

Focus March 2021



Northhall Baptist Church – 200 years and still going.

A little Church with strong local links.

The March winds will blow and we will have snow

I do hope that this saying will not come true this year. However, I have noticed that it often snows, having a last blast on my brother's birthday on March 6th. We'll see what happens this year.

In the Church calendar, though, Lent is to be a feature this month. Lent starts on Ash Wednesday 17th February right through until either Maundy Thursday on 1st April or Easter Day on 4th April. So during March many Christians may be part of a fasting, prayer and penance regime.

So why do we celebrate Lent? At the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry, we read about Jesus being baptised in the River Jordan by John the Baptist who preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Why therefore did Jesus need to be baptised? He was sinless! But Jesus was both God and human – he underwent baptism and death as a human, identifying with the people he had come to save. Then, he needed to prepare himself for his teaching and preaching, over the next few years, which led to his death and resurrection.

Now some 2000 years later – baptism in the Jordan today



After Jesus baptism, the Spirit led him into the desert on his own, where he was wholly dependent on his Heavenly Father. He was kept safe by angels, although there were wild animals keen to attack him. The Devil tempted him with riches and glory – all the kingdoms of the world. Jesus has all those. We are also told that Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. As a human, that would have been really difficult but he was strong enough to resist when the Devil suggested he as God could quite easily turn stones into bread.

In recognition of this sacrifice Christians try to fast or give up some of our good life for the 40 days of Lent. Giving up chocolate, meat, alcohol etc. for this period may be a test but nothing in comparison. Satan tried to get Jesus to sin, but was unsuccessful. Again, Satan is unsuccessful in thinking that Jesus death was the end.

Lent in the Christian calendar is a time of preparation for Easter. Easter is celebrated as Jesus died at that Passover weekend 2,000 years ago and 3 days later rose out of the grave – the pivotal point for the believer. Jesus is alive today. Jesus says in Revelation 1 'I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever!'

We are having Zoom Lent sessions on Wednesdays 24th February to 24th March inclusive at 8pm. You are welcome to join us. Please contact me on the number below.

We are continuing our Sunday services on Zoom for the foreseeable future at 11 am. If you would like to join in the worship, music and song, you'll get a very warm welcome. Please ring the number below or contact us via our website.

For those interested in the history of Northhall Baptist Church, a free copy of the booklet, Rebels in Green Pastures can be supplied or downloaded from our website: <http://northhallbaptistchurch.org/>