

# Letter from the Minister

Sandpipers, Southampton Road, Hythe SO45 5AA  
Tel: Office 023 8084 5008  
& Home 023 8020 7868



Dear Friends,

*This month the magazine letter has been written by one of our Elders, Kay Keen.  
Thank you Kay.*

*With best wishes for the month ahead.*

*Eddie*

Whilst it is now April, we are still in the season of Lent. Easter is very late this year, so much so that the school holidays are before Easter and the children and young people return for the summer term immediately following Easter Monday for a slightly shorter summer term than usual.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and is the 40-day period before Easter (excluding Sundays). The significance of 40 days is based on two periods of spiritual testing in the bible. The first being the 40 years the Israelites wandered in the desert after the exodus from Egypt and secondly, the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting and being tempted.

The word "Lent" is an old English word from a Latin root meaning 'to lengthen'. It reminds us that during this season winter turns into spring with the days beginning to noticeably get longer. With this comes the warmer weather and new growth with signs of new life emerging all around us. I always enjoy the daffodils planted by the roadside in Hythe and Dibden Purlieu and the wonderful display of colour they provide.

We were fortunate not to have any snow this winter but, nevertheless, during the winter things can get blown about, covered in mud and litter and can also be trampled upon. With spring comes new growth and the healing of the damage that took place during the winter months. This amazing healing is almost a miracle in itself.

Lent can be a little bit like this. It is a time of preparation and reflection before we celebrate the joy of Easter Day and Jesus' glorious resurrection from the dead. During Lent we recall the events leading up to Easter and Jesus' death on the cross for our salvation. It is a time to examine ourselves and to seek His forgiveness. In other words it can be a time when we have a spring clean of our lives. For some people it can be helpful to give up something and to spend more time in prayer and helping others. So when Easter Day arrives we will be truly able to experience the joy of that day and to celebrate that 'He is risen'. **'Hallelujah'**.

*Kay Keen*