

Longfleet United Reformed Church

NEWSLETTER



February 2010

www.longfleeturc.org.uk

Worship rota for January

February 7 th -	The Revd Bryan George (Communion Service)
February 14 th -	Mrs Carol Arnott
February 21 st -	Mr Jeff Russell
February 28 th -	Pastor John Chilvers

LECTIONARY READINGS

7 th Feb Epiphany 5	Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13), Psalm 138 1Corinthians 15:1-11, Luke 5: 1-11
17 th Feb Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1-2,12-17, Psalm 51:1-17 11Corinthians 5:20b-6:10, Matthew6:1-4,16-21
21 st Feb Lent 1	Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 91: 1-2, 9- 16, Romans 10:8b-13, Luke 4:1-13
28 th Feb Lent 2	Genesis 15:1-12,17-18, Psalm 27, Philippians 3:17-4;1, Luke 13:31-35

Welcome rota for January

Mrs Jean Hart



New Year brings hope and courage
Resolutions, plans and schemes,
May our lives be free from blemish
Always worthy of our dreams.
As we work the days ahead Lord,
May our paths be straight and clear,
Leading on to new horizons
free from danger, doubt and fear.

May we share a wider friendship,
Reaching out to those we meet,
Laughter lighting darker moments,
Raising smiles along the street.
As the months go swiftly by Lord,
Help us value every day,
Let us build a new tomorrow
Knowing You will show the way.

Iris Hesselden

It has become fashionable for successful people to write books urging their readers to motivate themselves, to be positive and bold. But like most good ideas there's nothing new in suggesting we should stretch ourselves.

Two thousand years ago the Roman philosopher Seneca said, " It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that things are difficult."



The Month of February

February 2nd - Candlemas

In bygone centuries Christians said their last farewells to the Christmas season on Candlemas, 2nd February. This is exactly 40 days after Christmas Day itself.

In the New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first "public appearance". Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child-to "present him to the Lord" At the same time, she, as a new mother, was "purified". Thus we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

So where does the Candlemas bit come in ? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day- hence the name, Candlemas.

The story of how Candlemas began can be found in Luke 2:22-40. Simeon's great declaration of faith and recognition of who Jesus was is of course found in the Nunc Dimittis, which is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer in the West. But in medieval times, the Nunc Dimittis was mostly used just once on this day, during the distribution of candles before the Eucharist. Only gradually did it win a place in the daily prayer life of the Church.

February 14th - The very first valentine card - a legend

The Romans Emperor Claudius 11 needed soldiers. He suspected that marriage made men want to stay at home instead of fighting wars, so he outlawed marriage.

A kind-hearted young priest named Valentine felt sorry for all the couples who wanted to marry, but couldn't. So secretly he married as many couples as he could- until the Emperor found out and condemned him to death. While he was in prison awaiting execution, Valentine showed love and compassion to everyone around him, including his jailor. The jailor had a young daughter who was blind, but through Valentine's prayers, she was healed. Just before his death in Rome on 14th February, he wrote her a farewell message signed "from your Valentine".

So the very first Valentine card was not between lovers, but between a priest about to die, and a little girl, healed through his prayers.

February 17th - Ash Wednesday

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. But why Ash Wednesday? The reason has to do with getting things right between you and God, and the tradition goes right back to the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites often sinned. When they finally came to their senses, and saw their evil ways as God saw them, they could do nothing but repent in sorrow. They mourned for the damage and the evil they had done. As part of this repentance, they covered their heads with ashes. For the Israelites, putting ashes on your head, and even rending your clothes, was an outward sign of their heart-felt repentance and acknowledgement of their sin.

In the very early Christian Church, the yearly "class" of penitents had ashes sprinkled over them at the beginning of Lent. They were turning to God for the first time, and mourning their sins. But soon many other Christians wanted to take part in the custom, and to do so at the very start of Lent. They heeded Joel's call to "rend your hearts and not your garments. Ash Wednesday became known as either the "beginning of the fast" or "the day of the ashes!"

OBSERVATIONS ON LIFE

Give Satan an inch and he'll be a ruler.

Be patient - God hasn't finished with me yet.

It's easy to be an angel when no one ruffles your feathers.

Every day is a gift that's why they call it the present.

Worry is the darkroom in which negatives develop.

If you can smile when things go wrong, you have someone in mind to blame.

Inside some of us is a thin person struggling to get out, but they can usually be sedated with a few pieces of chocolate cake.

TO HELP YOU SMILE

Getting through today.

So far today, God, I've done alright.

I haven't gossiped,

haven't lost my temper,

haven't been greedy, grumpy,

nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent,

I'm really glad about that.

But in a few minutes, God,

I'm going to get out of bed...

and from then on I'm going to need your help!

SPECIAL NEEDS

After booking my 80 year-old grandmother on a flight from London to Amsterdam, I called the airline to go over her special needs. The representative listened patiently as I requested a wheelchair and an attendant for my mother because of her arthritis and impaired vision to the point of near blindness. My apprehension lightened a bit when the woman again and again assured me that she understood and that everything would be taken care of. I thanked her profusely. "Oh, you're welcome", she replied. I was about to hang up when she cheerfully added, "And will your grandmother need a rental car?"

PRAYER

My 10 year old niece says her prayers every night, and instead of "Amen" she says "click, send".

LOOPS

Memory is what tells a man his wedding anniversary was yesterday.

HONEYMOONERS

For our honeymoon my fiancée and I chose a fashionable hotel known for its luxurious suites. When I called to make a reservation the desk clerk inquired, "Is this for a special occasion?" "Yes" I replied ! It's our honeymoon". "And how many adults will there be ?" she asked.

KNOW YOUR SPOUSE

While attending a marriage Seminar dealing with communication, Tom and his wife Grace were told by the instructor: "It is essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other"

He addressed Tom. "For instance, can you name your wife's favourite flower?" Tom leaned over, touched his wife's arm gently and whispered, "It's sell-raising, isn't it?". The rest of the story gets rather ugly so I'll stop there.

CURIOSITY

A teacher was finishing a lesson on the joys of discovery and the importance of curiosity. "After all" she declared, "Where would we be today." she asked, "if no one had ever been curious?"

One child quietly spoke up from the back of the room, "In the garden of Eden?"

Longfleet URC on the Internet

The Church has its own website which can be found at :

www.longfleeturc.org.uk

We now also have a link to Broadstone URC and they have “linked” back to us which should mean that both websites will get more visitors.

The Church can now also be found on the popular where you can view contact details and photos.



... and finally

A big “thank you” to those at www.biblequizzes.org.uk for allowing us to continue to reproduce their quizzes on the website and here in the Newsletter.

There now follows the answer to last month’s Books of the Bible crossword together with an Anagram puzzle to keep you amused !

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE CROSSWORD - SOLUTION



Anagrams - Men of the Old Testament

Created by BibleQuizzes.org.uk

Hat on Jan	Eh? I'm a hen!
More acid	Hard cash
Like Zee	Mob a hero
Hit goal	Me Saul?
SOS! Me?	Hi Asia!
Enhance buzzard	I do, Ahab
Jim 'n' Bean	So, a Jephthah!
No looms?	Denial
A Manna	A lush theme
Hike haze	Hire map
I jam here!	Seal him
Bah! A ram	In dorm
I'd gone	Hail Cam
One badge	No semi
No mass	Razzle bathes
An oar	A bad machine
A lamb! So?	Heal an ant
Sheila	Canine herbs
More a job	Adores hand

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