

Lent is nearly upon us

Lent is nearly upon us, and I was thinking I might like to choose to read a book to get myself prepared for Easter. Perhaps you might like to have a look at some likely ones, too – there is still time to order one in time for Ash Wednesday..... and it is much easier than giving up chocolate!

Bishop John recommends '**Saying yes to Life**' by **Ruth Valerio**. He says that as a people made in the image of God, we are entrusted to look after what He has created, making a difference for good. Ruth draws on the Creation story relating to themes of light, water, land, seasons, other creatures and humankind and to matters of ethical, environmental and social concern to bring us reflections, discussions and prayer for each week. You may read this for yourself or join a zoom study group. There is also a smaller booklet called **Live Lent** with a challenge for every day – one for children and one for families. e.g. When did I last gaze at the night sky? Where did the food for my dinner come from? The **C of E website** has more info.

Stephen Cottrell, the new Archbishop of York, brings us '**Come and see**' – 28 readings, reflections and prayers taken from the life of Peter. Peter, because he shows us what being a disciple of Jesus is really like – Peter wholeheartedly responded to the call 'Follow me'; like us, he often takes a step of faith, then flounders, and needs the saving touch of God to continue to become the person he was created to be. That definitely sounds like me!

New Daylight brings us '**Journeying through Lent**', for individuals or groups, with sections on the sermon on the Mount, Feasting and Fasting, Jesus' wisdom in Luke (Stephen Cottrell again), 1 Corinthians 13, and From the upper room to Easter day with Brother Ramon. It is only £2.99!

Amy Boucher Pye brings us '**The Living Cross**', engaging with Bible characters and modern day stories of sin, forgiveness and reconciliation. She says, 'through the reading, reflection, prayers and exercises, I hope we will come to understand not only in our heads but in our hearts, the profound gift we have received in Jesus' death.... to see the living power of the Cross.... God's love, grace and forgiveness.' Sounds like a very apt preparation for Easter!

Finally, there is **Holy Habits** – a book to read or **Holy Habits: Following Jesus** a Lent group study resource on discipleship – deepening our own discipleship and equipping us to be intentional and missional about making more disciples! The Bible Reading Fellowship is providing zoom recordings for anyone who would like to join. Go onto their website for a link, or buy the book.

My annual favourite is 40 short reflections and prayers – **Max Lucado, On Calvary's Hill**.

These books can be purchased from BRF, from Eden books, Aslan books or SPCK, or if you would like me to order for you, let me know.

Happy Reading!!

Pat Newbold.



Welcome to the Alcester Minster Group of Churches Sunday 31 January 2021

Presentation of Christ in the Temple *White/Gold*

"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."

Luke 2 v 22

Collect

Almighty and ever-living God,
clothed in majesty,
whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple,
in substance of our flesh:
grant that we may be presented to you
with pure and clean hearts,
by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

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Alcester Minster website: www.alcesterminster.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster

Next week's services and events

Sunday 31 January Epiphany 4 Colour
All church services within the Alcester Minster are suspended throughout January

Tuesday 02 February Candlemas

Via Zoom Platform 12 noon Minster Prayer Gathering

Sunday 07 February 2 before Lent Colour
All church services within the Alcester Minster are suspended throughout February

We are delighted to say that, although we cannot meet together in St Nicholas, Alcester on Sunday 31st January, Archdeacon Barry Dugmore will be recording a talk for the on-line service.

Suspension of all Minster Church services in February

It is with regret that, as there is little change in the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision has reluctantly been agreed, to continue to suspend all church services throughout February.

This will be reviewed before the end of February.
The on-line services will continue to be available

Reminder! The following churches continue to be open for private prayer.
Kinwarton, Sambourne & Weethley at their usual times
Alcester will be open on Sunday mornings between 10 am and 12 noon.

Lateral Flow Antigen Testing

If you are taking part in church related activities with regular contact with the public, such as helping with the food bank etc. and do not have any COVID symptoms, you are encouraged to access weekly Lateral Flow Testing. This is a very quick process with quick results. You would need to pre-book a test. Find out more by following the link:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/covidcommunitytesting>
there is a centre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Readings for the week

Today	Hebrews 2 v 1 – 4 Luke 2 v 22 – 40
Monday	1 Corinthians 12 v 12 –
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 13 v 1 –
Wednesday	1 Corinthians 14 v 1 – 10
Thursday	1 Corinthians 14 v 20 –
Friday	1 Corinthians 16 v 1 – 9
Saturday	1 Corinthians 16 v 10 –



Prayer

The Ministry Leadership Team would like you to pray for the following topics:

1. Give thanks to God for all the acts of kindness we have seen during the pandemic, and for all those who have lifted our hearts.
2. Pray for the leadership of the Church of England, Archbishops, Bishops and Archdeacons as they continue to guide us through the complexities of dealing with Covid as church communities. Pray that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit and that their faith may be strengthened at this difficult time.

At church services please ensure that all mobile phones are switched OFF during church services. Visitors are invited to Gift Aid their offerings in the envelopes provided.

Contact Tricia Berry (01789 509 278 or 07840 284 294 or administrator@alcesterminster.org) by 6 pm on Tuesday to add notices of church activities to next week's notice sheet.

Information and more resources and courses for Lent will feature in following Notice Sheets



Did you know that you can now 'LIKE' Alcester Minster on Facebook? Find details and pictures of events at www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster
If you would like to submit event notices or photos to be published on the page then please email administrator@alcesterminster.org