



# St John's News

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**December 2019  
& January 2020**

Welcome to our packed edition covering Christmas and the New Year. Our next edition will come out for February.

**Details of our services are on page 2.**

## The dawn of a revolution!



*"The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all humankind." (Titus 2 v 11)*

The dawn is surely one of the most evocative images of Jesus's birth. Dawn suggests something good is about to happen. So we speak of the dawn of civilisation, of peace, a golden age. Dawn is the time when the most fragile and tentative dreams are transformed into reality. How many of us have got up early to hear the dawn chorus? Or had an Easter morning Holy Communion service as the sun rises?

Dawn is the time when uncertainty and fear give place to confident assurance. How often have we worried in the middle of the night and then daylight comes and we see things in a clearer perspective? Dawn marks the transition from darkness, in its many forms, to light and life in all its fullness. Dawn is that pivotal point when we realise once again that night is about to be conquered and the sleeping world will come to life.

In this country, our forebears, who worshipped at places like Avebury and Stonehenge, recognised the pattern of the seasons when they, despite the weather, defiantly celebrated the winter solstice, a festival of light in the deepest winter time - December 21st. In their way these celebrations were also a statement of faith, an assertion that cold and dark could be overcome. It is not surprising that when the Christian Gospel came to these shores, first by the Celtic saints, such as Columba and Aiden, they chose to use that festival time to celebrate the birth of Christ.

We really do not know exactly the year and month and date on which Jesus was born, but the exact date does not matter. As the early Christians knew, Jesus was the one whose coming marked not just a new day or year but the new age which is what the celebrations are about.

When the light first appears it is subtle, gentle, and quiet. So it is with Jesus. The birth of Jesus crept up on the world. He was born in a little town called Bethlehem in a remote corner of the Roman empire, a long way from the centre of things.

The event takes place in the humblest of settings, and who are the first recorded witnesses? - a few farm workers and the members of a weird Persian sect.

And yet the birth of Jesus is the dawning of the world's greatest revolution. There is a sense in which all births are profound, but this birth is profound for all, because this child reveals God to us - it is through our encounter with Christ that we receive the grace of God and God's healing love and forgiveness. Then we are called to bring that grace to others through our lives, and our loving and our giving. At Christmas time we will no doubt be singing the carol "Hark the Herald angels sing", which has the lines "Light and Life to all he brings, Risen with healing in his wings."

It is the birth of Jesus which is the way God has shown us his love, the love which has the power to bring healing to all humankind. May we all know that love and reveal it to others by the ways we live.

Every Blessing for Advent and Christmas and the New Year!

*Rev Rosemary Fletcher*

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the Kings and Princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with the flocks,  
Then the work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost  
To heal the broken  
To feed the hungry  
To release the prisoner  
To rebuild the nations  
To bring peace among the people,  
To make music in the heart.

*Howard Thurman*



Photo by Grevson Joralemon on unsplash.com



# Quorum Singers

Annual Christmas Concert at the United Reformed Church on **Saturday 14th Dec.** at 7.30pm. Free entry (retiring collection for DIPPS). Further details: [www.quorumsingers.org.uk](http://www.quorumsingers.org.uk) or [facebook.com/quorumsingers](https://facebook.com/quorumsingers)

# Carol singing

**Saturday 7th December** at Sainsbury's 2.00 - 4.00pm, raising money for Action for Children. Please contact David Bowler if you need more details. **Friday 20th December** around the streets near St John's: meet at church for a 7.00pm start.

# Discover Christmas

A family Christmas journey with crafts, drama and carols at St John's on **Saturday 14th December at 2pm.** The event is run by Potters Bar Churches Together Holiday Club and is FREE, but if possible let us know you are coming at: [www.stjohnspb.org.uk/discover-christmas](http://www.stjohnspb.org.uk/discover-christmas)

## DECEMBER SERVICES

### Sunday 1st December

10.30am **Christingle Service** with Scout Parade

*Duty steward: Chris Humphreys*

### Sunday 8th December

10.30am Morning Worship led by Graham Phillips

*Duty steward: Myra Sloper*

### 2.30pm Trad. Nine Lessons & Carols

*Duty steward: Gill Hutley*

### Sunday 15th December

4.00pm **Family Nativity Play & Carols**

*Duty steward: Dave Best*

### Sunday 22nd December

10.30am Morning Worship with Holy Communion (& baptism) led by Rev David Mullins

*Duty steward: Robin Burns*

### Tuesday 24th December

#### CHRISTMAS EVE

11.15pm **Midnight Communion**

led by Rev Rosemary Fletcher

*Duty steward: Dave Best*

### Wednesday 25th December

#### CHRISTMAS DAY

10.30am Morning Worship led by Graham Phillips

*Duty steward: Robin Burns*

### Sunday 29th December

10.30am Morning Worship (with favourite carols) led by Gill Hutley

*Duty steward: Myra Sloper*

## JANUARY SERVICES

### Sunday 5th January

#### COVENANT SERVICE

10.30am Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev Dr Jonathan Hustler

*Duty steward: Dave Best*

### Sunday 12th January

10.30am Morning Worship led by Rev John Amankwatia

*Duty steward: Robin Burns*

### 7.00pm Café Worship

led by Dave Best & Ros Hancock

*Duty steward: Myra Sloper*

### Sunday 19th January

#### CREATIVE CHURCH

10.30am Morning Worship led by Graham Phillips with Creative Crafts, followed by Celebration for all in Church

*Duty steward: Chris Humphreys*

### Sunday 26th January

10.30am Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev Rosemary Fletcher

*Duty steward: Myra Sloper*

**Families are welcome to all our 10.30am services. Under 3s are welcome in church and in the adjoining creche. Other children can join our Creative, Junior Johns or Praise & Play group.**

## Gill Hutley

**We very much regret that Gill is to leave us at the end of the year.** We have been extremely fortunate to have her as part of our church for several years and are so grateful for all she has taken on including as a member of the leadership team and music group, organising the St John's Festival in 2018, coordinating Local Arrangement services, and editing SJ News. It has been a pleasure to work with her as a steward and see the boundless energy and ideas that she has to offer.

We hope she will find a new church where she can feel as much at home as she has been at St John's.

Gill, we appreciate all you have done. Please be assured that you leave us with all our grateful thanks, and our prayers for your improved health.

*Peter Barlow*

I have made the tough decision to move my membership from St John's to a church nearer to my home in Wimpole, Cambridgeshire in the New Year. My health continues to gradually deteriorate and I think it's time I do the sensible thing and find a church that is easier for me to get to. I have loved my time at St John's and will miss everyone a great deal. You have all made me feel very welcome, I've made some wonderful friends – and I intend coming back regularly for visits! If anyone fancies a trip up the A1 to Wimpole then you are very welcome to pop in for a cuppa and a chat.

*Gill Hutley, [gillhutley@hotmail.com](mailto:gillhutley@hotmail.com)*

## Singalong a Christmas Carol

**Sunday 29th December at 10.30am**

If there is a carol you love but never get to sing, or if you have a favourite Christmas poem or piece of music, this service is for you! If you want to suggest an item, fill in a form and put it in the box at the back of St John's by Sunday 22nd December. For further information, contact Gill Hutley, [gillhutley@hotmail.com](mailto:gillhutley@hotmail.com) or 07563 843265

## Scout Christmas Market

Thank you to everyone who came along - the total raised for the Scout group was £1600. The annual 'baking competition' was won by Sam Wort with this impressive 3 tiered snowman!



## Baptism

On **Sunday 26th January** at 12.15pm after morning worship, the baptism of Leonardo, the grandson of Stuart and Lynette Johnson will take place in the Church. All are invited to stay for this Service, help with the singing and support the family. Stuart is one of our Circuit Local Preachers.

## Covenant Service, 5 January

This service provides an opportunity to celebrate all that God has done for us and recommit our lives and choices to God. The Covenant Prayer, which is the focal point, has been compared to a set of New Year resolutions that emphasise the importance of doing and being, as much as believing. But more than that, the prayer represents a commitment to being a disciple and putting God first in our lives: in what we do, what we say and who we are.

## Church flowers

Thank you to all who have donated money for flowers for the Church during 2019. The flower list for 2020 is now on the notice board in the vestibule - if anyone would like to make a donation towards the flowers for a date 'special' to them, please indicate on the form or see Margaret, Angela or one of the Leadership team.  
*Margaret Bland*

# #LOVEPRAYVOTE

As we approach a General Election on 12 December, the Joint Public Issues Team (made up of the Baptist Union, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church, working together for peace and justice) is inviting us to **Love, Pray, Vote**. They say:

**We are all called to play a part in God's kingdom. Be prayerful, and take some time to consider how you can use your vote to lift up the lives and rights of all creation. Take the time to be kind and respectful of those who may have a different political view from yours. Remember - we are all in this together!**

## LOVE

Politics plays an important role in how our society is run. As Christians, we can use our opportunity to engage in

politics as a chance to **love** our neighbour and our world.

## PRAY

Elections are significant times in the life of our country. Spending time with God in prayer as we consider how to use our voice is important. As we pray, we can ask God to deepen our awareness of situations, people or stories which might guide us to show God's love deeper to all.

## VOTE

Voting in elections is a crucial part of making your voice heard. Casting a vote is about more than just paper in a ballot box. We can use our democratic opportunity to engage positively in the debate.

Further details here: <http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/love-pray-vote/>

I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election, and advised them:

1. To vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy
2. To speak no evil of the person they voted against, and
3. To take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side.

*John Wesley*

At our **November parade service** we remembered the 30th anniversary of the Berlin Wall coming down. This reminded us of the actions and attitudes that build barriers. We then suggested words that illustrated building bridges to overcome these barriers. Great fun was had as we used large boxes to represent the wall and then a bridge!

*See photo (right)*



## St John's Prayer Focus for Dec & January



Photo by Brennan Martinez on Unsplash.com

**This month we pray as a church for:**

- ❖ **Jumping Johns Toddler Group**
- ❖ **Friday Morning Coffee**
- ❖ **Outreach and the Outreach C'ttee**

*Heavenly Father, we pray for our Jumping Johns Toddler Group. Thank you for the dedication of the leaders; give them strength and wisdom as they work with the toddlers and the parents. May it be a shining light of your love to all and draw people to think about you.*

*We pray also for the Friday morning coffee meeting. May this be an effective time of fellowship and reach out to our neighbours and friends. Help us to share your love.*

*Dear Father, please guide the Outreach Committee as they plan ideas for outreach and think how to encourage outreach in the church. Show us all how to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others.*

*Amen.*

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November, St John's hosted its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual "The Big Quiz" in aid of Tearfund. We had over 40 people take part making up 7 teams and St John's was one of 552 quiz nights that took place across the UK. The questions covered a variety of topics including geography, music and history, as well as a picture round. Everyone enjoyed trying to help their team win the coveted(!) cardboard trophy and the scores were very close. A huge "thank you" to everyone who helped make the evening such a success – including all who donated cakes, biscuits, and savoury snacks, helped with the setting up and tidying away, and helping serve hot drinks. We raised just over £320 which is a great amount – well done all!

*Gill Hutley*



**Minister: Rev Ali Facey 01707 652978 (minister@stjohnspb.org.uk) - days off Fri & Sat**  
**Senior Steward: Chris Humphreys 01707 851320 (seniorsteward@stjohnspb.org.uk)**  
**Treasurer: Rob Ward (treasurer@stjohnspb.org.uk)**  
**Lettings: Chris and Lesley Humphreys 01707 851320 (bookings@stjohnspb.org.uk))**  
**Nursery Playgroup: Celia Mills 07969 924482**

**Copy deadline for next issue is Sunday 19th January**

*Articles in 'St John's News' contain personal opinions of contributors and may not reflect the opinions of the Editors, Minister or Members*

### News of the church family

**Lee Khalid** will be baptised on Sunday 22nd December by Rev. David Mullins. Lee and his friend **Ahmad** have been attending St John's for many months and we are delighted he has decided to make this commitment. Lee hopes you will be able to join him after the service for coffee and cake.

Congratulations to **Reg Merrill** who has recently celebrated his 90th birthday and to **Doris Lavigne** who was 98 years old on 12th November. Reg will have planned surgery on 9th December and we hold both Pat and Reg in our prayers.

**Valerie Vessey** and **Val Evans** are steadily recovering at home and we hope to see you both back at St. John's very soon. Also unwell are **Sandra, Gill** and **Tony**. We pray for patience for anyone waiting for surgery and those who are recovering.

Our thoughts are with **Andy and Sylvia Borrows, Peter and Margaret** as they mourn the loss of their mother. **Marjorie** had been a member at St John's since moving from Oakwood Baptist Church in the 1980's.

Some of our church family will remember **Eric Tilbury** who died recently. He was a member at St John's for many years before he moved away with Louie.

We pray for his family and their loss at this time.

This month we say goodbye to five of our friends and there are separate notes in this issue related to **Glynne Parry** (see right) and **Gill Hutley** (p2).

**Alan and Michele Combes** move at the end of the year to the Vale of Stour circuit, in the West Midlands. Michele has led worship throughout her time at St John's in church, Junior church, carol singing and holiday clubs. She has recently been one of the driving forces for Café Worship. Michele's contribution to all aspects of music will be missed.

**Rae Edmondson** moves in December to a village near Sawbridgeworth with her daughter. Rae has been a designated first aider and was always willing to help out at the Easter holiday clubs.

We wish everyone who is moving our best wishes and hope they will settle smoothly into new homes and communities.

*If you would like to include any future news, please contact Helen Barlow (Pastoral Secretary) on 01707 662254 or [foodtech16@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:foodtech16@hotmail.co.uk)*

### Thank you!

Now that I am 91 and on my own, I am moving to Norfolk to live with my daughter, Helen, and to be nearer to our sons. We first came to Potters Bar in 1951 and settled happily at St John's. We then retired to Pembrokeshire in 1984, enjoying 29 years there before returning to Potters Bar 6 years ago. In 1951 Potters Bar (and St John's) were very different. Over the years we did find some of the changes difficult to accept, however the one thing that has not changed is the love and care that we have received since we returned to the area. I would like to express my very sincere thanks to everyone at St John's for all the help and loving kindness I have received from you all.

*Glynne Parry*

### CHURCH GROUPS

For more information about our regular activities, please use the contact information here, or look at the church website (address on p1).

#### **Bible Study (Wednesday 7.45pm)**

*Lesley Humphreys 01707 851320*

Study, discussion, prayer and fellowship in the Clifton Room

#### **Havercroft House Group (Tuesdays)**

*Belinda Havercroft 01707 652540*

#### **Byng Drive House Group**

**(2nd & 4th Fridays, 1.30-3.00pm)**

*Dawn Fenner 01707 652540*

#### **Junior Johns (for ages 3+)**

*Jackie Hart 01707 642417*

#### **Men Out Tonight (MOT)**

*Dave Best 01707 643023*

#### **Strafford Gate House Group (Wednesdays)**

*David Carter 01707 658297*

#### **Women Connect (first Friday in month)**

*Tinu 07931167531 or Laetitia*

Pudding, Prayers, Movies and Sharing from 7.30 – 9.30pm in the Clifton Room

#### **Worship Band**

*Paul Guppy 07528 858390*

### REGULAR ACTIVITIES *See website for details*

<b>Mondays</b>	<b>10.00am</b> 'Can We Fix It?' Group ( <i>Roger 01707 650438</i> )
	<b>10am-11.45am</b> Jumping Johns Toddlers ( <i>Margaret 01707 659845</i> )
	<b>2.30pm-4.00pm.</b> Women's Guild ( <i>Barbara 01707 656483</i> )
<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>8.00pm</b> Badminton Group ( <i>Margaret 01707 659845</i> )
	<b>10.00am-11.30am</b> Yoga ( <i>Ann 01707 655244</i> )
	<b>6.30 - 8.00pm</b> Junior Youth Club ( <i>Years 3-6, Liz 01707 659597</i> )
<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>6.30 - 8.00pm</b> Cubs ( <i>see <a href="http://www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk">www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk</a></i> )
<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>7.00 - 8.30pm</b> Scouts ( <i>see <a href="http://www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk">www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk</a></i> )
<b>Fridays</b>	<b>10.30am</b> Morning Coffee in the Clifton Room
	<b>10am - 11.45am</b> Jumping Johns Toddlers ( <i>Margaret 01707 659845</i> )
	<b>6.15 - 7.15pm</b> Beavers ( <i>see <a href="http://www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk">www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk</a></i> )
<b>Mon-Friday</b>	<b>8.55am - 2.55pm</b> St John's Nursery Playgroups ( <i>07969 924482</i> )