

What are you doing for Lent?

Dear Friends,

It's that time of year again and we may be asking each other this, usually expecting the reply; "Oh I'm giving up alcohol or chocolate or I'm going to try a bit of a diet". It's great to show ourselves that we have some self discipline but perhaps if we do this because we think that it is something that God demands of us then I believe that we are rather deluding ourselves.

Each year the Archbishop of Canterbury chooses a Lent Book that he feels may be valuable to us to read during Lent. It could be a really good thing to challenge ourselves to read something spiritual. The book that he has selected this year is *Why go to Church* by Timothy Radcliffe.

Last year I found that the Lent lunches at Castle Hall were a great way to meet members of the other churches in Hertford and I found that there is then just enough time to get to Soundbites for a time to sit and reflect and listen to the wonderful music too. An opportunity to have fellowship with other Christians, raise money for Christian Aid and then to reflect is an invaluable break in the middle of the week.

The beautiful, tranquil, atmosphere at Compline led by the choir at 7.15 on Wednesdays is also a great way to recharge spiritually flagging batteries and this Lent the reading will be from Isaiah.

Many have expressed the wish to join a Bible study group and Churches Together are holding these at various points in the week (see below) I have a feeling that it will be a very active and fulfilling Lent!

Yours in Christ,
Jo

Lent Groups 2009

People from every church are invited to sign up to join groups which will be meeting at different times and locations in Hertford and the surrounding area. The groups will meet five times during Lent, and their activities will be based around the course

material. The groups will aim to include people from a variety of different churches, and as far as possible to fit in with people's stated preferences for time and location.

So far we have the following groups arranged:

Tuesday mornings 9.45-11:15am at the home of Jane & Harold Chaplin, 39 Port Hill, Hertford 01992 304606

Tuesday evenings 8.15-9:45pm at the home of Mandi Relph, 32 Rushen Drive, Hertford Heath 01992 503588

Wednesday evenings 8-9:30pm at the home of Ros Squires, 78 Wellington Road, Hertford 01992 553465

Thursday afternoons 1.45-3:15pm at the home of Rachel Sharp, 17 Barclay Close, Hertford Heath 01992 589149

Friday afternoons 2:30-4pm at the URC, Cowbridge, Hertford. Contact Derek Jones 01707 275065

If you would like to join in one of the groups, please contact the host, to see if there is still room for you.

In case of difficulty, please contact Nick Sharp 01992 589147 – if there is enough interest, we may be able to form another group

Lent Lunches

Malaria kills 3,000 children every day in Africa, but sleeping under a mosquito net (cost £3) at night will save lives. Christian Aid provides these nets through its local partners, irrespective of their faith.

Funds come from the Light "Lent" Lunches (for £3) in the River Room, Castle Hall, 12 noon till 1:45p.m. every Wednesday from February 25 to April 9, organised for Christian Aid by members of Hertford and District Churches Together.

In past years local people have raised enough money to buy over 700 nets and this year we hope to get more.

The River Room is a pleasant place for lunch breaks or after shopping - or to meet friends for coffee (from 11 a.m.). Parents and children are welcome too.

Searching for Faith

Searching for Faith is a six week course currently going on at the White Horse pub in Castle Street.

Devised by Alan Stewart, he and Nick Sharp are delivering this course to a small group of interested people who responded to the publicity over Christmas in all the churches of the team. St Mary's, Hertingfordbury had the best success, with wedding couples and baptism contacts accepting the invitation to join in. We've also been joined by someone from Bengeo.

There will be repeats of this course, perhaps with some variations and in different venues, so if you know someone who has questions to ask about Christianity, who would like to air them in a pleasant, relaxed and very unthreatening environment, then look out for opportunities to invite them along.

A good plan is to say, "I'm thinking of going along to this course, would you like to join me?"

Confirmation and Exploring the Christian faith

The confirmation service this year will be held here at **All Saints** on **Sunday May 3rd at 10.00am** with the Bishop of Hertford. We will be starting two groups, one for young people and one for adults very soon. These courses will explore the Christian faith.

If you are interested in joining one of them, if you would like to be confirmed, or if you are just interested in knowing more (and not necessarily sure whether you really want to commit yourself) or if you are looking for a refresher course where you can ask all the questions that you did not ask before, then please let me know.

We will hold the two groups on **Monday evenings** (straight after boys choir practice) at 7.15-8.00 for the young people and from 8.00-9.15 for the adults. These will commence after half-term in the meeting room at the back of Church

Jo Tel: 584 899

Watoto Children's Choir

The Watoto Children's Choir will give a concert at All Saints Church, Hertford on Saturday 6th June at 7pm. Admission is free with an offering taken during the concert.

This choir of parentless children from Uganda are touring Europe for six months during 2009 with their live 'CONCERT OF HOPE' - this event is sponsored by Hertford Churches Together and is not to be missed! Please put the date in your diaries now.



As hosts for these children, we need to provide accommodation for eight groups of two or three children plus their responsible adult. If you feel you might be able to help with this or for further details about the concert, please contact Paul or Wendy Farrant 01992 422447.

