

Faith Comment published in the Petersfield Post

9 March 2011: Rev'd Joanna Farrell, Assistant Priest, All Saints', Steep, and St Peter's, Froxfield with Privett

The days are getting longer, Lent is here

Today the church marks Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, a time of preparation for the great celebration of Easter, the heart of the Christian faith.

The word "Lenten" relates to the lengthening of the days and Lent is observed as a time of spiritual growth and renewal. Traditionally many people have "given up something for Lent" as a form of self-discipline and as a reminder of the hardships suffered by Jesus during his time in the desert. Present-day Christians might give up coffee, alcohol, chocolate or any one of a number of other things which, when Lent is over, they return to once again.

But what about "taking something on for Lent" instead? If Lent is to be a time for spiritual growth and development we can treat it like an athlete preparing for a particular event and focus on those things that are necessary to achieve our goals and lay aside the unnecessary ones. Or like someone on a treasure hunt, we concentrate on finding the clues to where the treasure is hidden while we turn away from the things that lead us astray.

The churches of PACT are running a number of different events during Lent. There are housegroups, talks and church services which would welcome anyone who would like to explore the Christian faith, maybe for the first time or perhaps to grow in maturity in faith already held. See the details of the [PACT Lent Programme](#) on this web site or through the [Unity Bookshop](#) (01730 262572). Why not try one this Lent and maybe it will start something that takes you well beyond Easter?