

## Church of the Good Shepherd, Low Hill



Notices February 2025



### Spiritual Maturity

The fundamental bond of trust we share with Jesus is the foundation for all subsequent growth and actions. 2 Peter 3:18 instructs us to develop, which means consistent growth, ongoing expansion, and growing wisdom.

#### *List of do's and don'ts if we are to develop every day.*

Contemplating God's word daily is our source of comfort and guidance. Hold God's Word close to your heart. It provides the consolation, direction, correction, and encouragement we require. Recognise the mysteries of prayer. All prayers are answered, whether the response is 'Yes', 'No', or 'Wait'.

Dependency on the Spirit of God. For us, the Holy Spirit makes intercession. Let the Spirit take charge of your life's circumstances. Rom. 8:26

Consistent church attendance—Nothing can replace going to church, and as Christians, we must come together to worship God and support one another.

Let Love serve as the compass for our lives. "If you love one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples" (John 13:35). Love is one of the Christian identities.

Act as a devout Christian. Put Christ first in all of your life's decisions.

Pay attention to temptation. Being tempted is not sinful, but giving in turns it into a sin. Trust in the Holy Spirit to fight your battle.

We have to live like Christ. We should live and look in a way that honours the Gospel and draws others to it.

Act as a Christian witness. Words and deeds are the two ways we bear witness, and they should be used in tandem whenever feasible. Before continuing on your spiritual path, take some time to reflect on yourself. Find a peaceful location and spend some time in prayer.

## February 2025 News

### Notice Board

(Things that happen regularly in church).

If you want further information, get in touch via A Church Near You or the parish website contacts below - or leave a message on the church phone - 01902 731963))



**Sunday Services** continue every week at 11am. Holy Communion will be celebrated on February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

- ♥ **Over 50s**, an easy-going friendship and support group, held on alternate Mondays at 2pm. Dates in February are 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.
- ♥ **Coffee Morning**; The legendary Toastie Pat is back in action. Drop in any Friday morning 10 - 12 during school term.
- ♥ **Bushbury Youth Group** for 11 - 14-year-olds meet weekly on a Friday during term time, 7.15pm in St Mary's church hall aside from the last Friday of the month which is at St James Church, Fordhouses.
- ♥ **Waking the Dawn** is every Saturday, 8am - 9am. All are welcome at this powerhouse of prayer.

### Other news

**Saturday 8th February Day of fasting and prayer** - see more detailed comments at the end of the newsletter, or pick up the leaflet on Prayer and Fasting in church.



This is **IMPORTANT** and **FOR EVERYONE**, even if you are not able to fast from food. As many as possible are encouraged to participate and invited to gather for prayer and worship during some (or all) of the 1-hour slots provided across the parish, so that we can pray for our churches and our community; 9am - 10am (immediately following Waking the Dawn) at Good Shepherd; 2pm - 3pm at St James' and 6pm - 7pm at St Mary's.

**February 15<sup>th</sup> February Men's Breakfast**, 10am in the Parish Hall. Please leave a message with the parish office (01902 782226) for catering purposes. Topic: Is The World Coming to an End? Part II

**Thursday 20th February City Wide Prayer**, 7 - 8 pm at All Nations. Temple Street. WV2 4AN

**Tuesday 25th February Prayer for the Deanery** is 6 - 7 pm at St Mary's Church.

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February**, 4pm, marks the start of **Preparation for Confirmation** classes. If you would like to be confirmed please discuss with Rev Taiwo as soon as possible.

## Advance Notices and other information



**The Healing Service** will continue its bi-monthly pattern. The next one will be on March 9<sup>th</sup> 5 - 6pm. This will take place at Good Shepherd.

**Deanery Service and food.** 6pm Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at The Church of The Epiphany, Oxley WV10 6AA

**Confirmation Service** this year will be held on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March 4pm at St Thomas' Church, Wednesfield WV11 1SS



Lent begins in March; Ash Wednesday is on March 5<sup>th</sup> details will be given about the service closer to the time.

**Electoral Roll revision.** Every six years we are required to completely revise the electoral Roll, which is the church's register of electors. Names are not automatically carried forward, so even if you have gone through the process before you will still need to complete the application form. We elected Adrian (McDowell) as the ER Officer at last year's AGM and he will be in charge of collecting and collating the information to compile the roll. Along with the Annual General Meeting, this is a time sensitive procedure governed by the legal processes of the Church of England rules and regulations, so please make it as easy as possible for him. You will spot the legal notifications displayed on the noticeboard from 2<sup>nd</sup> February.



**The Good Shepherd Annual General Meeting** will take place after the Church Service on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. It is usually a short meeting where we receive reports of the fabric and finance of the church over the previous year and look to the year ahead. It is also the time when various church officers are elected - district and parish council representatives and churchwardens.

It doesn't sound very thrilling however, it is an essential part of the life of the church that we pray into these 'jumping through hoops' activities, to be inspired and transformed by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit as we seek to be the body of Christ in Low Hill. For those who are newer members of the church, there is a requirement to be on the Electoral Roll for six months before being nominated as a church officer.

Please do take the opportunity to ask questions about these very practical aspects of the life of the church - names of the current elected members are displayed on the notice board, or any of the leaders should be able to answer queries.



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If you need to contact Rev Taiwo Olumuyiwa, please in the first instance speak to the **Parish Office:** 01902 782226

We can also be found on: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com> (enter The Good Shepherd, Low Hill).

<https://bushburyteamministry.co.uk/church-of-the-good-shepherd>  
or find us on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CHURCH.COGS>

## FASTING and PRAYER

### What is fasting?

Simply put, fasting is when you set aside something that your body enjoys so that you can grow spiritually. Usually in the Bible the most common thing that people would set aside was food. So, when God sees that you want so much of Him that you are willing to sacrifice something like food, it moves the heart of God and it allows for us to feed the most important part of us... our spirit!

Right at the beginning we need to be very clear that fasting does not earn our salvation; for that is a gift that we receive when we ask God's forgiveness for our sins and ask Jesus to live in our lives through His Holy Spirit. What fasting does (if we are well enough to do it) is it makes the gift of salvation, the presence of God grow strong in us and is usually accompanied by prayer. Actually, being able to pray regularly and with faith is even more important than fasting, but the two can work together. SO fast if you can and start off in small ways and see it as a gift, a joy and not a chore.

### Why should we fast?

i) **To increase our intimacy with the Lord.**

See Anna in the temple. Luke 2: 37.

ii) **To be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit**

See what happens when worship, prayer and fasting combine..... Acts 13:2

iii) **To prepare ourselves to receive the Holy Spirit or stronger anointing.**

See Acts Chapter 9: 9. Saul fasts for 3 days until Ananias lays hands on him to receive the Holy Spirit (V 17 - 19).

*Matthew 17:21 NKJV However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.*

iv) **For protection and preparation.**

To consciously come under God's protection and prepare ourselves for the Lord using us.

In Esther Ch 4: 15 - 16 as Esther prepares to go before king Xerxes she asks her fellow Jews to join with her in a three day total fast i.e. fasting from food and fluid! This was also spiritual warfare.

In Matthew 4: 1 - 11 Jesus fasts from food for forty days and nights as he prepares Himself to resist the temptations of the devil and prepares Himself for His three year ministry on earth.

v) **To prepare for spiritual revival.**

One of the most famous rallying verses in the OT.... 2 Chronicles 7: 14

vi) **To see breakthroughs in our Christian lives.**

vii) **To humble ourselves before the Lord where we have sinned.**

In 2 Samuel 12: 15 - 20 King David fasts for seven days as he hopes his prayers and fasting will stay the hand of God so that his son by Bathsheeba will live.

viii) **Jesus expects us to.**

Notice that Jesus didn't say *if* you fast when he was talking to them, He said *when* you fast, therefore it is implied that believers are expected to fast.

## Is Fasting safe?

Yes, it is safe as long as you are in good health and don't have certain medical conditions. If in doubt it is worth asking your GP about what might safe fasting look like for you - and for some people it is not safe to fast at all.

Also, just as it is not safe to attempt to walk 10 miles in one go if you struggle to walk 1 mile so don't fast all food for three days when you have never gone without just one meal!

## How to fast?

When you fast don't make it obvious, keep it to yourself, keep it between you and God and if you do so as Christ says '*Your Father in heaven will reward you*'.

If you are used to taking in caffeine then before you fast either wean yourself off caffeine or continue to drink tea and coffee, but less strong than normal.

So, what type of fast should you do? Well, that is between you and God. He is the one who will give you the right idea about how many days you should fast and He gives you peace and confidence about it.

## **Five types of fasting.**

i) **Absolute Fast.** No food or water for a period of time. Please don't do this fast unless you are convinced the Lord is leading you and you have sought advice from leaders.

ii) **Complete Fast.** No food. Water or juice only. Aim to drink 1 - 2 litres of fluid per day.

iii) **Selective Fast.** No meat, sweets, bread - only fruits, veg & liquids. This is sometimes referred to as the Daniel fast.

iv) **Partial Fast.** No food between specified times. For example, only eat in the evenings say from 6pm, which leaves you the whole day to fast and pray.

v) **Media Fast.** Abstain from TV, films, gaming, Social Media.

At the end of your fast be careful not to eat too much which is so easy to do! Start off eating something light and then have a light meal before you go to bed if you are fasting for just a day.

## **Some inspiring thoughts and quotes**

American writer Bob Sorge says Jesus did not die for a bride that yawns in church on a Sunday but for a bride with fire in her eyes who feels as passionate about Him as He does about her. Surely the very concept of a 'passionless Christian' is the greatest oxymoron in the world! God longs to restore passion & fire in His people; it starts with us, so Lord revive our hearts! In the natural, the heart can suffer arrhythmia, cardiomyopathy & coronary heart disease. Sadly, they all have their spiritual equivalents that work to disaffect & disease our hearts before the Lord. Maybe today & during this day of prayer & fasting, the Lord might perform a spiritual electrocardiogram (ECG) on us His people; testing the activity & health of our hearts. Maybe the Holy Spirit might take a heavenly defibrillator to administer an injection of divine life to our hearts, that we might know His reviving power restoring our hearts to their God-intended rhythm! Let's come to the Lord with hunger today, for hunger escorts us into the



deeper things of God. Let's come to the Lord with a hunger that is not driven by the desire to get something from Him but simply to know Him more, to encounter Him, to be filled with His life, to know Him reviving our hearts.

**"PRAYER IS REACHING OUT AFTER THE UNSEEN; FASTING IS LETTING GO OF ALL THAT IS SEEN & TEMPORAL. FASTING HELPS EXPRESS, DEEPEN, CONFIRM THE RESOLUTION THAT WE ARE READY TO SACRIFICE ANYTHING, EVEN OURSELVES TO ATTAIN WHAT WE SEEK FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD" (ANDREW MURRAY)**

**"FASTING IN THE BIBLICAL SENSE IS CHOOSING NOT TO PARTAKE OF FOOD BECAUSE YOUR SPIRITUAL HUNGER IS SO DEEP, YOUR DETERMINATION IN INTERCESSION SO INTENSE, OR YOUR SPIRITUAL WARFARE SO DEMANDING THAT YOU HAVE TEMPORARILY SET ASIDE EVEN FLESHLY NEEDS TO GIVE YOURSELF TO PRAYER & MEDITATION." (WESLEY L. DUEWEL)**

