

ECB's NOTICE BOARD

19th February	10.30am	Informal Worship 2nd before Lent <i>1 Corinthians 11:2-16 The head</i> Leader: Tony Shields Preacher: Robert Jackson Reading: Sandy Addison Prayers: Clare Bean
	7.00pm	Evening Service <i>Just Ten – Keep peace with your parents</i> <i>Exodus 20:12</i> Leader: Ian Biscoe Preacher: Erika Biscoe
20th February	3.10–4.15pm	After school club for school years 4-6
	7.30-8.30pm	Prayer Meeting for Syria & The Middle East
21st February	10.00-12noon	Rock of Ages Café
	7.00-7.30pm	Prayers in church
	7.15pm	ALPHA course (meet in Bure Farm)
	7.30pm	Men's Curry club meets at Anica
	7.30pm	Deanery Synod at ECB
22nd February	7.00-7.30pm	Prayers in church
23rd February	6.30-8.00pm	Youth Group – Years 7, 8 & 9 <i>Includes STIR from 7:30 to 8:00pm</i>
24th February	7.30-8.30pm	Contemplative Compline <i>Women Jesus met</i> <i>Samaritan woman (Living Water)</i>
26th February	10.30am	Informal Communion Next before Lent <i>1 Corinthians 11:17-34 Lord's Supper</i> Leader: Peter Hill Preacher: Mark Ellis Reading: Jeanette Collett Prayers: Dora Potter
	7.00pm	Encounter God Evening Led by Rach Bowen & Rose Hunt



Welcome!

*to the church
at the heart
of the community*

Prayer chain: prayerchain@emmanuelbicester.org.uk

Notices: notices@emmanuelbicester.org.uk

email to receive either of these.

Website: www.emmanuelbicester.org.uk

**19th February
2017**

We extend a warm welcome to regulars and visitors alike. If you are new at Emmanuel, or visiting, please do introduce yourself to one of the Welcome Team.

Carol Hill writes:

Rose-tinted spectacles or 'Faith'?

There is a timeworn word 'Journey' used to describe Christian living. Our lives are not static – we go through various landscapes as we mature, and come across stumbling blocks. Learning to negotiate around these is what gives us character and strength to keep going. We learn who we really are, at core.

Lately my journey has taken me into an examination of 'faith'. I go into nursing homes and hospitals, meeting devoted Christian people caught in webs of dementia and deep sadness. I see people confronted with compromised mobility wondering how they will cope when sent home, but not wanting to go into nursing homes. I see people tired of living.

And I wonder about what I can offer them.

I believe in facing reality and don't minimise people's pain. I don't offer them that 'rose-tinted' view that denies suffering in this life.

So, what exactly IS faith? The Letter to the Hebrews tells us: *"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen". (11:1)*

There is something about this particular verse that echoes deep within. Words cannot describe something so elusive and intangible as faith – but this verse captures its essence. I once read a book written by someone who came to the UK on the kinder transport – Lore Segal. She stayed with Christians, and they taught her about Jesus. Refugees were also taught by a visiting rabbi and she took her confusion to him and said:

"It says in the Bible that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son ... and I was surprised at the sudden taste of tears with the sweetness of the words in my mouth."

This is faith, it is 'other', luminous, inexplicable and there despite

circumstance. It lies deep within all of us, nascent, awaiting coming into full bloom.

So, what can we offer those suffering? Prayer is an amazing gift. It opens up a channel between earth and heaven, enabling others to experience God.

Psalm 8 (Message) tells us
*God is a safe house for the battered,
A sanctuary during bad times.
The moment you arrive; you relax;
You are never sorry you knocked.*

Circumstances don't necessarily change – but the atmosphere *always* does.

Psalm 10 (Message) tells us:

*The victim's faint pulse picks up;
The hearts of the hopeless pump red blood
As you put your ear to their lips*

God hears us – he 'puts HIS ear to our lips'. He comes CLOSE to us.

Is Faith just seeing our life through a different coloured lens? No, it alters the very fabric of our lives, our reality is completely changed. We know there is a safe house in God, and that he gives us strength to survive whatever life may throw at us. It is a whole new dimension of living. One might even say it is like being born again ...

Blessings Carol

PRAYER REQUESTS - If you would value prayer for yourself or a loved one, please email the ECB prayer chain prayerchain@emmanuelbicester.org.uk. Tuesday morning prayers are at 9am in the Community Room.

Lent course - Starting on Tuesday 28th February with pancakes in church. The course will run in some small groups and on a Wednesday in church for those not currently in a group. *Speak to Ian for details.*

Coming soon: **GARDEN TALK.**

An opportunity to talk about gardening and growing your own food, for people starting out and enthusiasts! Saturdays 4 March, 1 April, 29 April in the café, 10am-12 noon. *For more information chat to Jo Morey or Debbie Winson.*

Events for Men....

Curry Club Tuesday 21st February, 7:30pm at Anica in Dean's Court. *Contact Colin Arter or Pete Stoddart to book.*

Breakfast Saturday 18th March. Organised by Churches in Bicester. Details and booking instructions to follow.

Real Easter Eggs – If you would like to order Fairtrade eggs with the Easter Story in the box, please speak to Karen or sign up on the sheet available.

Prison Fellowship – Angel Tree for Mothering Sunday. The Bicester Prison Fellowship will be raising funds for this project over the next few weeks – look out for flyers and a collection box.

Social badminton for learners. Thursdays 20:30-21:30 at Bicester leisure centre.
Speak to Clare Bean if interested

ROTAS

Welcome Team

19th February Heather Hindmarsh & Andrew Collett
26th February Andrew & Jeanette Collett
5th March Del Hindmarsh & Doreen Thompson

Sunday Team Duties (Refreshments, taking up the offering)

19th February Living Waters & Tuesday 20's and 30's
26th February MSG & Monday 20's & 30's
5th March Oasis & Super small group

Sunday Club

19th February
26th February
5th March

Mustard Seeds (crèche)

Vicky W & Elizabeth A
Kate & Rowan
Jane & Sophie

Cherry Blossom (Pre-school/Foundation)

Heidi & Qi
Jo & Mike W
Helle & Doyin

Sunday Club

19th February
26th February
5th March

Willows (School yrs 1-3)

Erika & Sam B
Jackie, Ken & Liz
Jo & Sam B

Silver Birches (School yrs 4-6)

And & Liz W
Ceri & And
And & Maureen

Youth

19th February
26th February
5th March

The Grid (School year 7+)

TBC & Debbie
Sam W & Tamara
Karl & Fleur

Finance Team

19th February
26th February
5th March

Pete Stoddart & Geoff Saunders
Roger Winson & Nick Hebditch
TBC

Any notices for next week please to Karen by 7 p.m. Wednesday at administrator@emmanuelbicester.org.uk