



February facts- A month of light and love

Candlemas (Christian festival of lights)



2nd February is Candlemas Day. This ancient festival marks the midpoint of winter, halfway between the shortest day and the spring equinox. In times past, many people used to say that the Christmas season lasted for forty days – until the second day of February.

It was the day of the year when all the candles, that were used in the church during the coming year, were brought into church and a blessing was said over them so it was the *Festival Day* (or 'mass') of the Candles.

Kissing Friday (the Friday after Ash Wednesday)

Friday of Shrove Week, English schoolboys were once entitled to kiss girls without fear of punishment or rejection, a custom that lasted until at least the 1940s.



In Sileby, Leicestershire, this day was also known as Nippy Hug Day. There, men could demand a kiss from the woman of their choice, but if their petition was denied, they had the right to louse, or pinch, the woman's posterior.

Marriage week UK 8 – 10 February 2010

Couples attending this year's biggest wedding shows will be able to ask for prayer to calm their wedding day nerves – by visiting the Church of England's stand and filling out a specially designed prayer postcard.

Revd Rosie Harper who will be on one of the stands says, "We'll remember them in our prayers in the run-up to their wedding. It demonstrates how we're not just there for the big day, we're there for them beforehand, and for their life together afterwards."

The Church of England's stand will be at the [UK Wedding Shows](#) in London (6-7 February), and the [National Wedding Shows](#) in London (19-21 February) and Birmingham (5-7 March), where it is designed to look like the nave of a beautiful church.



WELCOME to the February e-newsletter from the *Families First* team.

Reminder: Text that is [in blue and underlined](#) can be clicked on and link to the relevant webpage

CONTENT:

February facts

Marriage week

Pancake Day

Vicky Beeching – sample tracks

Regional event – East Midlands

Take Ten

Haiti

Volunteering



Follow us!

familiesfirst

e-NEWS
FEBRUARY



Don't forget the pancakes!

Be prepared for Shrove Tuesday on 16 February with Lyle's Golden Syrup's "Four Steps to Perfect Pancakes".

Visit the website to see Lyle's four key steps on how to make perfectly prepared pancakes, see tasty suggestion toppings to add to your shopping list and watch Emma Forbes in a 'cook-along' demonstration:

<http://www.welovepancakes.co.uk/cookalong.php>

Reminder: Text that is [in blue and underlined](#) can be clicked on and link to the relevant webpage



Vicky Beeching album release – early sample

Our January cover girl [Vicky Beeching](#) has given us a sneak preview of our forthcoming album 'Eternity Invades'.

The collection of 13 songs will be officially released on April 6th but if you can't wait that long click on the link below for the preview version containing the following 3 songs: *Salvation Day*, *Blessing and Honour* and *Deliverer*

Click here: [Vicky Beeching 3 song digital download](#)



Regional event - National Space Centre in Leicester

Visitors to the [National Space Centre](#) this half-term will be able to take a Tour of the Night Sky in the UK's largest planetarium as the Space Crew lead through the constellations visible in the sky at night.

Children will be invited to make their very own Astronaut George puppet in the craft sessions and visit the six hands-on galleries, over 150 interactives, inclusive Space Theatre show, unique 3D SIM ride and 42m high rocket tower.

All full paying visitors will also be able to upgrade their day passes to a free Annual Pass at no extra cost; giving you 318 amazing days out for the price of one (no promotions or discounts apply).

Families First magazine is a lifestyle magazine which encourages strong marriages, good parenting & active faith. It is for people who care about family life; people who want the best for their own family, families in their immediate community and families worldwide.



Follow us!

familiesfirst

e-NEWS
FEBRUARY



Take Ten and encourage your local community

Reminder: Text that is [in blue and underlined](#) can be clicked on and link to the relevant webpage

Families First magazine is a lifestyle magazine which encourages strong marriages, good parenting & active faith. It is for people who care about family life; people who want the best for their own family, families in their immediate community and families worldwide.

News about declining church attendance makes grim reading.

[Here's Times columnist Lucy Broadbent's comment](#) – with some ideas gleaned from her church in Los Angeles about creating community. Why not use the new *Families First* Take Ten offer to build links with families in your community. Here's how:

- Advertise the availability of *Families First* magazine in churches so it can be seen by toddler group parents plus mums, dads or grandparents with children attending youth groups, uniformed organisations, church parade Sunday or other community events in church halls.
- Ask churches of all denominations to put the display box of *Families First* on church bookstalls or in a refreshments area where people in local parishes can buy a copy.
- Ask your local Cathedral or Christian bookshop to display the magazine and, if you are running an event – a spring fayre for example – sell copies of *Families First* or give them away to promote family values.
- Ask local church school PTAs to sell copies to parents at school events.
- Consider giving copies away free as part of your work to encourage family life. *Families First* is a useful tool to keep in touch with families who have had a baby christened, blessed or dedicated in your church.
- Ask church members to sponsor gift subscriptions for families you are reaching through prison work or in women's refuges. Paying for a gift subscription and hearing more about your work with families could prompt church members to get more involved, volunteering to work with you.

Wherever families meet in your community a *Families First* display will attract attention, allowing you to promote family values and build community. While stocks last, we can supply back issues and promotional fliers for use at large events.

Ten copies of *Families First* costs £15. To order a **Take Ten** Promotional Pack contact Caroline Rink in the *Families First* office at Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RB. Phone 020 7222 5533 or email familiesfirst@themothersunion.org



Follow us!

Families First team, Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RB

www.familiesfirstmagazine.com

familiesfirst

e-NEWS
FEBRUARY



Haiti earthquake - A letter from the Action & Outreach team at Mothers' Union

We're sure that, like us, you will have been terribly saddened by the recent earthquake in Haiti and the impact this has had on individuals, families and communities in the country.

For anyone who wants to donate as an individual this may be done through the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) (<http://www.dec.org.uk/>).

We would of course like to encourage everyone to remember the victims of Haiti in their prayers and if you have a look at the Mothers' Union website you will find that there is now a prayer specifically for Haiti on there:

<http://www.themothersunion.org/>



Mothers' Union needs you - helping hands across the world

Mothers' Union has exciting volunteering opportunities within various units based at Head Office in Westminster; from working within the publications department to assisting teams that liaise with local workers on various projects around the world. The work will be varied and you will be gaining experience in a dynamic and devoted charity doing all it can to make a better world for families.

Interested? Please email your CV and a short covering letter to jobs@themothersunion.org

We welcome all feedback and suggestions so please contact the Families First team to tell us what you think: familiesfirst@themothersunion.org

Thanks!

Reminder: Text that is [in blue and underlined](#) can be clicked on and link to the relevant webpage

Families First magazine is a lifestyle magazine which encourages strong marriages, good parenting & active faith. It is for people who care about family life; people who want the best for their own family, families in their immediate community and families worldwide.



Follow us!

Families First team, Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RB

www.familiesfirstmagazine.com