

GoodNEWS

LINDFIELD URC'S VILLAGE MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 2008



Home Groups – The inside story!

PLUS...

- More about christian basics
- A special notice for all men
- Find out more about the period of Lent



Lindfield URC's Mission Statement

Lindfield United Reformed Church
– worshipping God, sharing the
good news of Jesus and seeing lives
changed by his love.

We are committed to:

- encountering God through daily praise, prayer and bible reading.
- encouraging one another to discover and fulfil God's plan for our lives.
- demonstrating God's love by meeting physical and spiritual needs, local and worldwide.

Dear Friends...



Are you still growing?

“It’s not what you’ve got; it’s what you use that makes the difference.”*

I noticed this quotation the other day and it seemed a very good introduction to the subject we will be looking at in February. Today, in the garden, I see lots of evidence of new life as we approach spring, bulbs are shooting up everywhere. The Christian message is all about new life.

Things grow because they make use of the food and resources available. We will be looking to see what the letter of James says to us about deepening our knowledge of God and seeing growth in our Christian experience. Please read Dan’s introduction later in the magazine.

New Life is also on our minds as we look forward to Easter and this year we are to join with All Saints and The Evangelical Free Church in Lent Groups on Wednesdays from February 6th. There will be meetings in both the mornings and evenings. These will culminate in a joint Maundy Thursday service on March 20th. The speaker will be Lindsay Unwin, Bishop of Horsham. Services will be held at the United Reformed Church on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. All are welcome to any of these meetings. Full details can be obtained from the churches.

As we look towards Easter our prayer is that all will meet the risen Lord Jesus and know new life for themselves.

David Jones

*Quotation by Zig Ziglar taken from A Bundle of Laughs J John and Mark Stibbe. Monarch Books.

GoodNEWS

This magazine is produced by: Lindfield United Reformed Church, 50 High Street, Lindfield, West Sussex RH16 2HL.
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Editorial Team: Val Cookney (editor), Steven Farley, Jacqui Adams and Martin Hall.

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Printing: Tom Burford & Sureprint Litho

Next copydate: Tuesday 12th February, 5pm.

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A list of serving Elders can be found in Who's Who?

Editorial



I have just finished compiling the magazine to send off to Steve who does all the clever technical stuff with it, and it occurs to me that this is quite a meaty edition. So maybe this month you may want to take it in bite-sized portions. Just an idea!

There is a lot of information about Home Groups. If you are not already part of a group I hope there is something in here that will encourage you to seriously think and act upon joining one.

We are coming up to the Season of Lent, and so Jacqui has spent time investigating and writing about what Lent is and how we can use this period of time to help us grow in our Christian lives.

I have nearly run out of word allocation so quick spotlights onto; the introduction to James – the Sermon series which is about to begin, an advert for the Church weekend, concerts to look forward to and a naming competition. All that and more.

Val



Prayer **FOCUS**

As it is still early in 2008, may I suggest that this month we really pray for one another in our Church family. You can use the 'Quicklist' at the beginning of "Who's Who" for easy reference. Bearing in mind that we have four weeks in which to cover 160 families/individuals, praying for 5 or so names each day would mean that you have covered the entire fellowship during February. (Feel free to do this in a different way; below is only a suggestion! It may be easier to work through the list from beginning to end!)

Please take up the challenge, and prayerfully support one another.

SUN

Surnames beginning with A and B

MON

Surnames beginning with C and D

TUE

Surnames beginning with E, F and G

WED

Surnames beginning with H, J and L

THUR

Surnames beginning with M, N and O

FRI

Surnames beginning with P, R and S

SAT

Surnames beginning with T and W

Home Groups

– A Lifeline to Spiritual Maturity

Some of you may have heard of Willow Creek community Church, in America. This church has an emphasis to be “seeker-friendly”. They recently, along with 30 other churches, carried out a survey to find out which of the many programmes for discipleship and activities they ran were actually helping people to mature spiritually. The survey devastated the Church Leaders as the results showed that churches that rely on programmes for developing spiritual maturity failed to produce men and women of Spiritual Maturity.

The conclusions made were ‘that Bible Study, prayer discipleship and missional community were all practices that must be instilled into people in a way that makes them depend on God for growth’. The emphasis should be on encouraging people to take responsibility for their own growth through small group and personal Bible study and prayer as well as participation in Church. (Sourced from Christianity magazine January 08)

We now have some short articles about the Home Groups within this church. Please do read them and if you are part of a group or not, or are struggling with your own regular Bible Study, be encouraged. This is important and well worth the effort.

Heather Swann starts us off and tells us about her group....

Perhaps you have never considered being part of a House Group as an essential in an already crowded diary? Whatever the reason for your decision just maybe we can persuade you that meeting together regularly with a few people is time well spent.

Our Morning House Group includes two members from other churches, some of us have been in

the group for a long time, others join us as and when they are able, but we all value the fellowship, friendship and the pastoral support one to another. But that is not all and primarily we meet to spend time in worship and prayer before moving into a time of Bible study with the aid of individual study books and/or DVD commentary.

The Leader (which can be anyone in the group!!) endeavours under God's leading to work through the

passage being studied, encouraging participation and not doing all the talking!

"Faith finds its sustenance in God's Word. If this is absent, faith becomes very meagre."

These words constantly challenge me to take God's Word seriously and perhaps may encourage us all to make House Group a priority.

Dawn Walters

Why Join a Housegroup? What are the benefits of attending a housegroup? Well, for me it makes me feel young. In our housegroup all the other attendees with the exception of Rich and myself are grandparents!

It isn't only the ego boost that keeps me going to housegroup. The benefit of having older Christians around is the experience and understanding of life which they have gained. I hope too, that, we (slightly younger!) people bring other facets to light when we are talking about aspects of life and faith. Certainly I find that discussing subjects and concerns with a varied group of people means that you gain a

much broader understanding and often gain insights from other angles that you may well not have thought of yourself. Our studies have varied from Bible characters and books to topical issues and Janet does her level best to keep us on track, even when we have decided to ramble off on some strange tangent – which is not an infrequent occurrence!

Alongside the discussions and the teaching, housegroup also offers a great opportunity for friendship and fellowship. It is always hard to get to know everyone even in a middle sized church like ourselves. For me, housegroup is a chance to get to know people that I would probably not see otherwise. We have had some fantastic housegroup socials including rowing at Barcombe, a long (ish) walk and a pub lunch and lots and lots of meals! Last year we had a fish and chip supper on the Bluebell Railway which was great and comes thoroughly recommended.

Prayer support is another



Feature – Home groups

essential of housegroup and it is really encouraging when life is tough to know that there is a group of people who ask how things are going, remember what you said last time(!) and care enough to pray with you and for you. It has been a bit of a shock to my parents at times when they visit and various members of our housegroup have asked about their dodgy elbows or their latest visit to the doctors when they weren't exactly sure who they were but I think that it is brilliant when the people of God love and care for each other the way that Jesus does and did when he was on earth.

Overall, I believe that housegroups give people a chance to learn more about God, themselves and each other together and that has to be a good thing.

Sidney Burden

For me it has been the icing on the cake in learning and building a greater understanding of God's Word.

My existing House Group has some 14 members, who meet fortnightly on a Thursday at 2-4 p.m., between September and November, resuming in January until the end of May. Other group sessions are held on a morning or late evening

commencing at 7:30p.m.

We meet at a fixed venue for the group meeting to present and discuss our collative answers; the questions we are provided in a selected workbook under the guidance of the House Group Leader.

Study book examples are; Romans, The Christian Story (16 studies), Sermon on the Mount (8 studies) and Psalms (12 Studies), our current choice.

Each member possesses a copy of the comprehensive study book. They comprise some 64-76 pages incorporating guidelines, leaders notes and space for each written answer. For example, Psalm 1 'Praying our Intentions' – there are twelve questions to answer which I will complete within the ensuing two weeks. I and other group members will each verbally give our answers at the meeting to the House Group leader who comments, sometimes praises and concludes with her version. Answers can be serious, emotional, often lighthearted and amusing as thoughts and ideas are bounced off each other. My aim is not necessarily to produce the 'right answer' should there be one, but to get closer to The BIBLE when reading and working through the questions.

Come and join us.



Ron Goodenough

Many years ago I attended a training day for house group leaders at All Saints. It was stated during one of the sessions that house groups should be a 'microcosm of the church'. In other words everything that takes place in the life of the church should be included in the function and purpose of the house group; worship, prayer, teaching, care, communion and even outreach. If we were to consider this as a church it could prove to be quite positive and exciting.

On the other side of the 'coin' house groups can reflect another characteristic of church life – cosiness!! It is important that deep, spiritual relationships are developed in house groups and that does take time, but it is possible to be together for too long. Some churches rotate house group membership regularly – something else that perhaps we should consider.

In one or two cases Alpha Courses were run and some participants continued to meet together as a Nurture Group and then eventually as a House Group. Membership of these groups has changed over the years but the roots were in Alpha. Maybe another Alpha or Christianity Explored Course should be considered.

Norna Derham

House Groups are a valuable part of the Church family life, where small groups, ideally, about a dozen folk, meet in the relaxed and comfortable environment of a home.

They are not 'teach-ins' as much as 'share-ins' where a leader encourages and 'draws-out' members of the group in sharing, discussion and questioning as a variety of subjects is studied. A bit of homework prior to a meeting helps enormously in getting to grips with the subject. As a group bonds together and experiences are shared, a code of confidentiality is necessarily observed. Pastoral caring also comes into house groups, where members, hopefully, are aware of needs in the group, come alongside, if able, or communicate the need. The power source of the group is prayer. We hope that prayer, Bible reading, fun times, laughter, in depth discussions, sharing and challenges will help us through our journey in life as we encourage one another.

(Norna co-ordinates the Home Groups so please do get in touch with her if you would like to join a group)

Persecuted but not forsaken

“We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed” 2 Corinthians 4: 8-9

When the apostle Paul penned these words almost 2,000 years ago he could not have imagined that throughout the world in over 50 countries Christians would be experiencing such extreme persecution as they are today.

Our mission-giving this month will be for the support of Open Doors, which was birthed back in 1955 by the founder, Brother Andrew, when he started smuggling Bibles into China. Many thousands would have read his book ‘God’s Smuggler’, one of the great Christian classics published in 1967.

Open Doors is the world’s largest outreach to persecuted Christians, working in the most high-risk places on earth, where the Gospel costs the

most. Projects are extensive and seek to support Christians where the Church is often forced underground. Much of the work is quite sensitive and cannot be publicised but much information is available in regular bulletins and magazines and on their website; www.opendoorsuk.org

The January edition of Open Doors magazine, ‘Frontline’ contains reports from Iraq, China, Egypt, Turkey, Gaza, etc. Copies are available at the mission display area.

The Iraq reports opens with these words; ‘There has been a Christian community in Iraq for nearly 2,000 years. But in recent months murder and threats have provoked a massive exodus. Canon Andrew White, an Anglican clergyman in Baghdad, says “Things are the most



www.opendoorsuk.org

difficult they have ever been for Christians”.

It concludes by giving figures for the number of Christians included in the total number of Internationally Displaced Persons (IDPs) fleeing the violence and settling in the Kurdish controlled region of Northern Iraq and those who have fled the country and settled in Syria, also details of the many hundreds who have been murdered for their faith – statistics that you will not read in the secular national press.

The work of Open Doors includes:

- Distributing Bibles and literature

- Ministry and theological training
- Presenting 'Standing Strong through the Storm', Family life and Christian living seminars
- Conducting Bible-based literacy courses
- Giving practical aid
- Specialist projects

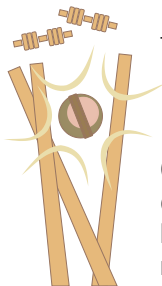
More information and literature is available at the mission display. If you would like to give to the work of Open Doors please use the special envelopes and place your donation in the offertory at any Sunday service. Please complete a Gift Aid Slip if appropriate

Thank you.

Don't get yourself stumped!

Cricketer's version of The Armour of God:

Ephesians 6:10-18



...The world's a bad place out there so here are a few things to help you win the game. Stay fit and focused, keep practicing but do it with God's coaching. Don't try and win this on your own. The game's tough out there so when you go out and step up to the crease don't expect to win if you're standing there in your pyjamas. If you don't have the necessary gear you'll be in all kinds of trouble.

This match isn't against players made of flesh and blood, but against evil bowlers and fielders of the unseen world, against those mighty wicketkeepers of darkness who rule this cricketing universe, and against those wicked umpires behind the celestial stumps.

Use every piece of God's kit to resist the enemy in this test series of evil, so

that when the game ends you will still be batting there, not out. Stand your ground in front of the wicket of life, putting on the box of truth and the kneepads of God's righteousness. For good grip put on the shoes of peace, so that you will be fully prepared to stand your ground, not lose your footing, and to make those runs as swiftly as possible. In every battle you will need to wear the gloves as your protection - to deflect the knuckle-busting spinners aimed at you by Satan. Put on salvation as your visor, protect your head and your mind with the dead certainty that you're a vital part of the team, and take the bat of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Be familiar with it, so you can use it well, and take a good stance so you can knock those fast balls for six. Pray all the time, keep communicating with the other batsman, and on every occasion don't try and win this alone. Stay alert and be persistent in your match play, aware that you don't do this for yourself, but for all good cricketers everywhere. Oh, and if you win the toss, bat first.

From The Bloke's Bible by Dave Hopwood

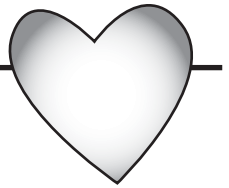
MENS BREAKFAST | SATURDAY 8th MARCH

“From Plant Grower to Seed Sower”

Full English breakfast 8.15am at SALTWORKZ Café, America Lane.
Followed by a talk from the ever enthusiastic John Goodway.

Please buy Tickets in advance from Dan McQuillin (484364)
or Ray Smith (484427) at a nominal charge of £2 each.

Is this the opportunity to invite a friend? **Why not ask them?**



Love is in the air!

What Is Love?

As it will be Valentine's Day soon I thought I would look up the dictionary meaning of LOVE.

It said;

1. To bear love to; to entertain a great regard for; to hold dear.

(Bit wishy washy I thought so....)

2. To entertain a strong affection; to be in love.

(Still sounds like Jane Austin talking, rather formal and sedate so....)

3. a. To be unwilling to part with

b. To be fond of; devoted or addicted to

c. To take pleasure in the existence of

That's more like it, some passion and emotion is seeping through the starched collars of the Shorter Oxford Dictionary's Editors.

Then of course there's the phrase, which defines God as Love. Not God is a loving being or God Loves but God is Love. In fact God is unwilling to be parted from His Creation. He is devoted to His Creation and He takes great pleasure in His Creation. So maybe looking at how God Loves will explain what it means.

So in the beginning God Created... and it was good, in fact it was perfect and He made it that way because He wanted his most precious creation, Man, to have the best. But, and we all know the story how, the snake made Eve question if God had her and Adam's best interest at heart, so breaking the relationship of trust and

love between man and God.

However, and here we go back to our Oxford dictionary definitions, God was unwilling to be parted from those whom He Loved so he made a plan to make good the broken relationship which meant so much to Him. This plan was not some quick fix with super glue; you can't mend broken hearts that way. No this plan required years of meticulous preparation, dedication and commitment.

How did God plan to mend the broken relationship? By giving a gift. As in all relationships love is symbolized in giving a gift. "If love can be measured by the value of the gift then God's Love could not be greater, for his love-gift is his most precious possession."* Jesus, His Only Son. God gave the world His Son to be the way of reconnection between Himself and Man.

So what is Love? God is Love; He takes the definitions of Love and puts them into action. God could not have loved more or less. We only have to admit our need and to accept His gift fully for our relationship with God to be reconnected.

Happy Valentine's Day
Val Cookney

*B. Milne – The Message of John (BST)
John 3:16

A man who loves his wife will love her letters and her photographs because they speak to him of her. So if we love the Lord Jesus, we shall love the Bible because it speaks to us of him.

John R W Stott
(Parish Pump)

February church diary

2nd

Saturday 8.45 – 9.30am Prayer Meeting at Evangelical Free

3rd

Sunday 9.30am Morning Worship
Communion
– Stuart Dew
11.00am Morning Worship
– Stuart Dew
6.30pm Evening Worship

6th

Wednesday 8.00pm Lent Groups
– All Saints

9th

Saturday 8.45 – 9.30am Prayer Meeting at Evangelical Free

10th

Sunday 9.30am Morning Worship
– Chris Gale
11.00am Morning Worship
– Chris Gale
6.30pm Evening Worship
– Communion in the Round

13th

Wednesday 12.30pm Lunch Fellowship
8.00pm Lent Groups
– All Saints

14th

Thursday 8.00pm Church Meeting at LURC

15th

Friday 12.30pm Lunch Fellowship

16th

Saturday 8.45 – 9.30am Prayer Meeting at Evangelical Free

17th

Sunday 9.30am Morning Worship
– Ron Goodenough
11.00am Morning Worship
– Ron Goodenough
6.30pm Evening Worship
– Mike Gardiner

20th

Wednesday 8.00pm Lent Groups
– All Saints

23rd

Saturday 8.45 – 9.30am Prayer Meeting at Evangelical Free

24th

Sunday 9.30am Morning Worship
– David Walters
11.00am Morning Worship
– Communion
David Walters
6.30pm Evening Worship
– David Jones

26th

Tuesday 7.45pm In Touch - Lounge

27th

Wednesday 2.45pm Afternoon Fellowship
8.00pm Lent Groups
– All Saints

28th

Thursday Church Prayer Meeting - Lounge

Balcombe United Reformed Church



Bramble Hill, Balcombe, RH17 6HR.

Contact: Mrs Leonie Wren (01444 811253)

Our services are held weekly at 10.30am.

Visitors are always welcome to join us.

Speakers for **February** are as follows:-

| | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 3rd | Matthew Wren |
| 10th | Philip Wren |
| 17th | David Walters |
| 24th | Michael Davies |

Flower Rota



Arranging

Distributing

February

| | | |
|----|---------------|------------------|
| 3 | Serena Nathan | Jacqueline Wood |
| 10 | Jean Baxter | Barbara Shepherd |
| 17 | Ann Blake | Lesley Sparks |
| 24 | Chris Caswell | Margaret Gomme |

March

| | | |
|----|-----------------|---------------|
| 2 | Vera Dorton | Kay Phillpot |
| 9 | Betty Billins | Jo Bloxham |
| 16 | Dorothy Forster | Heather Swann |
| 23 | Easter Flowers | Iris Bingham |
| 30 | Carol Marsh | Sue Tester |

Sunday services explained...

The **9.30am service** is an opportunity for all age groups to join in a relaxed informal time. There is a crèche, and after about 20 minutes children and young people up to age 14 go out to their own groups on most Sundays.

Coffee is normally served between the morning services and after the evening one.

The **11.00am service** is usually more set and formal.

At **6.30pm** it is sometimes a celebration, sometimes a quieter ministry time and sometimes an open communion service or something quite different!

Personal prayer is available after every service. Prayer requests and brief statements of praise for answered prayer can be put in the red book on the concourse table. We can also offer personal prayer ministry at home or in hospital.

We **do not take up an offering** during the services, but all those wishing to give are invited to place a gift in one of the bowls at the doors before or after the service. Thank you.

Cassette **recordings of services** can be borrowed free from the church.

OTHER LOCAL EVENTS LISTED ON BACK COVER

The Celebration Of Lent

– Footprints For Life

Whichever way I look at Lent I keep coming back to the same event: **Jesus' time in the wilderness.**

Each article I read on Lent kept bringing me back to phrases like “drawing aside from everyday activities in order to attain a closer fellowship with God”. “A time of repentance and renewal.” “Lifestyle – Spirit led.” One sentence in particular caught my attention “ the importance of listening to the Lord, especially as part of our Lent discipline”.

I also kept coming back to some immutable facts: A full recognition on our part of our complete dependence on, and need for, God to be the cornerstone foundation of our lives. Our own inability to do anything with sin, except the one right thing can we do – take it all to a loving God and, making true confession, by asking forgiveness, with a heart of repentance. And in doing so, trusting in Jesus to deliver us, free us, from the sin which does

so easily entangle.

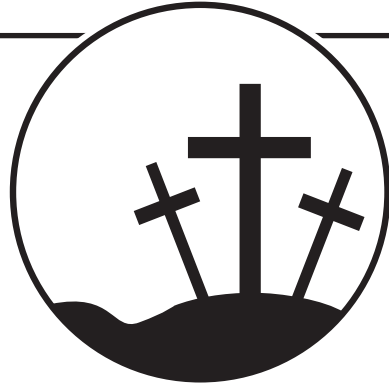
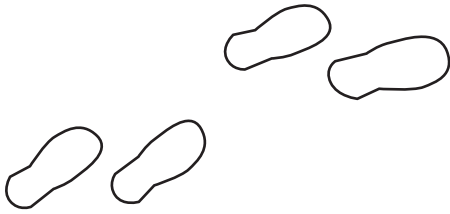
Perhaps Lent is a time for us to recognise that Jesus has prepared the way for us to come to Him. True confession and repentance is, I believe, an attitude of the heart and mind. Utter truthfulness before God. A transparency, if you will, allowing Him into those areas of the heart and mind which make us feel uncomfortable and even ashamed.

And there is the crux of the matter: in order to trust Him enough to do this, we have to believe and **recognise His deep and unending love toward us.** We have to take Him at His Word. Literally.

“That when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”. 1 John 1 v:9

Jesus, the only one without sin, taking our sin upon Himself, so that we might be restored to a right relationship with our





loving heavenly Father.

Whilst reading about Jesus' time in the desert we come upon a sequence of important events: Jesus has just been baptized by John. The Son Of God humbled Himself, allowing one of His own creation to baptize Him, saying "*it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness.*" Matthew 3: 15

This from the man who was completely without sin.

How much more, then, do we need to come to our loving, heavenly, Holy Father, in true repentance, and a desire to be completely honest with Him; to hide nothing, and hold nothing back?

The first thing that Jesus did after being baptized with water was not to speak, but to listen. God spoke to Jesus (Luke 3:17).

Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father, and listened to His voice. Perhaps these too are awesome footprints for us to follow:

obedience, humility, listening.

And there was the Holy Spirit; gentle in power. Filling Jesus

with His wonderful presence. Equipping Jesus for the difficult days ahead? Reassuring Jesus by His loving company, that Jesus wouldn't have to face the trial of the next 40 days alone?

And there, in the desert, in the book of Luke, we read "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was LED BY THE SPIRIT in the desert, where for 40 days he was tempted by the devil." Luke 4:1.

And there in the desert, **Jesus concentrated on the Word Of God.** The same words that Jesus had memorized are available to us, and much more besides. Another living example? The Word Of God memorized so that it is ready to use in the times when we need it most. "God breathed" and "sharper than a two edged sword". A most effective weapon, to be used as Jesus did, to defeat satan.

Whilst in the desert, Jesus allows satan to offer temptations, and then proceeds

to defeat him every step of the way, by quoting the Word Of God to him. The words Jesus used we recognise as Jewish Holy Scripture, and the Christian Old Testament.

In verse 14 of chapter 4 we read “Jesus returned to Galilee **IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT.**” Something big happened during those forty days, out there in the desert. Jesus was now fully prepared for the three years of ministry that lay before Him.

Jesus then returned to Galilee, and to his home town of Nazareth. On the Jewish Sabbath he went into his local place of Worship, as was His custom. A scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. The people around Him would have known and recognised Him. Jesus stood up, read from the scroll, sat down and then quietly asserted that He was the man that the prophet Isaiah spoke about so many years ago. (Luke 4: 18 - 21)

Dare I ask any of us “can we follow Jesus’ example even here?” To stand fearlessly in front of those who know us best, and say that Jesus is our Lord, and the only way to God the Father. Dare we do it in our own strength? That perhaps would be the daftest thing of all! Knowing

my own depths of personal cowardice, I think I would be wise if I were to follow Jesus example: *by welcoming His Holy Spirit to be my much needed wise counsellor and guide.*

Does Lent ask more of us than we can give? Certainly it is a choice and a challenge to prayerfully change our schedule. However, I suspect that if we embrace the idea, we may find ourselves the beneficiary of a new pattern.

Let us encourage one another to follow the examples Jesus has set before us: obedience to God the Father, adult baptism, openness to the Holy Spirit, regular private communion of our spirit with Jesus, humility, listening to the Voice Of God, a denial of self, an open-hearted attitude towards God the Father, fellowship with other believers, living each day with the Word Of God, sharing His love with others.

A tall list indeed! But not one we have to try to do in our own strength – **rather let us lean into the love and strength of God to show us the way.**

Jesus’ time in the desert leaves for us a set of footprints to follow, conceivably not only during the Lent season, but for all of our lives.

Jacqui Adams

February 29, 2008

This year is a leap year, with 29 days in February. February 2008 has five Fridays - it starts and ends on a Friday. Between 1904 and 2096, leap years with same day of week for each date repeat every 28 years which means that the last time February had 5 Fridays was in 1980 and next time will be in 2036.

What is a leap year?

A leap year is a year with one extra day inserted into February, the leap year is 366 days with 29 days in February as opposed to the normal 28 days (There are a few past exceptions to this).

Which years are leap years?

In the Gregorian calendar, which is the calendar used by most modern countries, the following rules decide which years are leap years:

1. Every year divisible by 4 is a leap year.
2. But every year divisible by 100 is NOT a leap year
3. Unless the year is also divisible by 400, then it is still a leap year.

This means that year 1800, 1900, 2100, 2200, 2300 and 2500 are NOT leap years, while year 2000 and 2400 are leap years.

This actually means year 2000 is kind of special, as it is the first time the third rule is used in many parts of the world.

In the old Julian Calendar, there was only one rule: Every year divisible by 4 is a leap year. This calendar was used before the Gregorian calendar was adopted.

Leap years are needed so that the calendar is in alignment with the earth's motion around the sun.

Using a calendar with 365 days would result in an error of 0.2422 days or almost 6 hours per year. After 100 years, this calendar would be more than 24 days ahead of the seasons (tropical year), which is not a desirable situation. It is desirable to align the calendar with the seasons, and make the difference as small as possible.

By adding leap years approximately every 4th year, this difference between the calendar and the seasons can be reduced significantly, and the calendar will follow the seasons much more closely than without leap years.

A Celebration Dance

At a recent Sunday service a video was shown of children in Africa who, for the sake of a relatively small amount of money, could have a better chance in this world.

It was with this image in mind that I set about organising a dance. Our good friend Mac Turner and his band agreed to join with the Perdidos to play at the King Edward Hall on Friday (please note) 7th March 2008 at 7.30pm. Barn Dance Music and music from the dance band era.

There will be cheese and wine at the interval but no alcohol will be on sale, therefore BYO

Admission is free but you must have a ticket and they are available from Tom Burford or Peter Swann.

At the end of the evening there will be a collection for the Children of Darfur.

A celebration? PHS has become an OAP.

Please help us to help the children.

Peter Swann

In Touch

**Tuesday 26th February,
7.45pm**

Please join us on that evening for a cup of coffee and a "Hat Evening".

All ladies very welcome.

The Fellowship

Our meeting in February is on Wednesday 27th at 2.45pm. We look forward to welcoming Fiona Tingley who will be telling us of "Musical Memories Over the Years."

There will be a Bring and Buy stall, and we extend a very warm welcome to all.

James: How active is your faith?

We are beginning a new teaching series in our morning services looking together at the book of James.

You will find James near the end of the new testament. The writer introduces himself as a servant of Christ but James was in fact one of the most significant and influential leaders of the early church. You may also know him as James the brother of Jesus.

James is a wonderfully practical book, containing enough wisdom to make it a kind of new testament book of proverbs. It challenges us to connect our faith and our lives in radical new ways.

Is your faith a disconnected, passive

intellectual exercise or a central, active part of everyday living?

Wherever you are on your faith journey James brings wisdom, strength and courage to help us to grow spiritually and develop an active living faith.

James, Living in an active Faith

Key Verse: James 2:17

"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

Week 1 Living Word

Week 2 Living Faith

Week 3 Living Wisdom

Week 4 Living Peace

Week 5 Living Hope

Name That Board!

We are shortly to have a Prayer Board in the Concourse. It is our hope that you will use it to write prayer requests as well as answers. The difference between the board and the Concourse Prayer Book is that the Board is for 'Everyday' prayers, rather than life-threatening needs. You may include your name if you wish, but if the prayer is for someone else, please obtain their permission before including it on your prayer request/answer.

Now here is the challenge – we need an appropriate or snappy title for this prayer board, and also an appropriate Scripture quotation. Please pass your suggestions to Fiona Tingley. The winner will be announced in due course!

A Word of Thanks...

Carol Concert. Our grateful thanks to all who took part in the Carol Concert whether as a performer or helper.

The concert went well and we have provisionally booked the Copthorne Silver Band for Christmas2008. Overall, the donation collection raised £524 of which £100 went to the Angel Tree Charity and £100 to the Worthing Churches Homeless Project. The balance went to St.Peter and St.James Hospice.

Peter Swann

Jonny Dew's Uni report

In September I started out on a 3-year Criminology & Criminal Justice course at Portsmouth university, and even though I had been warned about how quickly life at university would fly by, my first term still seems to have gone by quicker than expected. After taking my time to settle in I've gone on to really enjoy my time here so far, I've made a good group of friends and Portsmouth seems to have been the right choice of university. All that said, I'm looking forward to spending time at home over christmas.

When I'm not working out how to use the washing machine, socialising or procrastinating, I do manage to find time to do a bit of studying. The course so far has proved interesting, even if I must admit I am grateful for the lack of any early morning lectures, where I'm led to believe attendance levels are significantly diminished.

Jonny Dew



Bereavement

We are sad to report the death of our dear friend Paddy Lay on January 8th. There will be a service of Thanksgiving and Celebration for Paddy's life at Gateway Baptist Church, Burgess Hill, on Saturday 2nd. February at 11.30am. (The family have requested no dark clothes.) Please pray for Anne and the family, and we extend to them all our love and sympathy.

Thanks

Sally and Robin Russell thank their friends at Lindfield URC for their loving care, kindness, encouragement and wonderful prayer support during the last six weeks

Sally and Robin

I would like to thank most warmly my church friends for all the prayers, flowers and plants, telephone calls and visits during my recent illness and operation. It seems to have been a long time with several things all together which have been particularly difficult to cope with, but hopefully I am now well on the way to recovery. Your prayers and kindness have been valued so much and I thank you all.

With love, Val Lane

New e-mail address

Please note that Fiona Tingley's e-mail address is now:
fotingley@gmail.com

Paddy Lay – A Tribute

Where do I begin? Paddy was a man of many God-given talents as hundreds of boys, many helpers and officers of the 1st Boys' Brigade will confirm. He captained the company for 15 years before his retirement in 1986. He gave much of his life to the B.B. and endeavoured to encourage the object of advancing Christ's kingdom among boys. The B.B. motto of Hebrews 6 v.19 was Paddy through and through – sure and steadfast. So much fun and fond memories will come flooding back as many remember the annual camps that took place.

Church members and friends alike will remember the services Paddy took. He always had a carrier bag with him – the contents of which would be a visual aid for his sermon.

He suffered uncomplainingly for many years with multiple sclerosis but it never stopped him being an encourager with a grand sense of humour, cheerful and committed to help anyone who needed it - a true Christian man.

Now he is at Home in His Father's care – free from pain and suffering and we give thanks for his life.

It was a privilege to have known Paddy for 35 years and our thoughts are with his wife, Anne, and family at this time.

Terry Ward

Celebr8

Our God, our Faith, our Family

Booking forms and deposits are coming in – many of you have already made sure of your place on our 2008 Church Weekend Away at Pilgrim Hall for the weekend 21st – 23rd November. If YOU haven't done so, can we urge you to do so soon – if you haven't been given a booking form, there are more available from the stewards at church. We shall allocate rooms in order of priority of booking, and although all rooms are of a high standard, there are some without en suite facilities.

Celebr8 is open to all – you don't have to be a church member – and we will strive to make the weekend a blessing to people of all ages.

A reminder about payment. The church has endorsed the elders' recommendation that *Celebr8* should be a faith weekend, meaning that we want no-one to be excluded because they can't afford the cost. The only stipulated payment is £10 per adult at time of booking. Beyond that, we ask you to give what the Lord has laid on your heart to contribute towards the Weekend – either on the special *Celebr8* Gift Days or at any time, using the *Celebr8* envelopes which you will find in the Church. Why not resolve to give an amount each month between now and November? It may be that circumstances prevent you coming to *Celebr8*, but you still want to give because you believe the event will be a great blessing to our fellowship – if so, thankyou! – please feel free to use the envelopes. And remember – *Celebr8* payments, like all our offerings, are anonymous.

The *Celebr8* Committee will be pleased to answer any questions and receive any suggestions: Mike Gardiner, Rosemary Davies, Jeremy Campling, Richard & Dawn Walters, Marion Tingley, Zoe McQuillin, John Merrett, Steve Farley.

So, don't hesit8 or procrastin8, or even w8 a while – BOOK NOW!

Read-a-verse

In this feature someone from our fellowship will share their best-loved or most precious verse from the Bible and tell us why. If you would like to contribute, please email a paragraph of explanation together with the verse to goodnews@lindfieldurc.org.uk

1 Kings 19: v13 & 15

A voice said
“What are you doing
here, Elijah?.....
Go back the way
you came.”

After Hilary was very ill, we knew we had to move to something smaller and more accessible.

Having looked around I read this verse quite unexpectedly and it was just like hearing an actual voice. We knew without a doubt that we had to move back to Lindfield. From then on, everything went smoothly and just fell into place. We have never had a doubt since that it was the right thing to do.

Barbara Shepherd

What Do Your Friends Say About You?

There was a man who had three special friends. These friends were special because they had endeavoured to support the man through a grievous time in his life. The man was called Job and his friends were called Eliphaz, Zophar and Bildad.

Eliphaz said a very lovely thing about his friend Job; we read about it in the book of Job, chapter 4 and verse 4.

‘Your words have supported those who stumbled; you have strengthened faltering knees.’

I like the way Moffatt translates this verse ‘Job,your words have kept people on their feet.’

A thank-you to all of you who put these words into practice. With God’s help may I be that sort of friend to you.

Jean Gardiner

Editor: Here is the second in our new 'back to basics' on the Christian faith. You may find this a helpful series to run for the benefit of those who are interested in Christianity, and who would like to know more... The Rev Paul Hardingham, rector of Bolton, considers the problem...

Christian Basics: Sin and Suffering

'What's wrong with the world? How can a God of love allow suffering?' These are questions that many people ask in the light of their own experience. In answer to these questions, the Christian Faith offers an understanding of how sin affects both the human race and the whole created order.

Genesis gives us a picture of how sin first entered the world. In Genesis 2:16-17, God gave Adam and Eve a far-reaching permission ('You are free to eat from any tree in the garden'), a prohibition ('But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil') and then warned them of the penalty if they disobeyed ('For when you eat of it you will surely die').

In Genesis 3, we see how Adam and Eve broke God's law by eating of the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As a result their eyes were opened to the nature of sin (they knew shame) and their relationship with God was broken (they hid from him). Also as a consequence they faced the reality of death in their lives. This story expresses the truth that God gives us free will (an essential aspect of our humanity) to live with God at the centre of our lives or not.

There are different pictures in the Bible which describe the nature of sin:

Firstly, a spirit of independence: choosing to live our own lives in our own way, independent of God. This means we do our own thing, regardless whether it pleases God or helps others.

Secondly, ignoring the maker's instructions: if you buy an expensive item of equipment and then ignore the user instructions, you have only yourself to blame if things go wrong! God created us to function with him at the centre of our lives.

Thirdly, missing the mark: we will fail an exam if we have missed the pass mark, however near we get to it. As Paul reminds us, 'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23).

Fourthly, leaving God out of our lives: we don't want God to interfere with our lives, preferring our own ideas, plans and standards of behaviour.

There was a famous correspondence in The Times under the title 'What's wrong with the world?' One letter written by GK Chesterton simply said: 'Dear Sir, I am.'

As Lent begins this month, it is a good time to stop and consider what place God currently holds in our lives.

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Dear Editor,

I was delighted to read in your recent magazine an article relating to Burswood Home of Healing. As the chaplain at Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre in East Sussex, and an old friend of Lindfield, I was extremely encouraged to see the local church taking an interest in Christ's healing ministry today and thought you might also be interested in another resource available to folk seeking Christ's healing touch in this day and age.

Unlike Burswood, Crowhurst does not offer medical or nursing care, but concentrates on providing a place where the burdened, troubled, anxious, fearful, disillusioned or sorrowful can come and experience Christ's healing, renewal and release. 'Come to me all you who carry heavy loads and I will give you rest' could very much be the motto of this tranquil centre.

Like Burswood, Crowhurst offers two public healing services each week on a Thursday morning at 10.15am and a Monday night at 7.30pm. Guided Quiet Days each month give people the opportunity to have a few hours away to experience God's renewing presence in their life. We also run a programme of courses on all aspects of Christian healing which provide training opportunities for churches seeking to develop their own healing services or healing ministry within their congregation. Prayer ministry is always available from our chaplaincy team for those who want to come and stay and during their time away speak with someone in complete confidence to find release from the things that rob us all of wholeness of life in body, mind or Spirit. It's a lovely peaceful place to get away from it all with your own comfortable ensuite bedroom, and the food is amazing!

The church today really does need to reach out and offer Christ's healing to those longing for wholeness and inner peace, so thank you for stimulating such an interest in what God has for us. If any of your readers wish more information our web site is www.crowhursthealing.org.uk or please phone us on 01424 830205.

Every Blessing to you all,
Peter McIntosh

Church activities

SUNDAY WORSHIP:

- 9.30am Service for all the family, including crèche and Junior Church (Most weeks, children leave after 20 minutes for their own activities) Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
- 11.00am Morning Worship Holy Communion (4th Sunday)
- 6.30pm Evening Service Holy Communion (2nd Sunday)

Healing services as announced

PRAYER MEETINGS:

- Mon 9.30am An Hour of Prayer
- Wed 9.45am Short Service of Intercession
- Thur 8.00pm Church Prayer Evening (As announced)
- Sat 8.45 Three Churches Prayer Meeting.
– 9.30am Venue rotates between the three churches.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES:

- Mon 10.00am Art Group
- 6.30pm Boys' Brigade – Junior Section (8–11 years)
- 7.45pm Boys' Brigade – Company Section (11+ years)
- Tue 10.00am Stepping Stones (Parents and toddlers)
- 7.45pm In Touch (4th Tuesday)
- Wed 2.45pm The Fellowship (4th Wed.)
- 5:30pm Zest 1:2:3
- 6:45pm Zest 4:5:6
- Thur 10.00am Pop-In (for coffee and a chat)
- 8.00pm Church Meeting (2nd Thur.)
- Fri 5.30pm Boys' Brigade – Anchor Boys (5–7 years)
- 7:30pm Zest Plus (Years 7–10)

House Groups normally meet 1st and 3rd Thursday

**The church is open Monday to Saturday
from 10.00am to 12.30pm**

Phonebook



Church (payphone):

01444 484620

Boys' Brigade:

Geoffrey Cocksedge
01444 474007

Cradle Roll:

Sue Tester 01444 482810

Flowers:

Betty Billins 01444 484494

Hall Booking Secretary:

Carol Walters 01444 457938

In Touch:

Sue Waller 01444 455047

Lunch Fellowship:

Wednesday:
Janet Drayton 01444 483621

Friday:

Gwen Hillman 01444 456963
Anne Parker 01444 473519

Magazine: Editor:

Val Cookney 01444 440029

The Fellowship:

Jessie Green 01444 452708
Roy Billins 01444 484494

Stepping Stones:

Janet Goodenough
01444 417002

Transport:

Tina Elphick 01444 484440

Youth and Children's Work

Co-ordinator:

Adrian Cookney 01444 440029

Zest Co-ordinator:

Clare Nibloe 01444 484683

Powersource Co-ordinator:

Dawn Walters 01444 441601

Local events



For more information on activities going on in Lindfield, **Lindfield Times** is also available from around the village.

Chris Comber Organ Recitals

Thursday 28th February, 11.30am

Chris Comber will be giving an Organ Recital at Lindfield United Reformed Church.
All are welcome.

ADVANCE NOTICE - HOLY WEEK CONCERT

The Ashdown Singers

Singing 'Requiem', by G.F Fauré

Wednesday 19th March, 7.30pm

Lindfield United Reformed Church

The Ashdown Singers, under the direction of Terence Steele, are pleased to be singing again at Lindfield URC during Holy Week. Entrance is free of charge, but a retiring collection will be taken, the proceeds of which will be given to the local charity, Home Evangelism.

Further details will be available shortly but do put the date in your diaries now!

www.ashdownsingers.org.uk

To publicise your community event here see contact details on page 2. Diary entries included at the editor's discretion.