

LENT & SHROVE TUESDAY

SHROVE TUESDAY is part of the preparation for **LENT** that, in turn, prepares us for **EASTER**.

The term 'shrove' is derived from the word 'shriven' which means confession, and so **SHROVE TUESDAY** is part of a time of confession as we prepare for Lent. It is a time to get rid of "clutter" in our lives.

Traditionally all the flour in the house was used to make pancakes which were then eaten. This symbolised a purging of the old in preparation for the new, abundant life God has given to us through Jesus life, death and resurrection.

SHROVE TUESDAY has traditionally become a day of 'feasting' before the 'fast' and what better way to feast than with pancakes!

This year we will be doing a Drive Thru Pancake Evening & Pancake Decorating Competition (see attached info).



During **LENT** we remember the time that Christ spent in the desert before he began his public ministry (Luke 4: 1-13). It was for Him a time of contemplation, reflection, and preparation. He spent 40 days fasting and praying in preparation for his ministry.

By observing Lent, Christians follow Jesus' example. Lent consists of the forty days before Easter (not counting Sundays, because they are always the joyful celebration of the Resurrection). Therefore, the first day of Lent is always a Wednesday. This year Lent begins on the 2nd of March and ends on Easter Sunday (17 April).



In ancient times, people marked times of fasting, prayer, repentance, and remorse by placing ashes on their foreheads, as in 2 Samuel 13:19, Esther 4:1-3, Job 42:6, and Jeremiah 6:26. This scriptural custom entered the church from Judaism, and it is most appropriate on Ash Wednesday (the start of Lent), when we begin a period of sober reflection, self-examination, and spiritual re-direction.

Please consider joining us for an Ash Wednesday Service at 18h00 on 2 March. Please book through the church office.

Some people only celebrate the happy times in Jesus' life: Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas. But I think as true friends, we should also watch and pray with him on Maundy Thursday, stand by him at the cross on Good Friday and retreat with him into the wilderness during Lent.

As we practise Lent today, many Christians give up something of value to them for the 40 days (chocoholics may give up chocolate or TV-oholics could give up TV for example!). This is a constant reminder to us, as we miss it, of our commitment to Christ and his commitment to us.

We don't 'fast' (give something up) for the sake of fasting but in order to remind ourselves of God and God's provision in our lives and therefore allow God to work in a special way in our daily lives. We are reminded of God every time we remember that which we have given up. We should also not 'fast' unless we feel it will be beneficial to our spiritual growth.

Today the word 'fasting' means a total abstinence from all food. In the historic Church, it means a disciplined diet so that your animal appetites become a sort of spiritual snooze alarm. Fasting is a spiritual discipline that should not involve starvation or dehydration.

