

Events Coming Up!

As a change from our regular Soup and Sandwich lunches, on Saturday, 8th February, we will be serving Bacon Butties and desserts from 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. There will be the usual Cake and Fairtrade stalls

On Saturday, 8th March, there will be a Spud & Pud lunch, as we celebrate our annual Gift Day.

On Saturday, 15th February, at 6.30 p.m. Wreyfield Drive Church hold their Hymn Sing, an annual fundraising event. It starts with singing for about 1½ hours, followed by a Spud and Pud supper, cost £ 3, and another hour or so of singing. Please come and join in and sing lots of hymns and songs as well as raising money to continue the development of the church.



Wednesday Fellowship

Our Wednesday Fellowship is open to all, meeting on Wednesday afternoons at 2.30 p.m. for a short time of worship, a talk or entertainment and refreshments, and of course, a warm welcome! Their programme for the next few weeks is :-

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| 29th January | - Anthea Purdy, "Reminiscences". |
| 5th February | - Bob and Brenda Whitfield,
"Desert Island Discs". |
| 12th February | - Ann and Chris Kirkman, "Shoebboxes". |
| 19th February | - NO MEETING. |
| 26th February | - To be arranged. |
| 5th March | - Desert Island Discs, "OUR Choice!" |

From our Minister

"Lord, now let Your servant go in peace. Your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared in the sight of all peoples, a light to reveal you to the nations, and the glory of Your people Israel."

(Luke 2: 29 - 32)

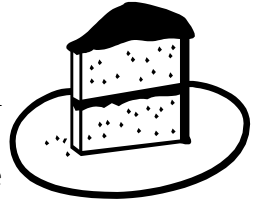
In a week or two we will reach the official end of the season of Christmas, 40 days after Christmas, and the festival known as "Candlemas".

Of course, in reality Christmas is now well and truly in the past - I know that because I ate the last piece of my Christmas cake just today! But for some parts of the church, Candlemas, celebrated on February 2nd each year, marks the end of it all. It is an ancient festival of the church, with lots of traditions attached to it. For one thing, it marks the mid-point of winter, half way between the shortest day and the first day of Spring, and there was a tradition of giving candles to light homes and to remind people that even in the midst of the dark season of the year, there is hope and light. New candles were also taken into church to be blessed, ready for use in the days ahead. No electric light back then!

Candlemas also coincides with Groundhog Day in America, which itself points to more pagan roots of this Christian festival. A groundhog is like a large squirrel. If it peers out of its hole on Candlemas - "Mid-winter Day" - and sees the sun shining, and its own shadow, it will pop straight back in, because another spell of winter is just about to begin, which will last for another six weeks. If it's dull on that day and there is no shadow to be seen, then spring is just around the corner. An ancient rhyme puts it like this: "If Candlemas be fair and bright - winter has another flight. If Candlemas brings clouds and rain, winter will not come again".

Coffee Stop at Burniston

"Coffee Stop" is now open at Burniston Methodist Church every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, serving drinks and home-made cakes, so why not drop in for a snack when you're out and about?



Dates for your Diary

Sunday, Feb. 2nd, 10.30 a.m.	All-age worship, Rev. C. Stainsby.
Saturday, Feb. 8th, 10 a.m. to 12 noon	Coffee morning, Scalby Church.
11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	Bacon Buttie lunch.
Sunday, Feb. 9th, 10.30 a.m.	Morning worship, Mr B. Clark.
Saturday, Feb. 15th, 6.30 p.m.	Hymn Sing, Wreyfield Drive.
Sunday, Feb. 16th, 10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion, Rev. M. Jackman.
Sunday, Feb. 23rd. 10.30 a.m.	Morning worship, Rev. R. Whitfield.
Feb. 24th to March 9th	Fairtrade Fortnight.
Saturday, March 1st, 10 a.m. to 12 noon	Coffee Morning, Scalby Church.
Sunday, March 16th, 3 p.m.	Service of Remembrance.

Children's Page (for children under 100!)

JESUS HAD TWELVE DISCIPLES. One appears twice in this picture! Find him!



One of the disciples brought this boy to Jesus. Read his story

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE! Find ten differences in these reflected pictures.



I guess we are all waiting for the end of winter and the beginning of spring. Not that winter's been that harsh or traditionally cold so far this season! We've escaped the floods that have blighted so many people's Christmas and New Year celebrations. And as I write this, the record breaking low temperatures in the USA have yet to reach us here. Who knows - we might escape the snow this year, but let's not bank on it!

But the true importance of Candlemas is in its connection with the presentation of Jesus in the temple by his parents, as remembered in Luke, chapter 2. His parents were following the traditional requirements of their Jewish faith. There in the Temple they encountered two prophets, Simeon and Anna. Both were elderly, and were awaiting the coming of their Saviour, and both believed that they would see him with their own eyes. In Jesus, a baby just a few weeks old, sleeping in his parents' arms, they recognised that the long-awaited moment has arrived. Simeon's words in response to Jesus are one of the most familiar passages in the Bible, also known as the Nunc Dimitis. In Jesus he sees the beginning of the salvation he has longed for. He sees the light of hope being lit, and he is full of gratitude to God who has brought that light of hope in a human child.

We are, I'm sure, waiting eagerly for the lighter mornings and evenings, and for the colourful rush of spring. Candlemas marks a step on the way towards that. But the true light of hope witnessed by Simeon is with us still, in this child, in our Saviour Jesus, whose light remains very real in this world, and will never be extinguished.

Clare

Church Flowers



We all appreciate the flowers in church each Sunday as we come to worship, and perhaps even more so do those who receive them afterwards. They are taken to those who are ill, no longer able to get to church, or going through a difficult time, and are a reminder that they are being thought about and prayed for.

Most Sundays the flowers are donated by a church member, sometimes, but not always, in memory of a loved one who has passed away.

Ladies' Circle

Our Ladies' Circle meets at 7.30 p.m. on alternate Tuesday evenings.

Elvie Gehrke will lead them in "Armchair Keep-fit" on February 4th, and on 18th, Diane Robinson will talk about "Our Celtic Roots". On March 4th, there will be an update from Derek Edwards, on "Smiles to Tanzania", the charity we are supporting with our knitting and crocheting, as well as gifts of stationery etc for schools. The AGM on March 18th will be followed by games, and on April 8th, the season finishes with a restaurant meal.

Service of Remembrance

There is to be a Service of Remembrance, at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 16th at Northstead, led by Rev. Clare Stainsby. This will provide us with an opportunity to remember all those lovely friends and relatives who have been very much part of our lives at Northstead but are no longer with us.

Coffee at Scalby

Our friends at Scalby Church hold regular Coffee Mornings, usually on the first Saturday of each month, for a different charity each time.



However, this month it's on the second Saturday, February 8th, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, in aid of "Dial-a-Ride". There will be a Cake stall and a Fairtrade stall.

The next Coffee Morning will be on Saturday, March 1st, for Parkinson UK.

A Winter Prayer of thanksgiving

Gracious God, in the storms of winter
you are our calm, our safe haven.
Spirit of calm, **give us peace.**

Gracious God, in the cold of winter
you are our hearth, our centre,
the source of life and love.
Spirit of life and love, **inspire us.**

Gracious God, in the darkness of winter
you are our light, a beacon to guide.
Spirit of hope, **shine in us.**

Gracious God, in the beauty of winter,
the gleam of frost, and the sharp, bright air,
you are our joy.
Spirit of delight, **lift our hearts in praise.**

Gracious God, in the heart of winter
you are our longing, you are our promised spring.
Spirit of truth, **live in our lives and fill the world.**

Amen.