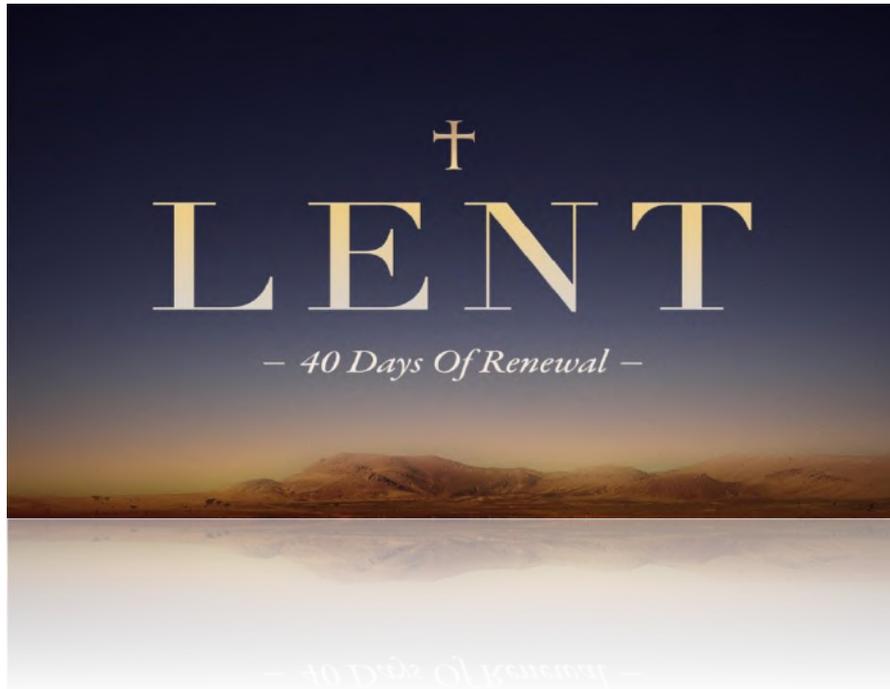




St Michael's Messenger Supplement LENT AT ST MICHAEL'S 2026



The forty days of the Christian year leading up to Easter, called **Lent**, continues in March. Lent is a season of prayer and spiritual renewal, looking toward new spiritual life and hope. The Lenten season is an opportunity to cultivate the interior life through spiritual exercises and practices. On Palm Sunday, 29 March, we commemorate Christ's entry into Jerusalem with a distribution of palms, a procession into the church, and the Eucharist.

Sunday 1 March	10h00 – Eucharist – Lent 2 <i>Celebrant Priest: Rev Liz Morris</i>
Sunday 8 March	10h00 – Eucharist – Lent 3 <i>Celebrant Priest: Rev Liz Morris</i>
Sunday 15 March	10h00 – Eucharist – Lent 4 (Mothering Sunday) <i>Celebrant Priest: Rev Liz Morris</i>
Sunday 29 March	10h00 – Eucharist – Palm Sunday <i>Celebrant Priest: Fr David Houghton</i>

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

On the evening of 17 February, thirty people gathered at the church for the traditional Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper... eight different nationalities, some first timers, and some old timers who have been part of our church for several decades. A wonderful eclectic mix!

Prompted by a once-in-thirty-three year confluence of dates with both Christian Lent and Muslim Ramadan starting on the same day, the theme of the dinner this year was Middle Eastern, a reminder of our shared Abrahamic roots.

Traditional foods of the Holy Land including shawarma, hummus, and tabbouleh were served and enjoyed by all. We pray for common understanding and peace in that part of the world.

Father Brett gave an explanation of the terms Shrove Tuesday and Mardi Gras, both of which refer to the day before Lent.



Photo by Kimberlee

Shrove Tuesday is a time to confess our sins before the beginning of Lent and to be 'shriven' or absolved. *Mardi Gras* - "Fat Tuesday" is when people would eat up all their eggs butter and milk before Lenten fasting. Hence the pancakes! Enhanced of course by beautiful local lemons.

Many thanks to the whole team who made the evening happen: picking lemons, shopping, cooking, bringing wine, moving furniture, setting tables, popping corks, serving food and wine, collecting donations and clearing up the next day. Special mention to Andrew Noble who provided lovely piano music throughout. Also to our now regular event helpers in the kitchen, Dennis and Nico.

- Nicola

Some thoughts on the Lenten Season

As I write, Lent is almost upon us. My homily for Ash Wednesday is written, the book I'm going to read through the season is sitting beside me (*Meeting God in John* by David F Ford), and my mind turns to how else I'm going to observe these weeks of preparation. There were some helpful reflections on Lent in the February Messenger and you'll also have received the email which contains details of the online Lent course being led by Fr Jeffrey John at St George's Paris.



Fr Brett Ward

There are some alternatives to those you might also consider. They could even be additions to your Lenten practice although I always discourage exhausting ourselves with piety in Lent – we should always aim to arrive at Easter invigorated rather than worn out. One or two things done well will always feed us better than attempting to consume an entire Lenten menu.

One suggestion is called “40 Acts”, which is about building generous habits and deepening faith. By signing up you will receive a daily email with a suggestion for the day. This can be found by clicking on www.stewardship.org.uk/40acts

Another option is a smartphone app which gives us daily reflections from the Church of England. ***Everyday Faith | The Church of England*** is free and available at the usual app stores online. These come every day through the year, but Lent is a good chance to begin exploring this.

By the time you're reading this, I'll be back home in beautiful, if probably damp and chilly, south Devon. Thank you for the warmth, hospitality and welcome that I've received during my four weeks with you. St Michael's is just the sort of place I'd want to make my spiritual home if my physical home were down here on the Côte d'Azur. One of the real blessings of life as the people of God is that a stranger can arrive and very quickly find a new community, not only for worship but for friendship and belonging.

I have often reflected that the Church is perhaps the only place in society where people from remarkably diverse backgrounds all mix together as family. Like our biological families, relationships can have tricky moments, but the things that hold us together – our faith, our desire to love and serve our Lord, the nourishment that comes in sacramental worship – at their best inspire us to love more deeply, to forgive more readily and to give of ourselves more fully.

As we give ourselves to Lent and look forward to the joys of Easter, may the blessings of community nourish, inspire and challenge us all to grow more deeply into becoming the people God calls us to be.

- Fr Brett Ward (locum priest)



Photo by Dung

Want to get in touch?

Editor Eric: stmichaels-messenger@outlook.com

Webmaster Simon: info@stmichaelsbeaulieusurmer.org

Our Website: www.stmichaelsbeaulieusurmer.org

Our YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@StMichaelsChurch-Beaulieu>



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