

# What are you Giving Up or Giving Out for Lent?

So what are you giving up for Lent? It is a question often asked in the days leading up to Ash Wednesday. In the past, sugar in your tea, chocolate, alcohol or cigarettes were popular choices. Perhaps more modern answers might include social media, and rather than scrolling through Facebook one might be better off spending that time in prayer or reading a book. When it comes to giving up something that is not very good for you, we might hope that a little Lenten discipline might even lead to a more permanent lifestyle improvement.

The other side of abstaining from luxury items during Lent, is to give the money saved to charity or worthy causes. Whatever the Lenten choices and disciplines might be there is hope for a more positive approach to life, a deeper relationship with God and the opportunity to develop a more Christ-like character.

One component of such a character is generosity. I think this should be applied in the broadest sense. It is not just about giving to charity or always buying the first round of drinks in the pub, as commendable as these things are. It is also about generosity of spirit, and by this I mean giving of time and giving someone your full attention, valuing them and treating them with upmost respect. It is also about being generous to oneself. How can we be authentic and generous to others if we are not kind to ourselves?

Recently Cath and I dropped Laura back at University in Swansea and stayed at a delightful B&B, where our host couldn't have been more friendly and helpful. There was something generous about his hospitality and in many ways it was infectious. It generated in both Cath and I a desire to be generous in return. Doing so by being equally friendly, kind and attentive to his life story and business and all that he wanted to share with us in conversation.

Is generosity infectious? They say one good deed deserves another. Perhaps your generosity to others in being attentive and kind might spill over and who knows, in some glorious way create a ripple effect leading to a kinder more caring world.

May this Lent be a time of spiritual renewal, leading us ever closer to our loving, generous and compassionate God who knows each one of us by name In turn, may that make us more generous and caring to others and help to make the world a better place.

*Rev. Tony Rindl, Vicar of St. Leonard's*

## Eco Church

In the Bible, caring for creation is God's first instruction to humans. This Lent, a time when Christians traditionally fast and focus on God, we encourage you to take up our Lent challenge - living more simply and finding new ways to cut your carbon footprint.

Dates for you diary

Date	Time	Event
Sunday 1st February	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Cafe Communion in the Lounge
Sunday 8th February	10am	Holy Communion
Sunday 15th February	10am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 18th February	10am	Ash Wednesday Communion

Sunday 1st February	8am	Holy Communion
Sunday 1st March	8am	Holy Communion
Sunday 1st March	10am	Holy Communion

#### Our Folk

Please pray for those who are sick, housebound, or in care homes: Jean Burnand, Shirley Evers, Ethel Gough, Elsie Goulen, Shirley Mellish, Patricia Musgrove, Beryl Robinson, Vicky Spedding, and Avril Wormwood. **RIP:** Pat Preece, Diane Leroy, Bob Dowell, Andrew Thomas, Jocelyn Kennedy, and John Grove.

### Community News

A **Curry Evening** in aid of the Parish Hall kitchen refurbishment will be held on Friday February 6th, cost £5. Another event raising money for the refurbishment is an Afternoon Tea on Valentine's Day, Sunday 14th, Cost £7.50.

A Community Cafe has opened in the Elmdon Lounge of the Parish Hall every Tuesday and Thursday between 11am and 1pm. Free refreshments and lunch are offered.

The Midland Air Ambulance charity thank members of Wednesday Welcome for their generous support in raising £156.34 in sales and £113.57 Raffle proceeds, giving a grand total of £269.91.

### Marston Green 50 Plus

On Monday, February 9th, there will be a talk about Richard III. We understand that the speaker will dress as the character, which should be entertaining! On Monday, February 23rd, the speaker is 'Kath the Vicar', who is always very entertaining.

### Ladies Fellowship

On Monday, February 16th, 2 to 4.30pm in the Elmdon Lounge the speaker is **Rev. Tony Rindl**. All ladies are welcome - come and make new friends over a cuppa.

### Literary Society

Friday, February 20th at 7.30pm in the Elmdon Lounge. The subject is **Biographies and Autobiographies**. Please bring own drinks and refreshments to share.

### Marston Green Library

Date	Time	Event
February Monday 2nd, 9th, 23rd	2.30 - 3pm	Storytime
February 5th	2.15 - 3.15pm	Reminiscence Group
February 7th	10.30 - 12noon	Councillors Surgery
February 12th	10.15 - 12noon	Reading Cafe - poet Roy Goddard visiting.
February 16th	2 - 3pm	Half Term Craft ___Booking Essential! ___
February 19th	2 - 3.30pm	Writing Group
February 21st	10 - 12noon	Kit and Natter

February 23rd

10.30 - 12.30pm

**Mindful Crafts**, First of 5  
sessions **Booking Essential!**