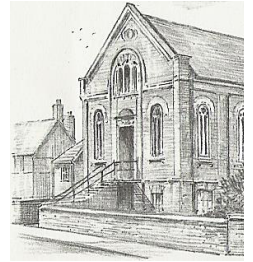


# STOTFOLD METHODISTS the church on the crossroads



## 150<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR MARCH 2019 NEWSLETTER

**Jesus said: Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Matthew 6: 5-8.**



March 5th is pancake day, Shrove Tuesday. Lemon and sugar on mine please. May there be many. But it wasn't pancakes that helped me understand Lent.

Some years ago, when I was working in London, I happened to be seated with Muslim colleagues during Ramadan. I wanted to find out what their month-long Ramadan fast meant to them. Actually, as they attempted to explain, I realised that it was different for each of them. But there was a common thread, that they wanted to feel closer to God.

One of my colleagues was especially keen to understand what the Christian season of Lent meant to me. That's when I realised that I didn't know. It was on the calendar, started with Ash Wednesday and ended with Easter, but I was embarrassed at my lack of engagement with this Christian season.

I needed to learn more. So, I decided to share something of the Ramadan fast with my colleagues by joining them during working weekdays. For a few weeks, Monday to Friday, I got up long before sunrise for breakfast and ate and drank nothing until after sunset.

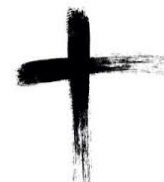
Unsurprisingly, I found this a struggle. It tended to focus the mind! However, I *did* find it easier to pray, especially since there was nothing much else to do at lunchtime and tea breaks! So, it became a special time for me too, of getting closer to God.

It was a relief when the month was over. Lunch never tasted so good! And a hot drink at my desk! Luxury. But I missed the focus on praying, that discipline that fasting brought. My Muslim colleagues had all moved on by the end of that year, and I was surprised how much I missed them when it was Ramadan again - I was sad because I had no one to fast with. And that was when I understood Lent: almost seven weeks set aside, with other believers, to be serious about getting close to God.

Lent starts 6th March, Ash Wednesday. Why not make it extra special in some way this year? Put God high on the priority list for this fixed period. And see what he does. May you be much blessed. And I hope you enjoy a pancake or two.

**Graham.**

**Sunday Services**



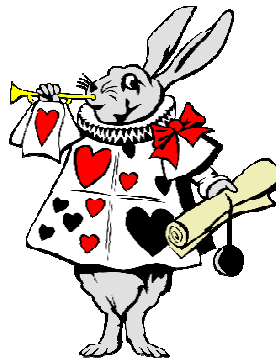
<b>Time</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Preacher</b>
10.30am	3 March	Rev Julian Blakemore United Service at Arlesey
10.00am	10 March	Rev John Whittle
10.00am	17 March	Rev Malcolm Peacock United Service with Arlesey
10.00am	24 March	Rev Graham Claydon-Knights (Baptism)
10.00am	31 March	David Latter

### **What's On**

<b>Time and Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
10.45am Friday 1.3.19	World Day of Prayer at Arlesey Methodist Church
10.00 to 11.30am Saturday 2.3.19	Coffee Morning & Bring & Buy
7.00pm Friday 29.3.19	Quiz Night
2.00pm Mondays	Monday Club
2.00pm Thursdays (third in month)	Carers Group
9.30am Friday (term time only)	Toddlers Group

<b>Minister</b> <b>Church Secretary &amp; Hall Hire</b> <b>Senior Steward</b>	Rev Graham Claydon-Knights 07340 857386 Julie Longhurst 01462-731167 Maggie Turner 01462-731030
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We would welcome any ideas for events celebrating our 150<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary year.



[www.stotfoldmethodists.org.uk](http://www.stotfoldmethodists.org.uk)