately with the yogurt.

Coffee may be omitted if preferred.

Margaret Flegg.

Trains and Trams

Our annual railway and tram show will be held in the church hall during the weekend of 16th and 17th April. As this is the week end of Palm Sunday there will be less activity in the church but there will be pictures posters and paintings on view.

Fliers and posters will be available from beginning of April.

Put these dates in your diaries and make sure your family and friends know.

Philip Spratley.



WWF Earth-Hour

Please remember that the World Wildlife Fund's Earth-Hour 2011 will start at 8:30pm on Saturday 26th March.

Earth Hour is organised by WWF, who are one of the world's



largest and most respected independent conservation organisations. Their mission is to stop the degradation of the Earth's natural environment and build a future where people live in harmony with nature.

For further details, please see: <http://earthhour.wwf.org.uk/>

Bet Washbrooke.



Open Afternoon
20th March
 50, Spalding Road, DSJ
 2-5pm

Come and visit the new clergy house,
 and enjoy tea, coffee, and cake!

Everyone welcome

*Please walk, or share lifts, as there is only
 parking for 3 cars, and we want to be
 considerate to our neighbours.*

Rotas for March

		Servers	Sidespersons	Intercessors
Sun 6th	10:00 am	Paul Boswall John Sellars	Team F: Doris Bellairs, Christine Masters, Val Wilde	Martin Fisher
	6:00 pm	John Sellars		
Wed 9th	ASH WEDNESDAY			
	7:30 pm	Sung Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes		
		Simon Marshall Chris Halley		
Sun 13th	8:00 am	Geoff Armstrong	George Knowles Ken Rimmer	
	10:00 am	Simon Marshall John Sellars	Team A: Doris Bellairs, Mary Hamilton, Vivien Hamilton	Sonia Marshall
Sun 20th	10:00 am	Paul Boswall Chris Halley	Team B: Joy Cunningham, Ann Meekings	Niccy Fisher
Sun 27th	8:00 am	Geoff Armstrong	George Knowles Ken Rimmer	
	10:00 am	Simon Marshall John Sellars	Team C: Adrian Hallam, Tim Hitchborn	Janet Donaldson
Sun 3rd Apr	10:00 am	Paul Boswall Chris Halley	Team D: Kim Hallam, Graham Hardy, Trevor Harwood	John Marsh
	6:00 pm	John Sellars		

		Bread & Wine	Sunday Coffee	Church Flowers	Church Cleaning	Brasses
Sun 6th	10:00 am	Martin & Niccy Fisher	Johanna Jones	<i>Vacant</i>	Pat Feek Doris Warner	
Wed 9th	ASH WEDNESDAY					
	7:30 pm	Sung Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes				
		Pat Feek Doris Warner				
Sun 13th	10:00 am	Peter & Val Wilde	Liz Spratley Linda Sellars	<i>LENT</i>	Pat Feek Doris Warner	Pat Feek Chris Payne
Sun 20th	10:00 am	Bill & Margaret Flegg	Val Wilde Doris Bellairs	<i>LENT</i>	Bill & Margaret Flegg	
Sun 27th	10:00 am	Caroline Herron Linda Sellars	John & Sue Marsh	<i>LENT</i>		
Sun 3rd Apr	10:00 am	Joy Cunningham Carole Mills	Pat Feek Doris Warner	<i>LENT</i>		

Readings and Readers for March

		Old Testament		New Testament		Gospel
		Reading	Reader	Reading	Reader	Reading
Sun 6th	The Sunday before Lent (Quinquagesima)					
	10:00 am	<u>Exodus</u> 24.12-end	Tony Masters	<u>2 Peter</u> 1.16-end	Liz Bridgeman	<u>Matthew</u> 17.1-9
Wed 9th	ASH WEDNESDAY					
	7:30 pm	Sung Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes				
		<u>Joel</u> 2.1-2,12-17	Liz Spratley	<u>2 Corinthians</u> 5.20b-6.10	Caroline Herron	<u>Matthew</u> 6.1-6,16-21
Sun 13th	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT					
	8:00 am	<u>Genesis</u>		<u>Romans</u> 5.12-19		<u>Matthew</u>
	10:00 am	2.15-17,3.1-7	John Worthington	<i>[Baptism]</i>		<u>4.1-11</u>
Sun 20th	THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT					
	10:00 am	<u>Genesis</u> 12.1-4a	Martin Fisher	<u>Romans</u> 4.1-5,13-17	Bill Flegg	<u>John</u> 3.1-17
Sun 27th	THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT					
	8:00 am	<u>Exodus</u>		<u>Romans</u>		<u>John</u>
	10:00 am	<u>17.1-7</u>	Roger Bridgeman	<u>5.1-11</u>	John Marsh	<u>4.5-42</u>
Sun 3rd Apr	THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT					
	10:00 am	<u>Exodus</u> 2.1-10	Jacob Boswall	<i>[Baptism]</i>		<u>Luke</u> 2.33-35



Bishop's Letter

Dear Friends

As the effects of the recent recession and the Government's actions to reduce the budget deficit impact on peoples' lives, levels of uncertainty are growing. Locally, with a significant dependence on government or local authority spending, the depth of uncertainty becomes evident in the course of many conversations.

If it is not uncertainty about one's own job, it is uncertainty about the employment prospects for children and grandchildren. Alongside many inequalities which come when you are on the 'losing side of the economy' - living with the uncertainty of possible redundancy, no jobs, low income and waiting for an upturn in the economy is a driver for despair. Against this background of uncertainty, we have to ask what is the Good News that we can offer out of our faith? Have Christians got more than words of comfort?

Well I believe that we do indeed have much to offer which is tangible, but it starts with the truth, frequently ignored, that in the Bible the opposite of uncertainty is not 'certainty' but 'direction'. Faith points us in the direction for finding what is essential - the direction for finding truth. Uncertainty in life means that the way ahead becomes featureless and the normal patterns of life no longer give shape to the future.

Yet at the heart of our faith we discover that relationships are the enduring features and landmarks which give texture to our lives and from which we can find direction. It feels very obvious to say that there is more to us than our work, but in times of uncertainty and despair, the obvious needs restating and experiencing.

We make many claims that our church buildings are at the heart of the community. In times of uncertainty we can demonstrate the truth of this by using them as places of meeting and encounter for those seeking direction and a rebalancing of their lives. There are many examples of how this has been achieved such as drop-ins, CV writing groups, debt counselling etc. They have enabled the church to be there in times of uncertainty, offering the texture of relationships to help move people from uncertainty to finding a direction when all seems lost.

+David Grimsby