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in a
NUTSHELL
news, views, ideas from your local church 2025 March/Apr

Throwing mud

'Throw enough mud ... and some of it will stick.' Well, a lot of mud has been thrown at the Church of England recently, especially at its 'top brass', much of it with good cause. The press has had a field day. Scandals in high (and low) places, an impression of dithering leadership, collusion and cover-ups over safeguarding issues, and, in some quarters, less than enthusiastic support for the ministry of women and of gay people.

Small wonder, then, that churchgoers are often disillusioned, while many younger people - especially those born around the turn of the century - want nothing to do with the religion of their grandparents.

Demand radical change

Strident voices, both inside and outside the Church, demand radical change. Only those, mainly the over-60s, who remain committed to the Church they remember, can be bothered to sift through the 'mud' and recognise that there are still good and well-meaning people involved in the Church at all levels - though even this loyal (and diminishing) group recognise the need for fresh ideas.

Flawed and human

But, and it's a big *but*, we must not confuse *Church* with *Faith*. Though created at Jesus's direction, the Church is an imperfect, flawed, human institution. Our Faith is not in



Don't believe it Dad. It's just a load of mudslinging by the teachers.

the Church but in the Creator of the universe and in his Son, Jesus, who accepted and used weak and fallible human beings as his first disciples. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit will always respond and support those who call on him. *This* is the Ground of our Faith.

Beginning again?

The Church is a *gathering* of the People of Faith in worship, prayer and obedience to Jesus's call to mission. Like the first disciples, many in that 'gathering' are weak and sinful, but God can and will forgive them and use them, enabling them to confess their faults, show signs of true repentance and restitution - and then, somehow, somewhere, begin again.

INSIDE	Sebastian's PUZZLE CORNER page s4		Sebastian loves biscuit crumbs page s5

Giving - or giving-up?

Baptist Deacon Pat Frankish wonders how best to observe the season of Lent.

This issue of our magazine covers the season known as Lent. It lasts for 40 days - this year from 5 March, the day that the Church calls Ash Wednesday* until 19 April, the Saturday before Easter Day. Sundays aren't included, as the Church counts them as 'Festival Days', when we remember Jesus's resurrection.

The devil

The period of 40 days corresponds to the time when Jesus was in the desert considering God's plan for his life. In this tough time, Jesus was tested by the devil (see the article on page 56), so the Church asks people to use the 40 days before Easter to pray and to identify with Jesus in the wilderness.

Many Christians, remembering how Jesus went hungry, give up something for Lent, maybe chocolate or alcohol or something else we really like. (Sebastian has his own struggle with this idea - see the middle pages below.)

Giving up something we really like can be hard. Can we cope with the temptation to indulge? Maybe we 'give in' when no one is looking, or maybe we forget. I'm sure most of us have tried it, and many of us have failed miserably!

One other way of looking at Lent is to consider 'giving' instead of 'giving-up'. Can we give something for each of the 40 days? We all have

something to be thankful about - for example, we might give 20 pence for every light bulb in our house. Or we could say a prayer each day for the people going without enough to eat.

The money gifts end up as a donation to a worthwhile charity at the end of the 40 days: for instance to help the children in Gaza, or the victims of war in the Ukraine.

Empty jar

This alternative way of marking Lent is possible for anyone. Why not keep an empty jar for your gifts, however small, or put the extra money in a box supplied by one of the charities, like the *Children's Society*. This year the Methodist-linked charity *Action for Children* has published a helpful online, day-by-day *Count Your Blessings* calendar. Why not download it and use it to guide your giving?

May God bless us in this time of Lent - in our thinking, in our praying, in our giving - and in our giving-up.

* Ash Wednesday dates from the 11th century. Priests marked worshippers with ash to signify the start of Lent. Some churches still do this. Ash has been a sign of repentance from biblical times (see Daniel 9.3).

§ Google *Action for Children, Count Your Blessings 2025*, and scroll down to find the *Count Your Blessings 2025 Calendar*.



Spring is here!

Michelle Clarke-Edwards welcomes the signs of spring, which remind her of God's providential care.

Spring is here! What a welcome respite the sunshine and blue skies are. A few days off during half-term, and my garden has benefitted from a little care and attention - the snowdrops in clumps are shaking their delicate heads and this morning three daffodils and a small patch of narcissi unfurled their sunny yellow trumpets.

The birds are cheerfully chirping, singing, and warbling from the hedgerow and trees. Buds are forming, the sap is rising, and the lawn looks like a jungle. (That'll be Mr C's job to tackle soon.) It's a blessing to realise that the season is changing - and it's lighter for longer in the evenings.

Birds of the air

This coming of spring reminded me of Matthew Chapter 6 verses 26-34 in which Matthew asks the reader to consider the birds of the air which neither reap nor sow but are fed. He draws our attention to the lilies of the field which are beautifully clothed but don't toil or spin, so why should we be anxious about clothes? He describes the grass - green today, hay tomorrow. So, he asks, why do we worry and ask, fretfully,

'What are we going to eat or drink or wear?' The birds, flowers and trees bursting into life without understanding or caring what they look like, seeking food and water and finding it, remind me not to worry about material things. If God provides for nature, he will provide for me too. That's a big thought! It's quite overwhelming to believe that God really cares for me.

How much God cares

In the Bible birds are often depicted as small and insignificant, but we are assured that they are provided for by God, as part of his creation. So, as you witness the wonder of nature this March, remember you are cared for by God every bit as much as the tiny sparrow chirping in your green space - or the snowdrops, harbingers of spring.



Join our friends in a Lent Course: a time to reflect on your faith

Transport can be arranged. Please contact Heather Bunker 01652 648573

Week 1 Sunday 9 March 6pm Messingham, Church Hall
Week 2 Sunday 16 March 6pm Scotter, Eau Centre
Week 3 Sunday 23 March 6pm Scotton, Village Hall
Week 4 Sunday 30 March 6pm Kirton, United Church Hall
Week 5 Sunday 6 April 6pm Messingham, Church Hall

Cupcakes, coffee and chat
10am-12noon 1st Saturday every month in the Town Hall



'Love in a Cup' Community Café
Every Thursday, 2-5pm:
St Andrew's United Church Halls





Things that some people give up for Lent

Can you spot the 12 differences between these two pictures?



Remember your Mum on Sunday 30 March

Solve this SPIDER Word Search

S X G P T A R A N T U L A Y W E S P
R E N A B D O M E N R A E G G S P R
S G B X L E G S T R S P I D E R I E
E P A A E A R T H R O P O D S S D Y
Z R I R S K R H R N T H O U S E E Z
N L R N D T D X E F Q G Y M C G R H
M K A L N E I X A W E Y E S U U L U
N B U M Z E N A D L P K P Z T E I N
S I L K T X R A N V P R J R T G N T
V H A X H O I E S S O T V Q L X G S
Y V O E I G H T T F A K O Y E X V O
G X E O I H V B W E B S P I N O G C

Find these words in the puzzle box. Words are hidden → and ↓ ↘

ABDOMEN	GARDEN	SCUTTLE	SPIN
ARTHROPOD	HOUSE	SEBASTIAN	SPINNERET
EGGS	HUNT	SILK	TARANTULA
EIGHT	LEGS	SPIDER	THREAD
EYES	PREY	SPIDERLING	WEB

Step Ladder

Climb from THINK to STONE
changing just one letter at a time,
without disturbing the order of
the remaining letters. We have
provided clues for the steps, but
not in the correct order.

STONE

CLUES

- Old word for *county*
- Give out light
- Keep things (or food) for future use
- Tall part of a church
- A narrow slit letting in light
- Ridge of hills or spine of an animal
- *Seed* of a toadstool

THINK

Hard riddles

1. I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with wind. What am I?

2. You measure my life in hours and I serve you by expiring. I'm quick when I'm thin and slow when I'm fat. The wind is my enemy. I am?

3. I have cities,
but no houses. I
have mountains,
but no animals. I
have water, but no
fish. What am I?

**Answers to the
puzzles on
this page are
on page s8.**



Hi friends!

My Mum says that the older you get, the quicker things seem to come round each year. She usually says that on her birthday, as she tries to fit all the candles on her cake.

Anyway, it's March - and it's Lent again! Can you remember what Lent is?

What is Lent?

It's when my friends in church think about the forty days that Jesus spent in the desert, after his baptism, while he got ready for all the hard work he did in the next three years.*

It was lonely, hot and dry in the desert and one of the things that happened was that Jesus was tempted to turn the stones that were all around him there into bread. But Jesus said that would not be right. It wasn't God's way - so he went on being hungry.

Giving something up

Some of my friends in church decide that it's right to give up something they like during Lent. It helps them to think about what Jesus went through and to think about their own lives and what they should be doing for God, just like Jesus did in the desert.

Biscuit crumbs

Maybe I'll give up something for Lent. I asked my friend Cedric for some advice and he said, 'It's obvious! The thing *you* like most is biscuit crumbs,

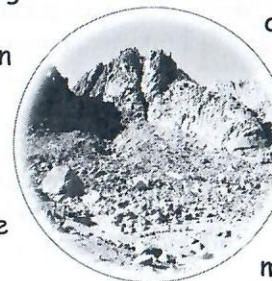


so you must stop eating them for 40 days.' What? No biscuit crumbs for six whole weeks? What a dreadful thought! I don't think I can do it. Anyway, my church friends rely on me to help keep the floor clean. No - the biscuit crumb idea is definitely out!

I suppose I could give up watching television for an hour each day. I don't enjoy most of the programmes on Spider TV anyway.

Second best?

I asked Cedric if that would do. He said, 'Well, I guess so, but it's second-best isn't it? You're not giving up anything that you'll really miss.' Then he reminded me that Jesus never gave people



'second best', even when he was tired. He went on loving them and putting them first, before his own needs. As usual, Cedric's right! Perhaps he ought to give up being so clever for Lent. Meanwhile, I suppose it's no more biscuit crumbs for me until Easter!

Your friend, *Sebastian*

* Look up Matthew 4: 1-11; Luke 4: 1-13
and Mark 1: 12-13

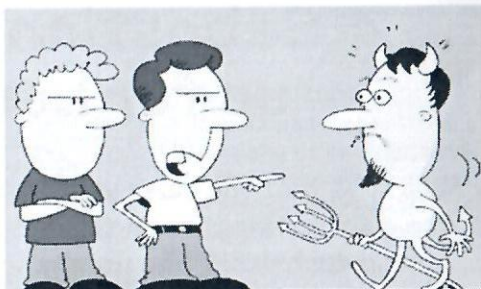
Is the devil real?

Satan, Beelzebub, Lucifer, the devil are some of the words used in the Bible to describe an evil force that seeks to corrupt all that is good, and thwart God's plans. Inevitably, perhaps, the use of such titles led medieval artists to depict the devil as humanoid, albeit with some animal traits, like the horns and cloven hooves of the Greek god, Pan.

Today such images are objects of ridicule – proof that the Church has got it wrong again. So, when we are told that, in the desert, Jesus was tested by the devil, it's easy to dismiss the story: 'There's no such thing as the devil: clearly the story is nonsense.'

But because people once interpreted scripture more literally than we might do today, this doesn't mean that evil is just an abstract notion linked to culture, and so a matter of individual free choice.

Jesus once rebuked his friend, Peter, saying, 'Get behind me, satan!' What had Peter done? Was he a 'satan look-alike'? No, he simply tried to persuade Jesus that, as the Messiah, he shouldn't take risks (*Matthew 16.22-23*).



'WELL WELL ... SPEAK OF THE DEVIL'

Ask anyone trying to break the hold of alcohol or gambling or drugs if these addictions are just 'abstract ideas'. The force for Evil – corrupting what is good and wholesome in this life – is not inert or 'neutral'. It has 'purpose'. It is both powerful and contagious.

Whether we give that force a name or an image, we need to *recognise* it; to understand how it has 'purpose', and how it seeks to destroy individuals, families, community, even the whole world order, as nations go to war.

The season of Lent is an opportunity to recognise how powerful the grip of evil can be – on individuals, nations and in the whole world order – and to discover God's answer, and how he works.

The Bible story of Jesus in the desert



There are two versions of how Jesus spent 40 days in the desert, praying, to learn what God wanted him to do – read *Matthew 4.1-11* and

Luke 4.1-13. Can you spot the differences between them? How many tests did Jesus face? Which one is shown here?

FORTHCOMING EVENTS – BOOK THESE DATES

* Friday 7 March 2.15pm, St Andrew's Church
World Day of Prayer service
(It will end in time to meet children from school)

4 March 4.30–7.00 pm
Family pancake party
in the United Church Hall

Bring
your Mum
to Church
on 30 March



MOTHERING SUNDAY
11am St Andrew's Church
(and you can still take her out for lunch!)

Remember
the Easter
happenings



St Andrew's United Church
17 April Maundy Thursday, 7pm
'Remember the Last Supper'

18 April Good Friday in church
*10.30: Hot drink & hot cross bun
*11am: Remember the walk to
the cross (in church & churchyard)

20 April Easter Day: Resurrection!
*6.30am: Sunrise Service
*9am: Easter Breakfast (Church Hall)
*11am: Easter Holy Communion

Come
for any
or all ...



Even if you aren't a regular in church,
please join us this Easter. You will be
welcomed – and not embarrassed!

**Kirton couple at
Mount Everest!**

**Janet & Dave's
adventures in
the Himalayas:**

Living the Dream!

7pm Friday 28 March
in the United Church Halls, Kirton

**+ One-pot Supper
and Raffle**

Entry by donation for
St Andrew's United Church

'Heaven and Earth'

DONT MISS THIS YEAR'S DISPLAY
in St Andrew's church, as part of the
West Lindsey Churches Festival.

We invite organisations or individuals
to contribute a floral display or suggest
an activity that can be set up without
taking away from the beauty and history of
the church building.

So put your imaginations to work!
And please come during the weekend
to see the church, the archives (with an
expert to answer your questions), and
enjoy a conducted tour of the tower.

For info: janeshheard.82@btinternet.com

Book the date now
Sat-Sun, 10-11 May



Your local churches

St Andrew's United Church, Kirton in Lindsey
www.standrewsunitedchurch.org.uk

St Radegund's Church, Grayingham
www.achurchnearyou.com/grayingham-st-radegund



Ministry Contacts: Mar 2025 - KIRTON

- ☎ 01724 647789 The Revd David Swannack (Anglican Vicar)
- ☎ 07395 453246 The Revd Robert Roberts (Methodist Minister)
- ☎ 01652 648846 The Revd Preb Dr Michael Sheard (Anglican, retired)
- ☎ 01652 649365 Dr Pat Frankish (Baptist Deacon; Anglican Lay Reader)

Ministry Contact: March 2025 - GRAYINGHAM

- ☎ 07738 356048 The Revd Charles Thody (Anglican Priest in Charge)

Other enquiries

Church Council Secretary, Kirton, 01652 648846
 Church hall bookings, Kirton, 01652 648573
 Church Warden, Kirton, Dr Pat Frankish, 01652 649365
 Church Council Secretary, Grayingham, 01652 640157
 Church Warden, Grayingham, Mr Clive Marshall, 01652 648125

SAFEGUARDING (Kirton) 01652 640740
SAFEGUARDING (Gray'm) 01652 640157

Baptism bookings (Kirton) - 07776 487791
 Wedding bookings (Kirton) - 01652 648846
 Funerals (Kirton) - 01652 648573

Worship in our buildings in Mar/April 2025

- St Andrew's United Church, Kirton,
11am Sunday; 9.30 every Wednesday
- St Radegund's, Grayingham,
9.30 1st Sun HC; other Sundays 9am

Please visit our websites/Facebook or
 phone one of the contact numbers
 above for other information about our
 churches and activities.

Join us for Worship on Zoom:
every Sunday at 9.30am

* To join - on computer, tablet or phone -
 contact heather.bunker@btinternet.com

St Andrew's United Church
4th SUNDAY every month,
FAMILY SERVICE 11am

PUZZLE CORNER ANSWERS (p 54)

Step Ladder
 Sebastian's solution:
 THINK, CHINK, CHINE,
 SHINE, SHIRE, SPIRE,
 SPORE, STORE, STONE,
Hard Riddles
 1. An echo 2. A candle
 3. A map

Use your own answers
 for the Two Pictures
 and the Word Search

Don't forget Mothering Sunday
 11am, 30 March at St Andrew's

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Write to Point of View (max 300 words)
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We are sorry that rising costs have
 forced us to raise the price in 2025.



CLEATHAM HALL NEWS

Celebrate Mother's Day weekend

from Friday the 28th March to Sunday the 30th
 March 2025

All Mothers will receive a spring bouquet.

Lunch on Sunday 30th March -served from 12 noon
 for 12:30pm and 2pm for 2:30pm.

Afternoon tea is at 4:30pm for £30 pp, add a special cocktail £7.50 or mocktail for £5.50

The Restaurant open daily from Wednesday to Sunday to enjoy Lunch, Afternoon tea and
 Dinner

Drop in and try our NEW cream tea

from £7.50 per person.

Lunch served for 12 to 3pm
 Afternoon Teas from 1 to 4pm
 Dinners from 6 to 8.30 pm

Ask about our special offers

for Over 65's lunches on Wednesday to Friday

See our website at www.cleathamhall.com/events for our menus and pricing
 To book call: 01652 649402 or email: enquiry@cleathamhall.com

Restaurant Opening Times:

Wed - Sat: 12pm - 8:30pm

Sunday Lunch
 12pm - 4pm



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