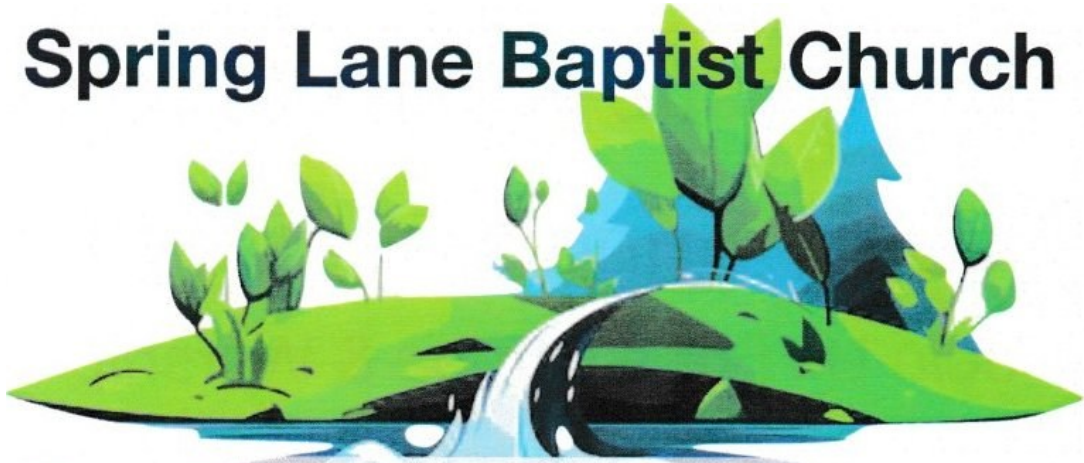


# Spring Lane Baptist Church



*Those who drink the water Jesus gives will never be thirsty again.  
It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.*

*— John 4:14*

**59 Spring Lane — Hockley Heath — B94 6QY**

Welcome to the **MARCH** edition of  
News, Views & Prayer.

**4.PM EVERY SUNDAY**

**Join us for a cuppa & Worship**

**All Ages welcome**

**EVERY TUESDAY 7.30 — 8.30pm**

**WHO IS JESUS?**

Have you ever wondered?

Please join us as we look for an answer

**Spring Lane Baptist Church: 59 Spring Lane Hockley Heath B94**

**Contact village Chaplain: Lawrence Bellew [slbchurch.bham@gmail.com](mailto:slbchurch.bham@gmail.com)**

## Lent Removes Our Lint

Do you celebrate Lent? Many Baptists don't always follow the broader church calendar for seasons such as Lent. And Ash Wednesday is almost unheard of in many Baptist churches. As a secondary school student I remember the first time I noticed one of my Catholic friends had an ash smudge on his forehead that day. His cursory explanation didn't really create much interest in me for the day nor the practice. Later, this same friend and I were university roommates. I watch with some scepticism as he honoured Lent by removing red and green coloured M&M candies from each packet he consumed. I'm not sure how it helped him celebrate the season but it was a gift for me as I got the shunned chocolate treats. I recall thinking that there must be more to this season of the church than what I saw my good friend doing.

In fact, there is a great deal more to the remembrance of Ash Wednesday and Lent. When done well, when done with a heart motivated by a desire to draw nearer to the Lord and not one driven by the letter of the law, then Lent can be a season of blessing. Briefly, Lent is a season of approximately 40 days for the Christ-follower to deny themselves some material benefit with the hope of gaining in spiritual awareness and blessing. (I say approximately because different groups count the time differently with some groups taking each Sunday off as a bit of a feast day.) When done with sincerity of heart, it is a season of fasting from some food, entertainment, or other valued aspect of life with the hope of drawing nearer to Christ. Lent almost always is practiced with the denial of material pleasure. However, it could be a season of acceptance of some new discipline or form of service to others. We have a lot of freedom in choosing how to use the time and even if we want to celebrate the season.

Years after observing my friend, and we are still friends after all these years, I came to a perhaps clearer understanding and appreciation of the season. In my practices over the years, I have found the season of Lent to be an opportunity to clean out the lint from my life, to dust off some aspects of my discipleship and to find renewed energy for following the Lord Jesus. Lent can be a time to slow down, inspect my daily practices, make adjustments that will hopefully result in a smoother relationship with Jesus.

Anyone who has used a vented clothes dryer knows the importance of cleaning out the lint trap on a regular basis. If the lint piles up, it can block the flow of air and even break the machine's ability to work properly. The same is true in our lives. We need to take regular time to clean out the lint from our lives. If you choose to celebrate Lent, may it be a blessing.

Lawrence Ballew  
Village Chaplain

## Community Prayers

2nd Feb	<b>Hazel Grove</b>	9th Feb	<b>Lindhurst Drive</b>
16th Feb	<b>Meadow Close</b>	23rd Feb	<b>Muntz Crescent</b>

**If you need to speak with someone in relation to a:**

- **Wedding.**
- **Baptism. or a:**
- **Funeral**

**Contact Chaplain Lawrence Ballew who will be happy to help**

**Email [slbchurch.bham@gmail.com](mailto:slbchurch.bham@gmail.com)**

# MARCH 2025

**St. Thomas' Church**  
**Sunday Service Every Week 9.45am**  
**See Facebook for Communion**

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**St. Thomas Coffee morning**  
**Tuesday 4th March 10am - 12 noon**

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*Coffee*  
morning



Come and Join us for a tea or coffee  
and a chat in the Parish Room,  
St Thomas Church Hockley Heath  
Tues 4<sup>th</sup> Mar 2025 10.00 to 12.00

Refreshments  Cake Stall

**SPRING LANE BAPTIST & ST. THOMAS CHURCH**

**You'll be sure of a warm welcome**

**at our popular**

**LUNCH**  
LUNCH

**So why not visit us at:  
Spring Lane Baptist Centre Hockley Heath  
At 12.30pm  
On the 3rd Wednesday of the month  
Suggested donation of £5,00  
All Ages welcome**



**MENU**

Home made soup with:  
Crusty Bread. (White or brown) & Cheese  
Topical five/ten minute talk or item followed by:  
Coffee/tea and cakes.  
*Advise on Allergies*



For More Information:

**Next Lunch 19th March 2025**

**Plenty of free parking**

[www.hockleyheathbaptist.co.uk](http://www.hockleyheathbaptist.co.uk)



## **Faith Matters March 2025**

Recently, I heard first-hand the story of how a man came to believe in God i.e. as revealed to us in the unique person of Jesus. This man had been born into a well-to-do religious family. By the time he became a teenager and then into his university years, he was fearful of the sovereign God that his religion presented to him. He became more depressed as he realised that his beliefs gave no assurance that he would enter heaven. He knew that his life was less than perfect and although God might forgive him, then again he might not. The bottom line was that the best he could do was to try and do good things to compensate for the bad, but he saw a problem with this approach. ‘What was the exchange rate? If I told a lie what good thing would wipe this out?’ He didn’t know and no one could tell him. He was in despair and hopeless, believing that he was damned.

Now I don't know enough about this guy's religion to know whether his understanding of it was a fair representation of its beliefs. Nevertheless, the fact remains that how he did understand things left him in a very unhappy place.

To cut a long story short, he found himself talking to some Christians and they showed him this verse from the New Testament: ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us...’

For Christians, this is a well-known verse that shows how even when we mess up and let God down there is a way back. If we confess our sins and turn again to God, we can have assurance of full forgiveness. Interestingly, this friend said, ‘What hit me right between the eyes was that phrase “God is faithful and just”’. Until this moment, his understanding was that God, being absolutely sovereign, could choose one day to forgive and on another to withhold that forgiveness.

The declaration that God is faithful and just showed him that God was actually consistent with his own character, and so to be faithful and just one day and different the next was impossible.

The man was keen to learn more and soon became a Christian. He’d discovered how, because of Jesus, we can be assured of God’s consistency and faithfulness.

Stephen Richards  
[www.solidrocknews.co.uk](http://www.solidrocknews.co.uk)

# User Groups



Why not join one of our **ART** groups  
**Mondays at 2.00pm** contact Peter on:  
pmorris4562@fastmail.co.uk

**Thursdays at 9.30am** contact Maria on:  
mariacooke45@gmail.com



**theWI**  
**INSPIRING WOMEN**

**Hockley Heath W.I.**  
President – Louise Thornton

Meetings of this lively, welcoming group of ladies usually take place every first Thursday of the month in Spring Lane Baptist Church.

## WI

We meet on the 1st THURSDAY of every month at:  
7.30pm in Spring Lane Baptist Centre

This month 6th March Topic is:  
“How you can help protect against Climate Change.”  
Speaker Liz Galloway

**ALL ARE WELCOME – Why not come and see for yourself?**  
For further information please telephone 07949 901116

**Seasonal Walks:** Pat Sheffield

**Book Club:** Meets the second Tuesday of the month 11.15 am  
at Hockley House

**Knit & Natter:** Meets second and fourth Thursday of the month at 10.30 am,  
Hockley House