

MOTHERING SUNDAY

Planning meeting

MONDAY 2 MARCH 7.30PM

IF you wish to help or suggest ideas then you are welcome to attend this meeting in the Church Room.

Keep-fit & Pilates

A BRAND new class to help improve general fitness, heart and lung function by performing light cardio-vascular exercises using your own body weight, has begun in the Church Hall, every TUESDAY afternoon at 1pm.

Fitness pilates movements strengthen your core, back and glutes, to help you tone up, get fit & improve bone density.

Relaxed, laid back classes, perfect for beginners, £6 per session or book 6 for £30. For more info, email Hayley Rose: resultft@outlook.com

LENT COURSE

THE focus of our Lent Course will be: 'Let's talk... Jesus!' with a mixture of short films, discussion, sharing and prayer.

Simply come to church on any or all the WEDNESDAY evenings in Lent:

First session is this week, starting on 4 March with subsequent sessions each Wednesday until 8 April beginning at 7.30pm.

Please sign up the attendance sheet at the rear of church on the font to help with planning purposes. *Thank you!*

www.saintstephensoundwell.org

 saintstephen soundwell  @SoundwellChurch

CHARITY NUMBER 1131503

A CELEBRATION
OF THE LIFE OF
Elaine Cox

FRIDAY 6 MARCH 10AM
in Church

Everyone is welcome to attend
The family ask you, please wear something red if you'd like to

A CELEBRATION
OF THE LIFE OF

Jackie Sheppard

FRIDAY 13 MARCH 1PM
in Church

Everyone is welcome to attend

ST STEPHENS MEN'S GROUP 25th Anniversary Celebration and Thanksgiving

SATURDAY 7 MARCH 7PM

IN Church to begin the evening but then after in the Church Hall at 7.45pm for Refreshments, with Entertainment from **The Chris Knox Big Band**.

There is no charge for admission to the evening but obtain a ticket from Brian Brown for catering planning.

OPEN SPACE is published this week! The monthly Church Diary for March and other events are also listed there for your interest.

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WHERE



01 MARCH 2020

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

BIBLE READINGS: GENESIS 2:15-17& 3:1-7; MATTHEW 4:1-11

There is greater joy in God

MY TESTIMONY includes episodes of a movement both away from faith as well as a journeying towards faith.

I did not grow up in church, and it wasn't until age 14 that a friend invited me, and I agreed to go, to his church.

I immediately loved going and also being part of the youth group there.

Two years later I accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour and so then I took the steps to become a Christian.

However, I thought that to be a Christian I had to be really 'good' and so quickly Christianity to me became just a list of rules and things to do or not do.

Upon going to university I had the options to choose to continue in a faith that seemed joyless, or to follow the more seemingly attractive and alternative student 'temptations of the world'.

Unlike Jesus in the desert, my misunderstanding of who God is and what Christ-like living is actually all about, led me to succumb to temptation instead.

In my final year of university I had an accident that caused me to rethink my future choices in life, because despite it all, I still believed in God even if I wasn't following him.

I thus came back to church, and I re-engaged with faith and uncovered the truth I had missed before. There is greater joy in God than in anything else in this world. Through grace we receive God's joy, not as a list of rules, but as a relationship with eternal source of all joy and goodness.

Finally, Christianity made sense for me and as a result I began to experience some of the life in all its fullness that Jesus offers all of us. **Aidan Watson**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS
GENESIS 12:1-4a; JOHN 3:1-17