

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

WEDNESDAY, 4th FEBRUARY, 10am – 12 noon; monthly Memory Cafe at Westbury Grange. A safe place where people living with dementia and their carers can find a warm welcome and support. Cost is £1.50 for tea/coffee, cake and a raffle. For more details phone 01908 210322.

MONDAY, 9th FEBRUARY, 7.30pm at Lovat Hall: Planning meeting for Holiday Club

WEDNESDAY, 11th FEBRUARY, 7.30pm: Annual quiz at the Methodist Church

WEDNESDAY, 18th FEBRUARY: Quiet Day for Ash Wednesday, 10am – 4pm at the Well at Willen, MK15 9AA. Cost is £20 which includes a light lunch (bursaries available on request). To book a place, phone 01908 242190 or email bookings@thewellatwillen.org.uk.

FRIDAY, 20th FEBRUARY – FRIDAY, 27th MARCH: Weekly Lent lunches at the URC Hall

WEDNESDAY, 23rd FEBRUARY, SHARE A BOOK, 2.30-4pm at The Well at Willen Library: Share the pleasure of special religious books with Peter Ballantyne. For more information email library@thewellatwillen.org.uk or phone 01908 242693.

FRIDAY, 6th MARCH, 7.30pm at Lovat Hall: Service to mark Women's World Day of Prayer. The service for 2015 has been written by Christian women of the Bahamas. Although written by women, all are invited to the service – men and children too. Over a period of 36 hours, 170 countries will have taken part. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland over 5,000 services will be held, focusing on the theme of: *Jesus said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you?'* Come and join us at Lovat Hall for your local Day of Prayer service

SUNDAY, 24th MAY, CTNP PENTECOST PICNIC, from 12.30pm on the Sports area of Bury Field (near the Health Centre entrance to the common) in Newport Pagnell: a chance to mix and have fun on the birthday of the church. All age games to join in with, drinks provided, just bring yourselves and a picnic. Come along and get to know people from other churches and meet up with friends already known! Let's celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church! Please note the date in your diary now!

CTNP President: Vacancy
Secretary: Vacancy
Treasurer: Paul Tolley, PTMERCEDES@aol.com Tel. 01908 615729

CTNP website: - www.ctnp.org.uk



CONNECTIONS FEBRUARY 2015

*May the mind of Christ my Saviour live
in me from day to day, by His love and
power controlling all I do and say.*
Kate Barclay Wilkinson (1859-1928)

LENT LUNCHES

Come and join us at the Lent Lunches every Friday from **February 20th to March 27th** at the URC Hall, Newport Pagnell from 12 noon to 1.15pm.

Enjoy delicious home-made soup with a variety of bread, rolls and cheeses.

Cost is £3.50 and all profits go to Christian Aid.

For more information please contact Jennifer Mazzone on 01908 613088

HOLIDAY CLUB 2015

This year's CTNP Children's Holiday Club will take place from 10th to 14th August (mornings). Please note the dates in your diaries. Lots of volunteers needed! The first planning meeting will be held on Monday, 9th February at 7.30pm in Lovat Hall – all welcome!

Articles to the Editor, Beth MacKay
Preferably by e-mail to beth.mackay@yahoo.co.uk 01908 612475
Copy Deadline - 20th of each month

LETTER FROM A MINISTER

I wonder how you feel about February. – traditionally February fill-dyke? Is it dreary and wet but fortunately only 28 days long? Or perhaps you see bulbs beginning to flower and the days getting longer and think to yourself that however bleak the weather is just now, warmer and sunnier days are on the way.

One thing that may make you a bit depressed in February is realising that you haven't managed to keep all those good resolutions that you made at the beginning of the year. Perhaps Dry January got a little damp, or the diet went to the wall when you saw a really delicious cake in the coffee shop or the daily exercise didn't survive the reality of cold mornings and a comfortable bed. But, on the other hand, you can always start again and hope that this time you will do better, especially as you now know the pitfalls that made it hard the last time.

February can seem like a time when nothing much happens. The excitement of Christmas is over and Easter still a long way away, even if the supermarkets are already selling Easter Eggs! But one thing that does happen is Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day, closely followed by the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday. For Christians, Lent gives us an opportunity to look at how we're doing and renew some of those resolutions which we've somehow managed to neglect. Some people give up things for Lent. Often this seems to include chocolate or alcohol, so this may be a good time to start a diet. Others think about what they could do to help others and make this their focus, or try to be more disciplined about praying or reading the Bible. Sometimes we may fail, just as sometimes we don't manage to keep our New Year resolutions, but we have the promise that when we recognise where we have failed, God will forgive us and help us when we try to do better next time.

It may well be an on-going process. One Christian described it as stumbling again and again, but always being picked up by God through faith in His Son. He loves us and forgives us and can bring us to the light and joy of Easter. One of God's great gifts to us is the gift of hope. However bad things seem, we always have the hope of a better future. We do not need to be afraid because God is with us, whatever happens.

Revd Glynis Bell

EMERGENCY HELP SCHEME

The scheme continues to give support to local people needing transport to clinical appointments. The majority of these are to Milton Keynes Hospital, however journeys of within a radius of 50 miles may be undertaken.

Recently, we have had two new drivers which will lighten the load on the existing team.

I am writing this on the eve of our first lunch where drivers and committee can meet together over a hot meal. Our co-ordinators do a sterling job in matching clients with drivers, but often they haven't met the person on the end of the line. By the time you read this, we will have enjoyed our meal and voices will have been matched to at least some of the faces, and perhaps some friendships forged too.

The scheme is looking for a new chairperson as I step down at the AGM in the summer. Please consider this prayerfully both privately and within your church. If you are interested in learning more, I can fill you in on duties involved and am also prepared to continue to serve on the committee if this will help to ease a new officer into the role. You can contact me on **01908 615729** or by email nitagt53@aol.com.

Nita Tolley, Chair of Emergency Help Scheme

LENT HOUSE GROUPS

Some of you may be wondering what is happening about CTNP Lent study groups this year. Numbers participating fell considerably last year to the extent that it wasn't possible to organise any evening groups (although there was a successful afternoon group). We had a discussion about this at the June Forum and it was left to the Executive and the Mission Group to decide whether to organise any this year. It was agreed **not** to organise any groups this year and to revisit this for 2016 by which time CTNP will hopefully have more man/woman power on the Executive and the working groups.

As you know, CTNP is still without a Chair or Secretary and a new **Treasurer** will also be required this summer as Paul Tolley's term of office comes to an end in June. If you think you may be able to help with any of these roles, or are aware of someone else who might, please get in touch. You'll find detailed information on what's involved on our website at www.ctnp.org.uk.

Beth MacKay, editor of Connections