

## **St Alban's going for Bronze in 2024**

### **February Days for your Diary**

2<sup>nd</sup> February - Candlemas commemorates the ritual purification of Mary, 40 days after the birth of her son Jesus. This day also marks the ritual presentation of the baby Jesus to God in the Temple at Jerusalem. Many Christians will bring candles to their church to be blessed.



4<sup>th</sup> February – British Yorkshire Pudding Day – make sure you have roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, or you could have jam on your Yorkshire pudding and have it as a desert *mmm YUMMY*

10<sup>th</sup> February — is the beginning of the Chinese New Year. It culminates in the Lantern Festival on 24<sup>th</sup> February. 2024 is the Year of the Dragon- a symbol of power and luck.

14<sup>th</sup> February - Ash Wednesday – Christians attend special Ash Wednesday church services, at which churchgoers receive ash on their foreheads. The ashes are prepared by burning palm leaves from the previous year's Palm Sunday celebrations. It is preceded by Shrove Tuesday and marks the first day of Lent, the six weeks of penitence before Easter.



**ASH WEDNESDAY**

14<sup>th</sup> February - Valentines Day - when lovers express their affection with greetings and gifts.



22<sup>nd</sup> February - Thinking Day - Our World, Our Thriving Future Together, we can make a positive impact on our world and ensure that all girls thrive It is a day when all Girl Guides think about their "sisters" (and "brothers") in all the countries of the world, the meaning of Guiding, and its global impact.

28<sup>th</sup> February - Inconvenience Yourself Day is dedicated to putting other people first and going out of your way to help. Give it a go.

### **Get Outside in Lent – and spend more time in nature.**

Being out in nature will help you connect with God as Creator and celebrate his creation in different ways over the Lenten period, enjoy being outside, take time to

connect with nature, either by yourself or with friends. Lent runs from 14<sup>th</sup> February to 30<sup>th</sup> March this year, a forty-day period of self-reflection, exploration, and discovery, when we try to grow nearer to the Heart of God and recapture a sense of wonder. Here's weeks 1-3 of our ideas, weeks 4-6 will be in the March Newsletter.

### **Week One – Flower and Vegetable Seeds**

#### **14<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> February**

Plant your seeds in peat free compost, water them, look after them and watch them grow, when they are stronger and the weather gets warmer you can plant them in your garden or bring them to church and we can plant them in our Eco Church planter.

If you cannot do this, try planting some cress seeds on a damp tissue. Look at them every day to see how they are growing. The cress should be ready for you to cut and eat in a couple of weeks' time.

Prayer for Flowers/vegetables - Creator God, thank you for seeds to grow, and the beauty that flowers bring to our world, for vegetables and the lives they support, and for the part they play in your creation.

We are sorry for the times when we have not noticed the beauty of the flowers around us. Help us to value flowers and vegetables as part of your creation; not just for what they can give us, but simply because you made them, and you love them. Amen.



#### **Week Two - Soil - 21<sup>st</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> February**

If you have a garden, take a handful of soil, feel it, and smell it. How would you describe it?

Go for a walk and notice all the things that are growing around you, both wild and in people's gardens.

Prayer for Soil - Creator God, thank you for soil, that the flowers and food that we plant will grow in it, as well as beauty and enjoyment of the plants. Please help people in those places where

growing food is difficult because soil and growing conditions are poor and forgive us for the times when we have forgotten to remember them. Help us to value soil as part of your creation; not just for what it can give us, but simply because you made it and you love it. Amen.



## Week Three - Go Hug a tree – 28<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> March



Whether it's a small tree in your garden or a huge tree in the park - go give it a hug or take your friends out and hug a bigger tree and each other – you'll feel so much better for it and so will your friends and the tree will feel loved too. Don't be shy now,



this will get you in practice for National Love a tree day on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

Also put in your diary National Tree Week – November 27-December 5, 2024. During that week we will be planting a few small trees in the church grounds.

Prayer for Trees - Creator God, thank you for trees. Thank you for the beauty that they bring to our world, for the life that they support, and for the part that they play in your creation. We are sorry for those places around the world where people have destroyed trees because they are greedy for something else. Help us to value trees as part of your creation not just for what they can give us, but because you made them and you love them. Amen

Look out for the last 3 weeks of Creation Lent in the March Newsletter

Thanks

*Janet*