

inter
MISSION
PRUDHOE METHODIST CHURCH
FEBRUARY 2021



Christ in the Desert (Христос в пустыне)
Ivan Nikolaevich Kramskoi (1837-87)

The Christian Year (a simple guide)

There are certain church traditions and practices that you perhaps won't discover during Bible study. One of these is the 'Liturgical Year'.

We have known since childhood that 25th December is always Christmas Day. But why does Easter drift about between March and April? The (UK) Easter Act of 1928 gave the **Home Secretary** the power to make Easter Sunday the day after the second Saturday of April. So Easter Day would always be between 9th and 15th April inclusive. That Act has never been enforced!

The western churches have stuck to the time-honoured tradition of calculating Easter Day from the date of the first new-moon in spring. Kids ... school terms are not determined by headteachers. It's the moon that calls the tune! Once we've calculated the date for Easter Day, we can determine the dates of everything from Ash Wednesday (the first day of Lent) to Trinity Sunday. If you go to: www.prudhoemc.org and then click the **PMC ALMANAC** tab at top right, you can find the main liturgical dates up to year 2037. (Example: table on right).

LENT: 40 days or 46 ?

The observance of Lent spans 40 days, ending on the Saturday before Easter. So why is Ash Wednesday 46 days before Easter? It's because the Lenten fast does not include Sundays, which are considered feast days (a celebration of the resurrection) so the six Sundays before Easter are omitted from the 40-day observance. The 4th Sunday in Lent is Mothering Sunday (Mothers' Day).

What is ORDINARY TIME?

In any given year there are either 33 or 34 "Sundays in Ordinary Time" (aka Ordinal Time as the Sundays have ordinal numbers). Sundays from Lent to Pentecost are not part of Ordinary Time. Neither are the Sundays from Advent to Epiphany (6th January). - *Pete B*

YEAR	Ash Wed	Sunday Lent 1	Sunday Lent 2	Sunday Lent 3	Sunday Lent 4	Sunday Lent 5	Sunday Lent 6	Good Friday	Easter Sunday	Ascension (Thurs)	Pentecost (Whit Sun)	Trinity Sunday
2021	17 Feb	21 Feb	28 Feb	07 Mar	14 Mar	21 Mar	28 Mar	02 Apr	04 Apr	13 May	23 May	30 May
2022	02 Mar	06 Mar	13 Mar	20 Mar	27 Mar	03 Apr	10 Apr	15 Apr	17 Apr	26 May	05 Jun	12 Jun
2023	22 Feb	26 Feb	05 Mar	12 Mar	19 Mar	26 Mar	02 Apr	07 Apr	09 Apr	18 May	28 May	04 Jun
2024	14 Feb	18 Feb	25 Feb	03 Mar	10 Mar	17 Mar	24 Mar	29 Mar	31 Mar	09 May	19 May	26 May

Cover Picture – Unlike many paintings of Christ in the wilderness, the devil does not appear in this painting by Ivan Kramskoi. I chose this painting because he portrays Jesus as a lonesome man with his eyes lost in solitary torment. Our Saviour has been there. - Ed

Rev. Jenny writes ...

Hi, It's good to be able to journey through Lent together again. It's tempting to reflect on all that has changed since last year but I feel that as a minister, in one sense that is not my job. In the midst of all that is going on, our calling as Christians is to remind one another and the world around us of all that has NOT changed in terms of God's relationship with the world.

1 Corinthians 1vs 7 tells us this:

'You have every spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.'

And in Lent, we wait for the truth of the gospel and the power of God to be revealed at Easter as we look again at the death and return to life of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness and promise of eternal life that he offers us.

So what spiritual gifts DO we have, in a pandemic, post brexit, in winter, when we are fed up? Well, As we move through Lent this year let's remember that we have every single spiritual gift we had this time last year. These things have not changed.

We have the gift of knowing God loves us, accepts us and is with us. We have the gift of knowing that there is no pain or challenge of human existence that God does not understand. We have the gift of prayer that allows us to cry out to God with our cares and sing out to God with our gratitude. We have the gift of God's Word to read and study and to give us encouragement.

So as we move into Lent this year, let's not be afraid. Let's pray often, count our blessings, read our Bibles in those extra hours most of us have been blessed with and let's remember that God says.

'I will never leave you or forsake you.'

- Rev Jenny Porterpryde

LENT REFLECTIONS

Private prayer: Our prayer lives can be very haphazard and undisciplined. Lent has traditionally been a time to correct this. Maybe you prefer to try and pray at home, setting aside a few minutes each day to bring yourself consciously into the presence of God. This can be a very difficult thing to do if we are wound up, distracted and stressed! We may need to light a candle, play some music or breathe slowly before we can either pray in silence or in words. For the Christian nothing is more important than our relationship with God because it affects all our other relationships, choices and behaviour. All loving relationships need time spent on them, time that can often feel as if it's being wasted, and our relationship with God is no different. What should you do about this in Lent?

Giving up: Most people think that Lent is about giving something up and it can often be a good idea to see whether you are able to give a few things up. What are you addicted to and what does this say about you? Wherever possible try and make your giving up beneficial to someone else other than you. Sometimes Lent can be a good opportunity to give up something that is harming you and the body that is, after all, God's gift entrusted to you. If you are healthy, a "hunger lunch" once a week can be a good idea — eat less and give the money you save to a good cause.

Taking on: Some people prefer to take things on rather than give something up. This can range from taking more care of yourself (by taking exercise, for instance) to making sure that you do something more profitable one night of the week than watching TV. One might consider helping out as a volunteer somewhere or deciding to contact someone who is lonely or not well. You could decide to be more environmentally friendly and change some bad habits. Christians need to take much more seriously their belief that God has entrusted his creation to us and that to exploit and spoil this world and its environment is counter to this.

Reading: What about treating yourself to half an hour's reading a day — and not just when you are nodding off at night? There are some excellent spiritual books available. You might also use the time to learn more about our Christian tradition and history.

– Sent by Margaret G

We forgot to mention, on page 2, an important date in Methodism. Wesley Day is always 24th May, and we celebrate Aldersgate on the nearest Sunday. Aldersgate Sunday this year will be on 23rd May 2021

David Durham on the meaning of Lent

LENT is a word from German and Dutch meaning "spring" from their word for "long," referring to the lengthening days of springtime. It defines the period of preparation, penance, self-denial, meditation and fasting leading up to the highest of Holy Days for Christians, Easter. Traditionally Lent is 40 days long, extending from Ash Wednesday to Easter, excluding Sundays, which are always "mini-Easters".

Forty is a powerful number in the Scriptures: Moses on Mt. Sinai, Elijah's walk to Mt. Horeb, the rain on Noah's picnic, time given Nineveh by Jonah before its threatened destruction, the years of the Hebrew people in the wilderness, Jesus' days in the desert when he was tempted - and the number of hours Jesus lay dead after his execution.

And how seriously do we take this sacred time of self-examination and penance? In the Church it means not using hymns with the word "alleluia" in them; it means a bit more subdued worship. It means using the penitential colour of purple. It means more of a focus on Jesus Christ giving his life as a sacrifice for us - and what sacrifice do we make now in return? Ah, that's the question!

"Giving up something for Lent" is not a bad idea - or even better, "doing something special for Christ and Christ's people" may be more positive. I encourage you to make a plan for truly "Living Lent" in your life this year.

Make it different. Make it meaningful. Make it Christ-like!

Rev. David E. Durham

With thanks to Anne & Peter Chapman who reproduced this article from Prudhoe Methodist Church Notices from 19 February 2012. Rev David Durham was our temporary minister at the time.

- Now that's what I call a well organised archive! Well done! - Ed 5

Walk in the Light

Jane Dixon, Glen Smith, Helen Taylor and 4 or 5 other friends who have attended an Emmaus walk in the past have met monthly since our walks as an accountability group, encouraging each other with faith stories, doubts, where we've felt closest to God and times when we've drifted. With lockdown, this ceased until once a month starting in July, August, Sept, Oct and November we have met outside together and done a walk, sharing our thoughts. We walked through the woods at Minsteracres for the first 3 months and the staff were very accommodating, as they always are. Stopping at various points to pray or just chat about things going on in our lives, we finished with a picnic.

By Lynne Graham



On the September walk it was quite wet, so we sheltered under a large redwood tree near the retreat house for our picnic. We've all been part of phone services, Zooms etc and at one point I had offered to do intercessory prayers. That particular day at Minsteracres in September I shared with the group in prayer. The prayer followed the disciples being in the boat after the feeding of the 5,000 when Jesus took himself off to be alone with his father after his business. We need to find time with God in prayer to develop and equip us to meet life's challenges and struggles, and we will become more Christ like. Peter stepped impulsively out of the boat, sinking, he reached out for Jesus who helped him out of his difficulty. When our faith falters we need to reach out, we can't save ourselves.



The prayers took the form of praying for the world, our country, our own and community, our church and our families and friends, ending each section with Let there be peace on Earth and let it begin with me. During the world section, of course I mentioned the COVID 19 and the need for a vaccine, the destruction at Beirut as well as praising God for the beauty of His world.

In praying for our country I prayed for our government, to be just and compassionate, planning for the good of all society, with economic fallout and troubles with race and culture differences. For our town I prayed for all the facilities it has to offer, shops, gyms, library, swimming pool, schools (that Open the book may still have an effect on school life now in video form) for food banks, do we as a church know people's needs?

We then prayed for our church without walls, assisting those who don't have technical support remembering that Christ has no body on earth but ours, no hands, no feet, nor eyes that can look with compassion.

Finally we prayed for our families and friends, mentioning missed shared celebrations, missed holidays, for the lonely, grieving and ill. Asking that God would help us know when to offer help, a listening ear and when to refrain from thinking we know best. I failed miserably at this last one as I upset my granddaughter being rather judgemental!! Another prayer offered at a later date was tinged by this bad attitude of mine when I said Lord we pray for those we judge by their outward appearance, those we avoid because of the way they dress, their language and the lifestyle they choose. We offer no hand of friendship, no sense of them being valued and important to us or God. We have all felt helpless at times when things seem enormously challenging and that any small effort we do can't improve matters that much.

Remember the boy throwing stranded starfish back into the sea one at a time, making a difference to as many as he could. An old African proverb states if you think you are too small to make a difference, you haven't spent the night with a mosquito. So Lord keep us sensitive to your promptings, move us out of our comfort zones to do your work in our beautiful world, help us make the most of each day. Watching and playing with better golfers raises my game, how much better would we be in our Christian lives if we studied Jesus' example more.



Amen.
- Lynne

Thanks Lynne ...

Your honest comment on judging by outward appearances really struck a chord with me. See "the generation gap" on page 11. - Ed.

Share your experiences with us here: intermission@uwclub.net

PARENTING TIP #37

If your kids are playing "hiddy" somewhere in the house at bathtime or during the homework hour, just switch off your wi-fi router. They will appear from hiding immediately. You may also find that your neighbours' kids come round to check on you.

JOHN WESLEY – by Edna Norrie

Samuel and Susannah Wesley had 19 children — 10 survived. Three boys and seven girls. Susannah was a firm but devoted mother. She educated her ten children and arranged for each of them to have lessons six hours per day from the age of five. Even the girls were included at a time when education of girls was unheard of. The family lived in a remote village where the villagers didn't take kindly to "Samuel — a stranger with high principles and determined manner". They burnt his crops and murdered his cattle so life must have been difficult for the family.

At an early age John escaped from a fire and, when he was 10, he left Lincolnshire to become a boarder at Charter House School. His older brother, Samuel, was a master at Westminster School and Charles, the baby of the family, joined them. So, for four years, all the Wesley boys were in London together. At the age of 17, John went up to Oxford on a scholarship and was there for six years. He was ordained as a priest in the Church of England and became a Fellow of Lincoln College and, as a tutor, was assured of an income.

John, his brother Charles, and others began to take life very seriously. They visited prisons and took an interest in the poorer parts of the town. After serving in America for two years John returned after going out with high hopes. He kept a diary and writes "May 24 He felt his heart strangely warmed." He began to preach out of doors — a thing unheard and disapproved of in those days. Huge crowds — 20,000 . The work expanded to schools for children and opening meeting houses in Newcastle, Bristol and London. He criss crossed England on horseback over rough roads, preaching the gospel nine months of the year.

- to be continued

Edna Norrie was a member of Prudhoe Methodist Church and a local preacher who took a keen interest in history.

PUZZLES & PASSWORDS

- by Pete B

I got an email from friends to say they were stranded abroad after theft of their credit cards. Please could I help by transferring some cash? It was, of course, a scam!

Their email account had a password that was not difficult to guess and the scammer had stolen their contacts list. One way to make "unguessable" passwords is to turn an obscure phrase into an anagram. Here are some ideas ... so let's have some fun!

Take a grid eight boxes long. Write the digit 0 (zero) in the first box. Take one step forward and write 1, then take two steps forward and write 2, three steps and write 3 and so on. When you reach the end of the grid, loop back to the beginning. It's a quirk of mathematics that if your grid contains 8, 16, 32 or 64 boxes (any power of two) you will always land in a blank space next time if you follow the rule. But you must begin with ZERO and not ONE.

0	1	4	2	7	6	3	5
W	E	R	S	D	A	T	O

I now take an eight letter phrase WESTROAD and starting at ZERO, well ... see what I've done here?

Next, instead of using a recognisable phrase, I take a well-known hymn and take the initial letters of the first eight words. I have chosen: **W-s-m-w-s-b-H-s** and then re-arranged the 8 letters (as in my grid above) to get **W-s-s-m-s-H-w-b**. Okay, so maybe I need a digit and a symbol in there. I'll change the first **s** into a dollar sign and the **b** looks a bit like **6** (six). Here we go: **W-\$-s-m-s-H-w-6**
PUZZLE: Which well-known hymn did I choose? (see p.11)



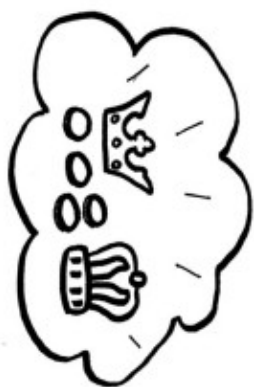
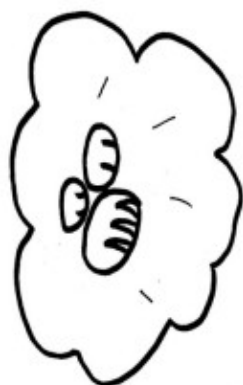
HARD MATHEMATICS!

My granddaughter had this maths question during lockdown.

Q: What one digit number and what two digit number can be multiplied together to get 39.

A: Without hesitation, Maisie grinned and replied "one and thirty-nine". Correct!

LENT for children (a page to colour)



TOPICAL QUOTES

"On hearing ill rumour that Londoners may soon be urged into their lodgings by Her Majesty's men, I looked upon the street to see a gaggle of striplings making fair merry, and no doubt spreading the plague well about. Not a care had these rogues for the health of their elders!" - *Samuel Pepys diaries, 1664*

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" - *The Life of Reason, George Santayana*

Puzzles & Passwords (from page 9)

The Wesleys' Conversion: "Where shall my wondering soul begin? How shall ..."

Some English words are difficult to comprehend.

If goods travel in a ship,
it's called CARGO.

If they travel by car or van,
it's called a SHIPMENT!

The generation gap?



We are now planing our **EASTER** edition. Please send your ideas and articles **NO LATER** than Wed 17th March.

OUR (inter) MISSION STATEMENT

- [1] To inform our local community, and ourselves, of what happens within the walls of PMC (as a building)
- [2] To inform the same parties of our organised outreach work beyond those walls (eg Open-the-Book)
- [3] To inform about individual work and witness by our members working with the Holy Spirit
- [4] To outreach our fellowship to those unable or (perhaps) unwilling to worship with us.
- [5] To spread the Good News using a fresh theme each month.
- [6] Making disciples. **Rev Rob Hawkins**

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WHAT'S ON AT PMC

LOCKDOWN

The building may be closed but you're invited to join us in worship and fellowship by telephone or online

Telephone:

don't forget to press # where shown below

Sundays 2:15pm

Tel: 0333 0110 946

then 4424 1866#

then 1984#

Wednesdays 10am

Quiz and Stories

Tel: 0333 0110 946

then 4424 1866#

then 1984#

Website:

prudhoemc.org

ZOOM:

10am Sun service

for Prudhoe, Wylam & Stocksfield

3pm Sun Fellowship

for Prudhoe, Wylam & Stocksfield

Tuesday 7:30pm

Bible Study

To join ZOOM get

Details from

intermission@uwclub.net

Facebook:

Prudhoe Methodist

Church Friends

Special: Thu 25 Feb 7:30pm Quiz Night on Zoom