

## Dates for your diary

<b>February 7</b>	<b>Two before Lent</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Holy Communion
5.30 pm	Evensong
7.00 pm	Reflective Service
<b>February 14</b>	<b>Sunday before Lent</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Family Service
5.30 pm	BCP Holy Communion
7.00 pm	Communion Service
<b>February 17</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday</b>
10.00 am	Said Communion
8.00 pm	Sung Communion
<b>February 21</b>	<b>Lent 1</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Holy Communion
5.30 pm	Evensong
7.00 pm	Iona Service
<b>February 28</b>	<b>Lent 2</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Holy Communion
5.30 pm	Evensong
7.00 pm	Organ Service
<b>March 7</b>	<b>Lent 3</b>
8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30 am	Holy Communion
5.30 pm	Evensong
7.00 pm	Reflective Service

**First Tuesday at St John's:** the sermon preached at 8am and 10.30am on 28 February will be discussed in the Elm Shades pub on Tuesday 2 March at 8pm. All are welcome. The sermon in question is posted on the parish website [www.stjohnsredhill.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsredhill.org.uk) beforehand.

## From the registers

### Baptisms

3 January  
Alban Kedgley  
17 January  
Elizabeth Smith  
Samuel Forgie  
17 January  
Charlie Ibbotson

### Funeral

7 January  
Hilda Stenning

### ● Advance notice

Please note that the Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place in church on 29 April at 8pm.

### ● Copy dates

The next magazine will be published on 7 March. Material can be left in the magazine pigeonhole in church, or emailed to [judith.calver@btinternet.com](mailto:judith.calver@btinternet.com) by 28 February. **A colour version of the magazine is posted each month on the church website: [www.stjohnsredhill.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsredhill.org.uk). And if you would like this colour version emailed to you each month, email Judith Calver to be added to the list.**

## Promise and pain at Candlemas

When I was a small child my mother used to send me into the garden to look for snowdrops on Candlemas – a sign she said of the coming of spring. I looked at the weekend and there they were just coming into bud, alongside the winter flowering aconites. This connection with the spring is also a sign of the very ancient roots of the festival: in pagan times it was related to the spring, to new beginnings, and even before it was Christianised, it was a festival associated with women and with childbirth.

We do not focus on these pagan roots now, and even as a Christian festival we no longer hold the view that a woman might need purification after childbirth, especially if the child concerned is the Christ Child – the Light of the World. Instead, we focus on the thanksgiving for the birth of the Saviour and his traditional dedication in the Temple. But the pre-reformation Church had as a feature of its observation of this feast, a procession of all those women who had given birth in the previous 12 months, carrying candles as a thanksgiving gift, for the safe delivery of their children.

This is or was, entirely right as Candlemas is one of our festivals of Light, completing the celebration of Christmas when the Light of Christ came into the world. Mary and Joseph take Jesus, as their first born son, to the Temple to dedicate him and to give thanks for his safe arrival. On arrival they meet Simeon and Anna, both very old and holy, who have been waiting for the birth of the Messiah. Simeon was promised that he would not die until he had seen him. They recognise him instantly. Simeon describes him as “the light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of God’s people Israel”

But this is not an event of unvarnished joy, because Simeon follows on with the warning that “this child is destined for the rising and falling of many in Israel ... and a sword will pierce your own soul also.”

So the stage is set for the working out of Jesus’ earthly life – on the one hand light and joy, glory and salvation, and on the other suffering and death as a consequence of the challenge of that light, and the unresponsiveness of those to whom He came. He became subject to the opposition and hatred of those to, and, for whom He was sent and Mary his mother, who like all mothers would have wanted only the best for her child, and hoped for a gentle and joyous life for him, watched him betrayed, arrested, tried, condemned and crucified. Not for her the mundane, ordinary family life of raising her son, watching him grow and develop and perhaps raise his own son, instead she had to deal with the anguish and agony of Lent and Holy Week, without knowing as we do now, that Easter follows and joy comes in the morning.

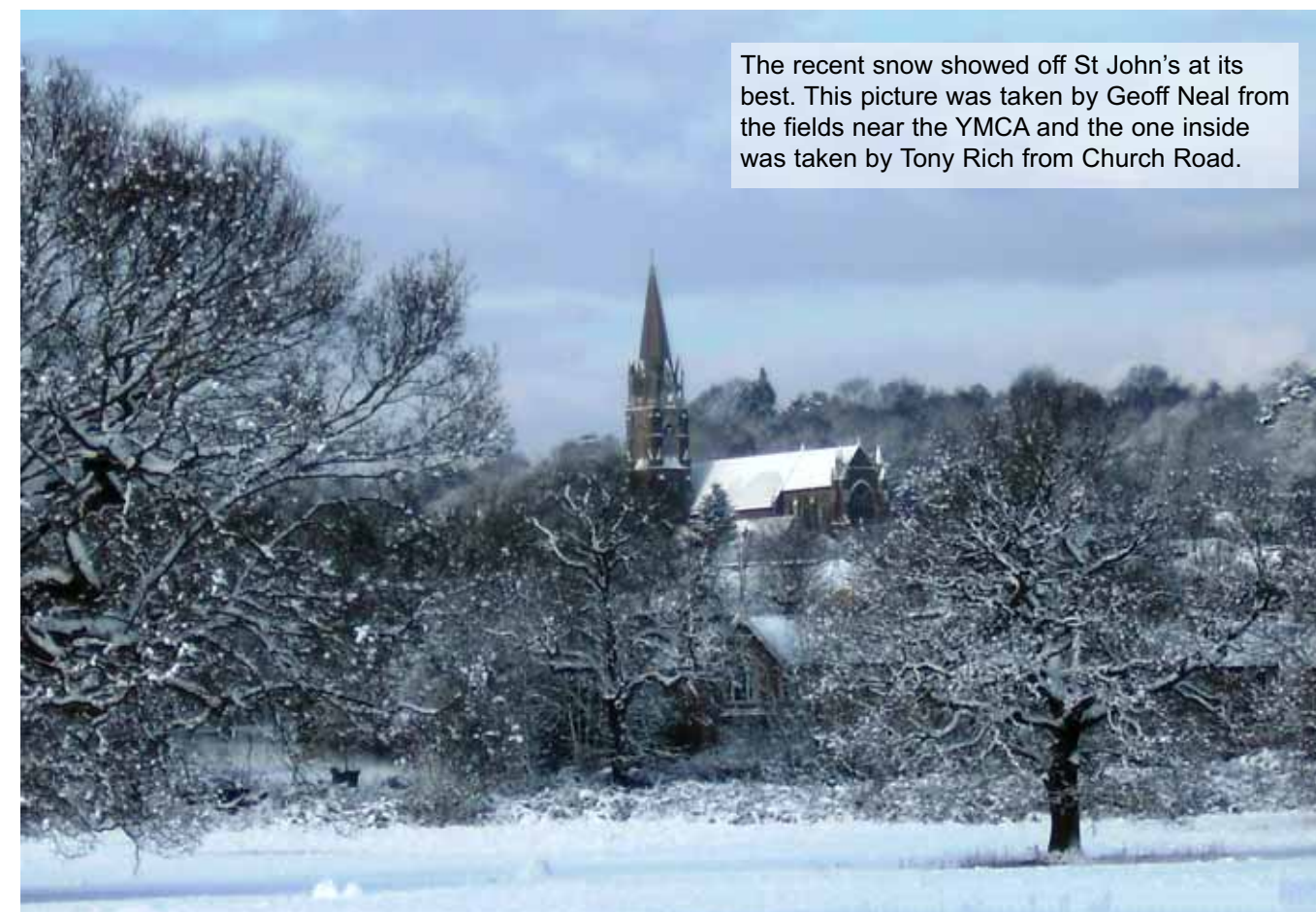
Simeon may be able to depart in peace but Mary and Joseph have both wonder and terror to face in the future. Candlemas marks for us not just the end of Christmas, but also acts as a pointer to the Passion, and a reminder that all human life is a mixture of joy and sorrow, even that of Jesus, God’s own son. Our faith in him holds together both the darkness and the light and gives us the confidence to seek him in both.

*A sermon preached by the Rev Alison Tyler at a lunchtime eucharist for Candlemas in Southwark Cathedral on 2 February.*

# St John the Evangelist, Redhill

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February 2010



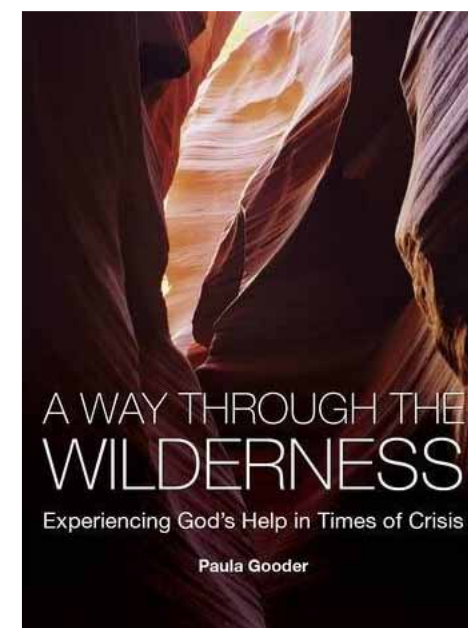
The recent snow showed off St John's at its best. This picture was taken by Geoff Neal from the fields near the YMCA and the one inside was taken by Tony Rich from Church Road.

## Lent groups 2010

When life takes us through difficult times, we should escape the loneliness of self-help and draw upon the assurance of God’s love and strength. This is the theme of *A Way Through the Wilderness*, the latest study course from theologian, Dr Paula Gooder. The course explores God’s promise to comfort his people as they negotiate their way through life’s good times, as well as the bad times. It is an appropriate book for Lent study groups, at a time when the Church draws inspiration from Christ’s 40 days in the wilderness prior to his public ministry. Each session provides opportunity for teaching and discussion, based on a short passage from Isaiah chapter 40. Successive sessions explore: the concept of comfort; the theme of wilderness as a place of comfort; becoming God’s messengers; encountering God; and receiving fresh strength from God. Those intending to join one of the groups are advised to buy a copy of the book. These are available at the special price of £5 per copy after services at the back of the church, as are times and venues of groups.

All five sessions include plenty of time for discussion and for reflection on these arresting passages from Isaiah, as we come to explore together *A Way Through the Wilderness*.

David Williams





Members of Salt and Pepper decided to treat themselves to brunch at Frankie and Benny's in Redhill for their Christmas treat. Here they are, above and below, expectantly awaiting their food!



# The Bishop's Lent Call

## India: Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service

The CCRS was established in 1971 after the Bangladesh war to undertake emergency relief measures among the thousands of refugees who came to Calcutta. It has now broadened its focus and reaches out to the population of over 250,000 in 12 urban slums in and around Calcutta and over 20 villages south of the city. CCRS attempts to tackle the issues of poverty, poor health, lack of education, unemployment illiteracy, lack of awareness of rights and the status of children and women in society.

## Uganda: Nnabagereka Development Foundation

Founded by the Nnabagereka (Queen) of Buganda Kingdom, NDF works mostly in the central region of Uganda disregarding tribe or ethnic background. Its mandate is to help improve living standards by promoting the welfare of children, youth and women. It further aims to contribute directly to the improvement of living standards through: increasing household incomes; enhancing access to education for disadvantaged children and youth; and contributing to improved health standards for all.

## Burkina Faso: Credo

In Burkina Faso one in ten children die before the age of five because of malnutrition. Tearfund has been in partnership with CREDO (Christian Relief and Development Organisation) since 1993 and since 2007 has been funding CREDO's food security work. The next phase of the three-year project will provide food and supplements, as well as mosquito nets and deworming tablets to the most vulnerable groups and train communities to end their land and start market gardens and rear animals.

Every year in Lent the Bishop of Southwark challenges us to give some thought to how we might help those who are less well off than ourselves by contributing to the work of projects in the diocese and around the world. These are the projects we are supporting this year: for full details and for special envelopes for donations, look in church

## Two projects in the Diocese of Southwark: Southwark Churches Care

SCC uses volunteers from local church congregations to help reduce isolation and loneliness among older people in the community. Volunteers are matched with isolated and lonely older people and commit to visiting them for at least an hour a week; some offer practical tasks while others take their clients out shopping or on museum or theatre trips. This year SCC plans to start three new social contact groups as an alternative for those seeking a befriender and support from the Lent Call will fund one of these groups.

## Dulwich Helpline

DHL also works with isolated older people and offers befriending, assistance with household and gardening tasks and transport, and small social groups. For the first three years the project was run by volunteers but it now also benefits from paid staff, who work with members of the founding churches who are still involved as trustees and volunteers.

## Zimbabwe: Dabane Trust

Supported by Christian Aid, the Trust helps rural people to develop low-cost sustainable water supplies for themselves, their crops and their animals, even during Zimbabwe's long, dry season.

## Lent Lunch

There will be a Soup Lunch in aid of the Bishop's Lent Appeal on Saturday 6 March in the Meadvale Hall, from 12.30-2.00pm. Come and enjoy home-made soup and good company, for a minimum donation of £3.50 per person.