

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday April 5th

There will be morning worship at our regular times at each of the six worship centres.

Maundy Thursday

7.00 Gathering at St Columba's Church
Agape—sharing food and the passion story

Good Friday

10.00 Christians from different churches across the town gathering around the cross

10.00—12.00 A children's workshop at the Lanthorn Centre—fun, faith and festival

12.00—3.00 p.m. Prayer and Reflection in the Lanthorn Chapel

7.30 p.m. Service at St Paul's—Objects of the Cross

Easter Sunday

Sunrise Service at the Cross—welcome in Easter morning (time to be announced—watch out)

Easter services at each centre at the regular times.

Lent and Holy Week

2009

Livingston Ecumenical Parish



Ash Wednesday falls on February 25th this year. Easter Sunday will be celebrated on April 12th. The days in between can be used as an opportunity for deepening our prayer, our discipleship, our friendship and understanding of faith.

This leaflet points you to some opportunities within the parish. What are your plans for the season of Lent?

What is Lent? Why bother? For some people an observance of Lent is ingrained, and for others it is a recent and questionable intrusion. In our different traditions some have found “The Church Year” an essential, and others grew up suspicious of it. Actually the history is muddled.

Perhaps you associate Lent with giving things up. In earlier centuries in a northern clime and a rural economy this was making a virtue of necessity. At this time of year hens were sitting on their eggs, cows were expecting calves, and fodder was running out and harvest stores depleted. It was a lean thin time. But of course this season when food was short was linked to the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness after his baptism, and we were intended to use physical abstinence as a discipline for spiritual growth. Remember Jesus taught about fasting that we should not make a show, but keep a cheerful face and not let on to others. Fasting is an honourable tradition, although to most of our contemporaries a foreign one. Don't go that way without drawing on the wisdom of the past.

In recent years many Christians have opted for doing something extra rather than cutting something out. (It seemed something positive.) In some parts of the early church these were the weeks when new believers were prepared for baptism and church membership. That has been taken up in the use of this time for something new—learning in groups, or taking new steps in prayer life, or giving time to Bible study. Whilst some congregations use it for special projects to raise funds for the relief of need at home or abroad.

Anyway this year we offer you a variety of meetings for the five or six weeks of Lent. Some people like discussion (and even argument!), some like to be led, some prefer the quiet devotional approach, and some prefer walking to talking. So herein you'll find the invitation to different styles of Lenten group, plus some brief description. Please contact a leader to indicate your interest or find out more. We are bound to hear the cry, “I wanted to do that one, but the day or time is impossible.” Find two or three like minded people who can agree a time, and we'll try to arrange the group to suit. Can we say fairer than that?

Robin Hine

Bill of Fare for Lent 2009

Monday evening 7.30 at St Paul's (starts March 2nd)

A time of stillness and reflection. Not a time for discussion, but a mix of recorded music, silence, short readings and prayers. A journey through Lent. Each evening no more than an hour, although with the possibility of lingering for refreshment and conversation afterwards. No embarrassment if you can only make some of the days. Led by Revd Robin Hine (207360)

Tuesday afternoon 1—3 at home of Revd Ron Greig (starts March 3)

Exploring the Void is a Lent course based on a film, *Touching the Void* which is the story of two mountaineers who set out to climb Siula Grande in Peru. We watch scenes from the DVD and reflect on the story, which takes us through a range of experiences and emotions, providing plenty of Lenten food for thought! Ron Greig (467426)

Wednesday evening 7.45 for 8.00 at Ann Hine's (Bankton Gardens)

Fast Food And Friendly Service—an exploration of Lent accessible to all ages. Using a book by Susan Sayers, each week takes a word from the title, in sequence, and explores it in conversation and group activities. There is some practical 'homework' with short readings each week. The session should last about an hour. Booklet £4.99 Contact Ann Hine (207360)

Thursday mornings—at 11.00am for 45 -60mins we will be holding a Bible study and discussion group open to all. We are delighted that folk from St Philip's want to be involved. Our book for study will be 'Beginning over again'. Through it we will study OT and NT passages and reflect on how they inspire and inform our day to day Christian life. It should be thought-provoking and practical. Come and share with fellow Christians from around the town. Beginning 26th February.

Friday late mornings Prayer Walks start February 27th. (Robin Hine)

Meet outside West Lothian Connected, Almondvale Centre 11.45. For those who prefer some exercise. We meet in town, walk to various key places and buildings, and spend a few moments in prayer. Very much playing (or praying) by ear—how will we be led to pray—think of some of the possible locations—Police station, skate park, river, courts, empty Woolworths, council offices, college, shops, estate agents, night clubs. Where two or three are gathered—it is not the numbers but the journey together. (Those who can't manage to walk can always join in imagination and spirit with this form of prayer.)