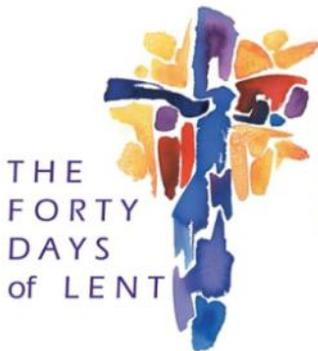


February 2026 Edition 120

“The Lord heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”*Psalm 147:3*

Lent is not merely a season of discipline or abstinence; it is a sacred invitation into healing and restoration. It is a time when God gently calls us to reorient our lives toward divine wholeness. This reorientation is not about shame or self-condemnation, but about grace—about allowing God to turn us again toward life, truth, and freedom. Lent creates space for honest prayer, deep reflection, and courageous self-examination,

so that what is wounded within us may be brought into the light of God’s healing love.

At the heart of this season lies God’s desire to restore what has been fractured—our relationship with God, with one another, with ourselves, and with the world. Scripture consistently portrays God as the one who heals, restores, and makes whole. The biblical vision of healing is never limited to the physical body alone. It reaches into the depths of the human heart and mind, addressing bitterness that corrodes the soul, sadness that drains hope, panic and anxiety that unsettle our peace, anger that distorts love, pride and envy that fracture relationships, and unforgiving spirits that imprison us in past wounds. God’s promise is not simply to manage these conditions, but to transform us through restoring grace.

As many of us grow older, these struggles often become more visible and more complex. We experience the waning of physical strength, the slowing of the body, the fragility of health, and the reality of illness or chronic pain. The ageing process confronts us with loss—loss of independence, loss of certainty, sometimes loss of roles, memory, or

confidence. Lent gives us language and space to bring these experiences before God, not as signs of failure, but as places where God's healing presence longs to dwell. Scripture reminds us that even as our outer nature wastes away, our inner nature can be renewed day by day, held within the faithful mercy of God.

Lent invites us to acknowledge honestly the inner landscapes we often avoid. Many of us carry emotional and psychological burdens—long-held resentments, unresolved grief, fear of the future, or a quiet despair that deepens with time. Others live with anxiety about declining health, loneliness, or being forgotten. Still others bear the invisible wounds of relational breakdown: marriages strained, friendships broken, families divided, trust eroded over years. Reorientation towards God allows us to name these realities in prayer, trusting that God meets us not after we are healed, but precisely within our vulnerability and weakness.

Healing in the biblical sense always moves toward restored relationships. Jesus' ministry consistently wove together forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing. When relationships are broken—through hurtful words, betrayal, neglect, or years of misunderstanding—the damage is not merely social but spiritual. Lent gives us time to ask difficult questions: Whom do I need to forgive? Where has bitterness taken root? What relationships need prayerful attention, humility, or gentle repair? Forgiveness does not deny pain, nor does it excuse wrongdoing, but it releases us from the weight of resentment and opens space for peace. As we receive God's forgiveness, we are slowly enabled to extend grace to others, allowing healing to flow through restored relationships.

This inward healing is deeply connected to prayer, especially prayer that is embodied and shared within the worshipping life of the Church. For this reason, during Lent we are introducing healing prayers as part of our Eucharistic services. The Eucharist is itself an act of healing—Christ offering his broken body for the healing of the world. After receiving Holy Communion, those who wish may come to the Lady Chapel, where trained pastoral care assistants will be available to pray with them. Through the anointing of oil and the use of Anglican prayers for healing,

we will seek God's gracious presence for healing of mind, body, and spirit.

This ministry of healing is offered gently, reverently, and without pressure. Anointing with oil is an ancient and biblical sign of God's healing mercy—a reminder that we are held, known, and loved in our fragility. These prayers are not a substitute for medical care, nor do they promise instant cures, but they are a means of grace through which God meets us in our suffering. In receiving prayer after Communion, we embody the truth that healing flows from Christ himself, whose life we receive at the altar.

Prayer during Lent becomes a place where we bring our anxiety, panic, anger, pride, envy, sadness, fear, and even our sense of bodily decline into God's presence without pretence. In silence and Scripture, through touch and prayer, the Spirit works patiently—softening hardened hearts, calming anxious minds, and restoring hope. For many, especially in later years, Lent becomes a season of learning to pray more simply and trust more deeply, resting in God rather than striving for control.

The disciplines of Lent—fasting, simplicity, confession, and self-denial—are not acts of punishment, but practices that help us let go of what prevents wholeness. Sometimes we must give something up not as an end in itself, but so that healing may take root: old resentments, excessive worry, unrealistic expectations of ourselves, or the need to appear strong. As we release these, we create space for God's peace and compassion to reshape our lives.

This personal healing is inseparable from the healing of our communities and our world. As we are restored inwardly, we become more attentive to broken systems, wounded nations, divided societies, and a suffering creation. Lent calls us to pray not only for our own healing, but for the healing of the world—for reconciliation where there is division, justice where there is oppression, compassion where there is neglect, and peace where there is fear. The biblical vision of *shalom* embraces the whole of life: personal well-being, right relationships, social justice, and harmony with creation.

Lent, then, is a journey from fragmentation to wholeness, from fear to trust, from woundedness to hope. As we reorient ourselves toward God, we discover that healing is not always immediate, but it is always held within God's faithful love. God meets us in the realities of ageing and decline, in anxiety and illness, in broken relationships and hidden pain, and offers sustaining grace. In this season, we are invited not only to be healed, but to become bearers of healing—living signs of Christ's restoring presence in a world longing for wholeness.

Rev Joshva Raja

February Events

Sunday 1	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Monday 2	19.30	<i>Knit & Natter</i> in the Leverton Room
Wednesday 4	10.30	<i>Knit & Natter</i> in the Leverton Room
Saturday 7	09.00	Men's Breakfast at Horton Golf Park
Sunday 8	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion
Sunday 15	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Wednesday 18	20.00	Ash Wednesday Sung Communion
Thursday 19	14.30	Afternoon Club in the Cuddington Hall
Saturday 21	10.00	Women's Group in the Cuddington Hall
Sunday 22	09.30	Sung Communion
Monday 23	19.30	<i>Making Sense of Lent</i> Course I
Wednesday 25	20.00	PCC in the Cuddington Hall
Sun 1 March	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups

Morning Prayer is said in church every weekday morning at 9am.

All are very welcome.