

# The Chapter Letter



SUNDAY 17 MARCH – SATURDAY 30 MARCH 2019

Lent is a time of prayer and fasting or abstinence. So, too, are Ember Days. There are three Ember Days four times a year, called Embertides, during which we pray for God's blessing on our labours. The Ember Days of Lent this year are 13, 15, 16 March.

They are prescribed in *The Book of Common Prayer* (BCP 1662) in 'A Table of the Vigils, Fasts, and Days of Abstinence to be Observed in the Year' (p.31 in my edition), which prescribes fasting or abstinence for (a) the eves of sixteen feast days; (b) the forty days of Lent; (c) the Ember-Days at the Four Seasons - Wednesday, Friday and Saturday after (i) The First Sunday in Lent, (ii) The Feast of Pentecost, (iii) September 14 [Holy Cross] and (iv) the December 13 [St Lucy's Day]; and (d) all Fridays in the Year, except Christmas Day if a Friday. Those four Embertides were remembered by an English rhyme, "Fasting days and Emberings be / Lent, Whitsun, Holyrood, and Lucie," or more colloquially as, "Lenty, Penty, Cruci, Lucy".

The *Common Worship* lectionary revised the dates. Understanding Ember Days to be times of prayer for ministry, it linked them more closely to the times of ordinations and in line with calendar reforms in the Catholic Church. This lectionary gives the Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays in the weeks before the following Sundays: The Third Sunday of Advent, the Second Sunday of Lent, the Sundays nearest 29 June [Pentecost] and 29 September [Michaelmas], and liturgical materials are provided for these days (*CW: Times and Seasons*, pp.636-642). The Ember Days here are days of prayer and fasting for vocations and ministry.

It still comes as a surprise to some in church congregations that the Church of England prescribes fasts for Fridays and Ember Days, as well as Lent, even though Jesus fasted and taught about 'when you fast' and not 'if'. But not all clergy were formed by these disciplines, and if they don't inhabit them, they are unlikely to teach them. And as, these days, we stress autonomy, we like to make our own choices, to be our own masters, rather than to have our lives directed by common expectations of one another within the church.

These days we are aware that though there can also be health benefits to fasting, there are also some risks for some people at some times to fast too much, so advice might be sought if you have a health concern or are pregnant. But as a shared experience among members of the church, fasting and abstinence can build us up as a community. Fasting brings inner stillness, conducive to the attentive and watchful prayerfulness that re-orientates us. Feeling hunger, we stand in solidarity with the hungry, recognise our dependence on God, and so remember to hunger and long for God in all we do.

Paul Overend, Chancellor

## BIBLE READINGS

**Sunday 17 March**  
*Second Sunday of Lent*

**Sung Eucharist**  
Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18  
Philippians 3:17-4.1  
Luke 13: 31-end  
**Mattins**  
Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16  
Romans 11: 13-24  
**Evensong**  
Jeremiah 22: 1-9, 13-17  
Luke 14: 27-33

**Sunday 24 March**  
*Third Sunday of Lent*

**Sung Eucharist**  
Isaiah 55: 1-9  
1 Corinthians 10: 1-13  
Luke 13: 1-9  
**Mattins**  
Deuteronomy 6:4-9  
John 17: 1a, 11b-19  
**Evensong**  
Genesis 28: 10-19a  
John 1: 35-end

**Sunday 31 March**  
*Fourth Sunday of Lent*  
*Mothering Sunday*

**Sung Eucharist**  
Exodus 2: 1-10  
John 19: 25b-27  
**Mattins**  
Genesis 37: 3-4, 12-end  
1 Peter 2: 16-end  
**Evensong**  
Prayer of Manasseh  
2 Timothy 4: 1-18

## Worship & Mission

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### Supporting Worship and Mission

Regular giving is an important source of funding for the worship and mission of Lincoln Cathedral. If you would like to set up regular giving to support the worship and mission, or indeed any other aspect of the Cathedral, standing order forms are available from the tables in the north and south choir aisles. Thank you for your support.

### Confirmation

If anyone would be interested in exploring the possibility of confirmation please speak to the Subdean or email: [Subdean@lincolncathedral.com](mailto:Subdean@lincolncathedral.com)

### Lent, Holy Week and Easter

Please see the leaflet for seasonal services and events during Lent, Holy Week and Easter.

### Spiritual Formation

**Lectio Divina:** Bible Reflection Group on 30 March, 4-5pm at 27 Minster Yard. We look at the following day's lectionary readings.

**The Resilient Disciple:** The next quiet afternoons on this Lent book, led by The Venerable Justine Allain Chapman, will be on Monday 18 March 1-4pm, and on Saturday 6 April 2-5pm. These will be £10 each. Please book online, or by phone on 01522 504394, in which case you can pay at the door.

**Stillpoint:** Contemplative prayer, next takes place on 23 March 9.00-9.45am in the Ringers' Chapel.

**Spiritual Classics Reading Group:** Next meets on 6 April, when we will discuss *The Merciful Humility of God*, by Dr Jane Williams. This book is on sale in the shop. Do read the book and come to the meeting 10.30am refreshments, for 10.45-12.00 meeting, at 27 Minster Yard.

**Intercessory Group:** Led by the Revd Canon Michael Boughton, and meets each Wednesday at 2pm in the Longland Chapel.

### Lent Sermon Series 'On Christian Virtue'

This series explores virtues of Christian living, to help us to consider how we live the Christian life, and to help those preparing for baptism and confirmation to consider what their commitment entails. The topics have been chosen by the preachers.

17 March (Lent 2) Hope; 24 March (Lent 3) Generosity; 31 March (Lent 4) Courage; 7 April (Lent 5 /Passiontide) Faithfulness.

The preachers are named in the leaflet for seasonal services and events during Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Please do take a copy with you.

### Forest Stations

The Forest Stations have been placed in the Nave, arranged in a pilgrim route to enable us to follow in a Way of the Cross (the *Via Crucis*) that culminates at the font. At baptism, a prayer evoking the Spirit over the water in the font says, 'Now send your Spirit, that those who are washed in this water may die with Christ and rise with him, to find true freedom as your children, alive in Christ for ever.' This is a reminder to us that in Lent and Passiontide we share in the way of the cross of Christ, and a preparation for our renewing our promises at the Easter Vigil.

The Stations will be on display until Pentecost, which ends the Eastertide season. There will be opportunity to join prayerfully in the way of the cross from 4.40pm on the following dates and times, before CW Evening Prayer in St Hugh's Shrine:

- Wednesday 27 March,
- Wednesday 3 April
- Monday 8 April
- Friday 12 April

## Community

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### Easter Flowers

Easter will be here soon. If anyone could donate towards Easter Lilies, the Flower Team would be most grateful. Vergers can receive donations as can flower team members.

Many thanks, Michaela Philp

### Lincoln Cathedral Community Association

Dates for your Diary: Pentecost Tea Party 9 June in the Cloisters; Annual General Meeting 7th October; Harvest Supper 16 October. More details will be published nearer the dates, but please put the dates in your diary

## Events

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### St John Passion

Saturday 6 April, 7pm

Lincoln Cathedral Choir will perform J.S. Bach *St John Passion* this year. Accompanied by Northern Baroque this is sure to be a profound and inspiring way to mark this Passiontide season.

### Byrd meets Bird

Wednesday 8 May, 7.30pm

A concert by the Choir of Lincoln Cathedral with a Jazz Quintet.

### Magna Carta Lecture - 'Rights and Freedoms Today'

Thursday 27 June, 7pm

For this year's Magna Carta Lecture we welcome Shami Chakrabarti, the Shadow Attorney General and a member of the House of Lords.

### Organ Concert Series 2019

Saturday 18 May, 7pm, Colin Walsh

Saturday 15 June, 7pm, Martin Baker

Saturday 21 July, 7pm, Hilary Punnett

Saturday 21 September, 7pm, Charles Harrison

Friday 4 October, 7pm, Organ Extravaganza

Sunday 22 December, 5.30pm, La Nativité de Seigneur

Tickets £8.50 including a drink on arrival