

## News for the Pews

**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

**Sunday: The Transfiguration (The Sunday before Lent)**



### News and Views

We are now heading into the season of Lent. It's a six week period of preparation to celebrate Easter. It's an opportunity to examine our lives, to have a spiritual spring clean and to draw close to God through prayer, fasting, reading and the study of the Scriptures. In the words of the prophet Joel, it is a time "to return to the Lord with our whole heart", to a God who is "merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love." Ash Wednesday is the prelude to the forty days of Lent. It reminds us of the time Jesus spent in the wilderness before he began his public ministry. The first three Sundays of Lent focus on repentance, forgiveness and a new start with God. Midway through this season comes Mothering Sunday with thanksgiving for Mother Church and our own mothers. From the fifth Sunday in Lent onwards, we look towards the suffering and death of Christ, known as the Passion. Lent ends on Maundy Thursday afternoon, leaving us ready for the great events of Maundy Thursday evening, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Day. I encourage you to engage with the spirit of Lent, to take time to be with God and maybe join us for our Lent course – please let me know if you are coming (details below).

Next Sunday (26<sup>th</sup> Feb), our evening worship at 5pm at Napton will be a special Taizé service. The Taizé community is an ecumenical monastic brotherhood in France. Their worship is based on the repetitive singing of chants, usually focussing on a simple phrase from Scripture that helps create a prayerful meditative experience. Please come along and join us if you are able to.

### Events for the week

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> Feb – Napton PCC at 7pm at Pen-y-Bryn

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb – Pancake Party from 12noon in Stockton Church

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb – Ash Wednesday Communion service at 10am at St. John the Baptist, Lower Shuckburgh

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb – Lent Lunch from 12noon at Napton Village Hall

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb – Lent Course – the "holy habit" of reading Scripture – 7.30 – 9pm in Stockton Church

### Looking ahead

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March – World Day of Prayer at 10.30am at St. Leonard's Church, Priors Marston

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March – Bishop John will be preaching and presiding at the service at St. Lawrence's, Napton

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March – Joint PCC meeting to consider proposals for the future structure of the group

### Services next Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February – Lent 1:

10.30am – CW Holy Communion at St. Michael's, Stockton

10.30am – Morning Worship at St. Peter's, Wormleighton

3.00pm – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at St. Leonard's, Priors Marston

5pm – Taizé service at St. Lawrence's, Napton (see above for more details)

Bible readings for the week are: Romans 5:12-19 and Matthew 4:1-11

### And finally

The collect for Ash Wednesday: "Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen."

God bless,  
Gillian

(For more details of events and diary dates, see our website: [www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk](http://www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk) or the parish magazines)