



Lent and Easter are an important part of the Christian calendar. A season (from Ash Wednesday until Easter Eve) of self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study, and preparation for Easter. Its duration (forty days plus Sundays) recalls the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. Learn more about the significance of Lent and Easter to Christians, and find out the answers to common questions you may have.

[The significance of Lent and Easter | The Church of England](#)

From the Church of England:

This Lent we are encouraged to put down deep roots of hope by connecting with God who is with us at all times.

The Church of England's Lent theme for 2025 is **Living Hope**.

In Lent we journey with Jesus on the difficult and thorny road that leads all the way to the cross on Good Friday – and beyond, to the transformation of Easter Day.

God invites us to bring to him our own journey through everyday life. In the disappointment of daily setbacks and the pain of deeper hurts, we discover that God is present with us. And God promises a future where all things are healed and made new.

Living Hope offers us the opportunity to deepen our hope in God and be part of what God is doing to bring hope in the world.

The readings and reflections explore how we can have hope in times of frustration or uncertainty; the hope found in joining with others; the invitation to notice signs of hope around us; the courage to face reality and pursue a hopeful future; and the ways God transforms death into life at Easter.

The reflections have been written by **Cathrine Fungai Ngangira** and **Belle Tindall** – both contributors to *Wild Bright Hope: The Big Church Read Lent Book 2025* (SPCK) – together with **Victoria Mason**, Everyday Faith Editor for the Church of England.

There are resources for churches, individuals and small groups, including booklets for adults and children. You can view the resources below:

[Living Hope – Resources for Lent 2025 | The Church of England](#)

[Living Sheet 2025](#) [see page 4 for our NEW linked Diocesan programme]

from **Ruth Burrows**, “**Extravagant Love: The self-emptying of Jesus**” (Paulist Press, 2022)

SELF-EMPTYING ~ KENOSIS

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.”
(Philippians 2:5)

That mind, that passionate, reckless love for us that caused him to cast aside his divine status as Son with it happiness and glory to assume our fallen condition, the “nature of a slave.” He becomes so lowly, so lowly. How can a poor, selfish earthling I know myself to be have such a mind? “You can’t,” Jesus agrees, “but I can give you my mind, I can live my boundless love in you if you let me.” We let him when we do all we possibly can do, living our life faithfully day to day, trying always to please Our Lord and serve [others]. Although he is working in us, loving us, giving himself to us whenever we are doing his will, he can do this most powerfully when for a given space of time we lay aside our “own” doing and remain **exposed to him in prayer**.



LENT March 2025

Churches: AD area dean; C clergy; Chaplaincy: Ch chaplain; Schools: Ac Academy; H headteacher; C-H Co-head; E executive head; AH acting head/all Church of En

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>This year there is a happy alignment between the national church theme of 'Living Hope' (see page 1) and a locally resourced series of online gatherings (see page 4), so the Friday prayer focus aligns with this, too!</p>						<p>Rugby Deanery AD – Steve Gold</p>
<p>SUNDAY BEFORE LENT 2 <i>St Matthew's Bloxham Academy PS</i> H – Anita Timson</p>	<p>3 Dunchurch & Thurlaston C – Vacancy</p>	<p>4 <i>Dunchurch Schools Boughton School – Junior: Co-Hs Danielle Read, Lynn Lee Infant: H Suzanne Marson</i></p>	<p>5 ASH WEDNESDAY Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, Newton & Brownsover C – Peter Bone</p>	<p>6 <i>Clifton-upon-Dunsmore Primary</i> H – Lisa Bernard DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT GROUP</p>	<p>7 LIVING HOPE - for our personal study and repentance this year</p>	<p>8 HMP Rye Hill & Onley Ch Rosemary Lowdon Ch Charles Ndigirwa Ch Sarah Gillard-Faulkner</p>
<p>LENT 1 9 Hillmorton C – Steve Gold;</p>	<p>10 <i>St Gabriel's Academy, Hillmorton</i> H – Andrew Taylor</p>	<p>11 Rugby Mission Hub @St Andrew's Edmund Newey & Alison Baxter</p>	<p>12 <i>St Andrew's Benn Primary</i> H – Abi Huggins DIOCESAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DAC)</p>	<p>13 St Mark's, Bilton C – Daniel Bennett <i>Bilton Junior School</i> EH Ed Newton; H – Rebecca Ross</p>	<p>14 IMPERFECT – holding on to hope when our lives are messy, the world imperfect</p>	<p>15 St Andrew's, Rugby C - Edmund Newey DIOCESAN SYNOD</p>
<p>LENT 2 16 Wolston, Church Lawford & Ryton-on-Dunsmore C – Malcolm Ingham</p>	<p>17 <i>Wolston St Margaret PS</i> H – Michelle Clemons</p>	<p>18 <i>Ryton upon Dunsmore Provost Williams Primary</i> EH – Leah Ba ddeley AH – Sherrise Cullen</p>	<p>19 Rugby West Benefice C – Alan Hulme</p>	<p>20 <i>St Oswald's Prim Academy</i> E – Michelle Cuskelly H – Jayne Geran BISHOP'S CORE STAFF TEAM</p>	<p>21 TOGETHER – praying for those who give us hope, and also receive from us</p>	<p>22 The Revel Group C – Martin Faulkner</p>
<p>LENT 3 23 <i>The Revel Primary</i> EH – Andrew Edwards; H Patrick Luke</p>	<p>24 Newbold-on-Avon with Long Lawford C – Paul Wilkinson</p>	<p>25 <i>Knightlow Primary</i> H – Claire Woolley</p>	<p>26 <i>Harris C of E Academy</i> H – Roberta Harrison</p>	<p>27 <i>Leamington Hastings Ac</i> H – Suzanne Marson GLEBE COMMITTEE</p>	<p>28 TRUSTING – when the future is uncertain – how do we trust in the hope promised by God?</p>	<p>LENT 4 Sat 29 & Sun 30 Draycote & Leam Benefice C – Phil Price ALSO MOTHERING SUNDAY</p>

PRAYER DIARY

THE SEASON OF LENT

Now is the healing time decreed
For sins of heart and word and deed,
When we in humble fear record
The wrong that we have done the Lord.
(Latin, before 12th century)

The whole Christian community is invited to join [candidates for baptism] in the process of study and repentance



BEING HEALTHY CHURCH

“Just as the human body needs regular training to give us full potential of physical energy, so does our spiritual life. Without continuous and systematic training we will either experience no growth at all, or of we are fortunate, “accidental growth.” The key to training, both in the physical and spiritual realm, is to challenge ourselves regularly such that we build up our muscle mass. Attempting to avoid those deliberate phases ... makes training virtually impossible.” Christian A. Schwarz

SPECIFIC DAYS IN MARCH 2025

Rugby Deanery Pray for our upcoming Deanery Greenhouse as we seek to encourage mission across our churches. For our work across the deanery with year 6 pupils in our church schools as we prepare to begin some form of **youth ministry with Harris students - that through it the young people in our schools would come to know God's love for themselves; and pray for wisdom as we discern how best to develop school chaplaincy in the Deanery.**

1 - Rugby East – Sara Bowie (PTO), Raymond Brown (PTO), Allan Scrivener (PTO); Readers: Carol Davies (PTO), John Martin-Jones, Gail Richmond. We thank God for the work on our new 'Lights On' benefice strategy. To pray for:-

- the new book and gift shop at St. George's
- our Christian mindfulness services at St. Peter & St. John during Lent
- our new Pastoral Visitors

We also ask God's blessing on our Sunday Schools

2 - St Matthew's Bloxam: For our new Church-School Link worker Gill to establish good relationships with parents. For the creation of a school prayer group.

3 - St Peter's, Dunchurch with St Edmund's Thurlaston R - Hilary Iredale (PTO) Prayer for church wardens Nicky Lowe and Celia Jones as **they seek a new clergy appointment.**

5 - Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, Newton & Brownsover – C – Ian Sweeney, Diane Bussey Curate – Adrian Thacker R - Catherine Hammond (PTO). Pray for Lynne & Peter Bone and their daughters.

8 - Pray for Anglican prison chaplains Rosemary Lowdon and Charles Ndigirwa at **HMP Rye Hill** and Sarah Gillard-Faulkner at **HMP Onley. Rye Hill:** Rosemary says, "Pray for myself as I now have the responsibilities of being **Managing Chaplain at Rye Hill Prison**, along with **new Anglican Chaplain Charles Ndigirwa**. Pray for Charles and the rest of the Chaplaincy team to have wisdom and open doors for ministry, so that many will come to know Jesus. Pray for stability at Rye Hill as they receive an extra 458 prisoners as part of the UK's prison expansion project. **Onley:** Sarah writes: "I would ask if people would pray for some stability. Our community here at the moment is very unsettled both Staff and prisoners. I would also request that there be a good level of tolerance in the community as both those of the Muslim Faith enter into Ramadan and Christians enter into Lent, that there we together may show great respect to each other as we enter into the time of fasting. Also for those who are anxious, those who are to be released worried what the future may hold for them."

9 - Hillmorton Curates – Ann-Marie Marsh, April Gold, Helen Merrigan Please pray for our **special week-long Easter-themed iSingPOP event at St Gabriel's school**; that through it pupils and staff would be drawn deeper into the invitation of relationship with Jesus and would find their own faith more deeply rooted and grounded in love.

11 - * Rugby Mission Hub – for their enabling of learning communities, new initiatives with young people, and more imaginative approaches to mission and ministry.

13 - St Mark's, Bilton C - Glenn Lowde, Philip Street, Joy Sharpe (PTO), **Elisabeth Jeyasingh, Children and Families Worker.** Rector, Dan Bennett writes: "We give thanks for Elisabeth's appointment last September and her work with our children and young people. We've **re-launched our junior church under the name St Mark's Rocks**. Please pray for our efforts to restart the stay and play group. We give thanks for our community outreach through our Poppy Cascade and Snowdrop Saturday events, and look forward to our involvement in **the Deanery Greenhouse project**. We pray for our links with our local schools especially those with the Bilton Community Federation. *For Lent, we're running a*

preaching series on the Living Hope resources and our Home Groups are reading the Wild Bright Hope Book together." [Wild Bright Hope - The Big Church Read](#)

15 - St Andrew's, Rugby C – Sharon Crofts, Alison Baxter, James Sampson-Foster R – Sue Minton (PTO), Gwyneth Hickman. Please join us in giving thanks for May Blossom Care Farm, and praying for Compassionate Rugby's continued flourishing, for our Mission Hub partnerships and especially **the new learning community exploring mission in the sacramental tradition**, and for **candidates to be confirmed by Bishop Edward Condry on Easter Eve, 19th April.**

16 - Wolston, Church Lawford & Ryton-on-Dunsmore – C - Paul Simmonds (Associate Minister), R - Helen Simmonds, Jayne Hayward. R – Rosemary King (PTO) We give thanks for Ryton joining with Wolston and Church Lawford just before Advent last year but please pray for us as we learn to live, work and minister both within our individual villages and together as a benefice under **the banner of Philippians 1:5, "Partners Together in the Gospel".**

19 - Rugby West - AM Jane Hulme; (PTO) Gordon Banks, Margaret Simmons, Hugh Priestner; (Readers) Mervyn Hill, David Long. We **give thanks for the completion our air-sourced heat pump installation – a key step in our carbon-zero plans.** Please pray for the fruitfulness of our Easter outreach – particularly the **Easter Experience aimed at church school families.**

20 - St Oswald's Academy: For our new Church-School Link worker Gill to establish good relationships with parents. For children to have encounters with God as they explore the new prayer garden.

22 - The Revel Group of Churches, Brinklow, Churchover, Harborough Magna, Monks Kirby, Pailton and Willey. –C - Rev Peter Beresford and Rev Liz Cowley (PTO); R Martin Lowdon. **Please pray for our mission initiatives with Outdoor Church, Cafe Church, Messy Church, Tea and Chat, School Confirmation Invitation and Messy Gazebo.**

24 - Newbold-on-Avon with Long Lawford C - Sarah Bowie (PTO) Prayer of thanks: we thank God for our continuing strong links with our two (non-church) primary schools. Pray for: our parish and churches, that they may have great vision as they approach an interregnum.

26 - Harris Academy (secondary) – chaplain (vacant), discerning how to develop role

29 & 30 - Draycote and Leam Benefice C – Barbara Clutton R – Karen Hatch. Please pray for our Children and families work, particularly that more volunteers may come forward to ensure that our activities continue to reach families whilst remaining sustainable.

C = Clergy; R = Reader; AM = Assistant Minister; H = Headteacher

* A key strand of the **Diocesan Growth Strategy** is the presence of six **Mission Hubs** in Coventry (North and South), Bedworth, Leamington Spa, Alcester (the rural hub) as well as Rugby. Pray for them as they, each in distinctive ways:

- gather clergy and other leaders (for retreat, prayer and planning)
- offer mentoring for church leaders
- are a focus for new initiatives like Growing Faith (St Stephen's, The Bridge), Myriad (St Paul's, Leamington Spa), Rural Greenhouse (Alcester Minster), Greenhouse (Rugby)
- influence their own Deaneries with more collaborative mission efforts
- can be overstretched, at times, so maintaining focus and cutting edge is a challenge
- release and support New Worshipping Communities across the Diocese

PRAYER JOTTINGS – MARCH 2025

This Lent, Equip Hub's Lent Series will explore the same themes as the Church of England's Lent Reflections – 'Living Hope'. Our series of 45 minute Zoom gatherings, will complement the resources produced by the National Church, including a booklet and daily reflections.

Equip Hub Lent Series 2025 – Living Hope – Equip Hub

The 'Living Hope' weekly zoom gathering, hosted by Anna Naish and Rob Harrison, will provide opportunity to *reflect together with others* on the day to day challenges and benefits of living in hope. These will take place from 8.00pm to 8.45pm, on Thursdays from 13th March, and include contributions from a different guest each week.

The weekly themes are:

13th March: **Imperfect** – Exploring how we hold on to hope in lives that are messy and a world that is imperfect.

20th March: **Together** – Exploring the ways joining with others allows us to find hope ourselves and offer hope to those who need it.

27th March: **Trusting** – Exploring what it means to trust in the hope God promises, even when we feel uncertain about the future.

3rd April: **Noticing** – Exploring how we can deepen our hope by noticing signs of what God is doing.

10th April: **Courage** – Exploring how being rooted in hope can give us courage to face difficulties and seek change.

Course information

Dates: Thursdays 13th March – 10th April
Time: 8pm – 8:45pm
On Zoom

Resources

Resources available from the national church:

Booklets for adults, and children & family resources: Ideal for using with groups, new printed Living Hope reflections booklets, prayer cards for adults and families are available to order now from [Church House Publishing](#).

Reflections via email: Sign up to national church [Lent reflection emails](#) and receive daily messages straight to your inbox. Daily emails will offer Bible readings, short reflections and a practical challenge, as well as prayers linked to weekly themes.

Daily reflections via Everyday Faith app: You can read and listen to daily Lent reflections from 5 March through the Everyday Faith app, the new daily devotional app from the Church of England, which is available to [download here](#).

Social media: You can follow the themes on the national church's social media channels – X/Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Threads – during the season for a variety of thought-provoking and inspiring content that explore the theme of 'hope'.

Contact us

If you have any questions, please contact Catherine.Stephenson@Coventry.Anglican.org

A Garden for God

I made a garden for God,
No, do not misunderstand me,
It was not on some lovely estate
Or even in a pretty suburb,
I made a garden for God
In the slum of my heart:
A sunless space between grimy walls
The reek of cabbage water in the air
Refuse strewn on the cracked asphalt –
The ground of my garden!

This was where I laboured night and day
Over the long years in dismal smog and cold –
There was nothing to show for my toil.
Like a child I could have pretended:
My slum transformed ...
An oasis of flowers and graceful trees,
How pleasant to work in such a garden!
I could have lost heart
And neglected my garden
To do something else for God
But I was making a garden for God
Not for myself, for his delight not mine,
And so I worked on in the slum of my heart.
Was he concerned with my garden?
Did he see my labour and tears?
I never saw him looking
Never felt him there.

Yet I knew (though it felt as if I did not know)
That he was there with me
Waiting ...
He has come into his garden,
Is it beautiful at last?
Are there flowers and perfumes?
I did not know
The garden is not mine but his –
God asked only for my little space
To be prepared and given;
This is garden for him
And my joy is full.

from **Ruth Burrows, "Extravagant Love: The self-emptying of Jesus"** (Paulist Press, 2022)



- Each month **we focus on a different Deanery; this month it is Rugby.** *In April we will pray for Alcester Deanery, then in May, Fosse Deanery, and in June Coventry South Deanery. I look forward to receiving updates from area deans and clergy, and anyone else with specific prayer requests.*
- **Coming up – the Themes for the next 3 months include Easter (April), New Worshipping Communities (May), and Net Zero/Creation Care (June).** *Do consider sending me your prayer suggestions, and any other jottings.*

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