



St John's News

St John's Methodist Church, Baker Street, Potters Bar EN6 2DZ
stjohnspb.org.uk email: sjnews@stjohnspb.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1130633

SERVICES

Sunday 1st March

9.00am Morning Prayer
led by Dave Best

Duty steward: Dave Best

10.30am Morning Worship with
Scout Parade

Duty steward: Dave Best

Sunday 8th March

10.30am Morning Worship
led by Rev Rosemary Fletcher

Duty steward: Robin Burns

**Followed by Annual General Church
Meeting at 11.45am**

7.00pm Café Worship
led by Rev Nicola Vidamour

Duty steward: Chris Humphreys

Sunday 15th March

CREATIVE CHURCH

10.30am Morning Worship
led by Rev Vindra Maraj-
Ogden
with Creative Crafts,
followed by Celebration
for all in Church

Duty steward: Myra Sloper

Sunday 22nd March

MOTHERING SUNDAY

10.30am Morning Worship
led by Stuart Johnson

Duty steward: Chris Humphreys

Sunday 29th March

CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

10.30am Morning Worship with
Holy Communion
led by Rev Kathleen
Richardson

Duty steward: Dave Best

Easter Services for your diaries

Thursday 9th April

Maundy Thursday

7.00pm Tenebrae Service

Friday 10th April

Good Friday

9.30am Walk of Witness (starting
from the Baptist Church (Barnet Rd))

Sunday 12th April

Easter Day

10.30am Creative Church and
Communion Service

March 2020

A closer walk with God

**O for a closer walk with God,
a calm and heavenly frame,
a light to shine upon the road
that leads me to the Lamb!**

This hymn was written by William Cowper in 1772 and essentially it describes what the hope is for Christians during the season of Lent, as we use as our example the time Jesus spent in the wilderness.

The Lenten season, preparation for Easter, has been observed from the beginning of the Church, although practices have varied over time.

Jesus gave the example of a penitential retreat, spending prayerful time in the desert preparing for his ministry, reflecting on God's will, and determining how he'd freely make that happen. Penitential seasons offer us this same opportunity: to withdraw from our routines and evaluate our spiritual progress or regression. We do this through reflection and repentance, which enable us to identify our weaknesses and make reparation to put right our failings. Penitential seasons create time to reflect on our need to make God the focal point of our lives. The result can be spiritually rewarding.

So what about us? Apparently the most common food item to give up in Lent is chocolate. This may be good for

our health and waist lines but what does it achieve? When we long for that bar of dairy milk, do we link it with our longing for a closer walk with God?



In more recent times we have been encouraged to take up something for Lent – join a Lent Group and study God's word with other Christians (*see information about a local course on page 2*).

Three other Lenten disciplines are prayer (daily conversation with God), fasting (from behaviours which detract from our relationship with God), and charitable giving, so charities such as Christian Aid have encouraged us to Count our Blessing each day of Lent. The UK Christian Charity Stewardship is inviting all Christians to seize the opportunity to 'do Lent generously' in the weeks leading to Easter. Find out more at 40acts.org.uk

Why 40 days? The number 40 has biblical significance: Moses spent 40 days on Mt. Sinai before receiving the 10 Commandments; Jesus spent 40 days in prayer and fasting prior to beginning his ministry. So, too, we spend 40 days preparing to hear once again the Easter message

May this Lent be a time for all of us to have a closer walk with God.

Every Blessing.

Rev Rosemary Fletcher

God in love unites us

On Tuesday 28th January we had an open meeting at St John's led by Rev Rosemary Fletcher and Rev Rachael Hawkins, to hear about, reflect on, and discuss the Methodist Church report on marriage and relationships, 'God in Love Unites Us'. This was the first of four such meetings in and around the Circuit, and was part of the process of reflection leading up to the consideration of the report by the 2020 Methodist Conference. If the report is accepted by Conference, then every Church Council will discuss the report. A range of opinions were reflected in the meeting on 28th January, and two different viewpoints from St John's (from Valerie Vessey and John Wainwright) were among those included in the February edition of the Circuit's 'Methodist Reporter', copies of which are available at the back of church or via the Circuit website: www.midhertsmethodists.org.uk

How will *you* be challenging yourself in Lent?

Local Lent Course 2020

Jesus: the voice that makes us turn

A four-session course, reflecting on Jesus' many voices:

A Crying Voice homes in on the baby's cry at Bethlehem, announcing that God was in town.

An Other Voice focuses on the strangeness of Christ, whose command stilled the storm and forgave sins and raised the dead.

A Dying Voice sees new depths for living in Jesus' familiar words from the cross.

A Rising Voice examines the immense quality which made downhearted disciples turn and fire the world with their faith.

Mondays 3.00-5.00pm
(2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd March)

OR

Tuesdays 10.45am-12.00pm
(3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th March)
(optional Eucharist at 10.00am)

...both held in the lounge at King Charles the Martyr Anglican Church, Mutton Lane, Potters Bar, EN6 3AS.

If you would like to join either of these groups, please call 01707 665579 or email office@kcm-church.org.uk

Course booklets cost £4.

All welcome!

Daily reflections for Lent

One of our Circuit local preachers, Chris Hancock, is uploading daily reflections to the Hatfield Road Methodist Church website here:
www.hatfieldroadmethodist.org/?cat=12



CHRISTIAN CLIMATE ACTION

DIRECT ACTION, PUBLIC WITNESS FOR THE CLIMATE

Christian Climate Action (the Christians of Extinction Rebellion), are launching '40 Days of Action' – which started on

Ash Wednesday and continues over the 40 days of Lent. People are invited to engage in **40 Days of Action** in different ways:

► The 40 Days of Action was due to be launched on Ash Wednesday with a vigil outside Westminster Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. They were due to call on Churches and all religious institutions to fully divest from fossil fuels by the end of Lent. Instead of making the sign of the cross with ash as is traditional, priests they were due to mark a cross onto the foreheads of worshippers using fake crude oil.

► Throughout the 40 days of action members of Christian Climate Action (and other Extinction Rebellion faith communities) are holding a non-stop meditation vigil outside the Houses of Parliament. It is focusing on lament for the climate and ecological crisis, and praying for leaders and representatives to find in

themselves the courage to take urgent action.

► For many Christians around the

The climate crisis is the defining issue of our generation, which is already having devastating affects around the world. The 40 days of action happening this Lent is a great way of bringing the whole church along as we explore together what being faithful looks like in this time.

Rev Daniel Woodhouse, Methodist Minister

world, the season of Lent is a time of sacrifice and fasting. People are therefore invited to engage in this process with the urgency of the climate crisis in mind. Some may use the period to be in solidarity with those already devastated by the climate and ecological emergency.

The window to address climate breakdown is closing rapidly and the UK government needs to act by getting our finances out of fossil fuels overseas, increasing investment in renewable energy and getting on track to achieve our own net zero commitment. Lent, which is a time of reflection and commitment, is an important time to pray for our politicians to have the courage to take action. The physical presence of this vigil is a reminder of this.

Dr Ruth Valerio, global advocacy and influencing director at Tearfund

Some individuals might take steps to reduce their carbon footprint or that of their local Church. Others will take up civil disobedience with the goal of pressuring governments to achieve 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2025. In this spirit, some

Christians will be undertaking direct action throughout Lent to draw attention to the desperate need for government and major corporations to start drastically reducing their carbon emissions.

Rotary Club Sponsored Swim

A team from St John's will again be swimming in the Rotary Club Charity Swim on **Saturday 7th March** to raise money for Herts Young Homeless. The swimmers would very much appreciate any sponsorship for their efforts. Please speak to Liz Bekooy or Chris Humphreys if you would like to contribute.

Annual General Church Mtg

This is on **Sunday 8th March** after the morning service and we invite all Church Members and those on the community roll to attend the meeting where there will be the opportunity to discuss the life and work of the Church. Annual elections of Representatives to Church Council and Stewards will also take place.

Mothering Sunday

There is an old Jewish saying: God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods – our human mothers – all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' – as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families – which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed and in many ways now resembles the American Mother's Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day. But this is not how the day began!

St John's Prayer Focus for March



This month we pray as a church for:

- ❖ **Our forthcoming Easter celebrations**
- ❖ **Proposed changes to the Circuit**
- ❖ **Churches Together in Potters Bar**

Dear Lord,

We are now approaching Easter and seek your blessing for our Easter Celebrations, especially the Tenebrae Service on Maundy Thursday and our Easter Day Services. Lead us to fully appreciate the sacrifice of Jesus in atonement for our sins.

We pray for guidance for the Circuit during this time of change when the number of clergy will be reduced. We pray that the plans being put in place will prove to be workable.

We give thanks for the Holiday Club and "Discover Christmas" events for children organised by Churches Together in Potters Bar (CTPB). We pray for the Good Friday "Walk of Witness" that it may provoke interest in those who see it. We also pray for a CTPB Praise and Prayer event to be organised here at St John's as part of the "Thy Kingdom Come" initiative.

Amen

News of the church family

On Sunday 23rd February we held our annual **memorial service** led by Rosemary which was well attended. Names of loved ones were read out and 57 candles lit in their memory.

We would like to express our thanks to **Rosemary Fletcher** and **John Amankwatia** for their love, care and help of all kinds over many weeks. John is away for the whole of March but is keen to restart his pastoral visits on his return. Please let me know if you would like him to visit. Rosemary has her arm in a sling for 6 weeks after a fall. We hope with the physio, prayers and following doctors guidance she will make a full recovery.

Barbara Attridge sadly died in her care home in Harpenden on Friday 21st February. Barbara was a much loved member of Women's Guild for many years. She will be missed.

Birthday congratulations to **Lesley Dyson** who celebrated his 94th birthday in February.

Several of our church family have undergone surgery in the past month and are well on the road to recovery. For that we are very thankful. **Pat and Tony Ware** are both now recovering from operations. We hope to see them again soon. Please pray often for those who are still waiting for dates.

We pray also for those in our families, our church and our community who are struggling or unwell at this time - they are held by God.

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

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 22nd March

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

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2020

Praying with Zimbabwe

FRIDAY 6TH MARCH



**Service to be held at 10.00 am at
The Baptist Church
Barnet Road, Potters Bar**

**A service for everyone
Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk**

Will you speak out for our young people?

Youth services, like youth clubs and youth workers, exist to provide a sense of belonging, a safe space, and the opportunity for some of the most vulnerable young people, to enjoy being young. But sadly, young people have suffered as a direct result of funding cuts across England and Wales. Since 2010/2011, youth services have been cut by 70% - resulting in the loss of hundreds of youth clubs and youth worker jobs.

The YMCA President, the Archbishop of York, is calling on church congregations to sign an online petition in support of YMCA's campaign to restore Youth Services: see ymca.org.uk

It is of great concern to me that young people are reporting that they feel increasingly isolated, that their mental wellbeing is worsening and that they feel more vulnerable to violence and crime. This is against a background of dramatic year on year cuts in spending on Youth Services. In this campaign YMCA is calling for these cuts to be reversed so that we can reinvest in the wellbeing of our young people. I commend the campaign to you and encourage you to add your voice to this call for change.

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu

REGULAR ACTIVITIES *See website for details*

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

3GENERATE

Local 2020

3 May 2020

10am to 4.30pm

Worship • Activities • Workshops

**£5 per young person
Adults free**

Faith Missions, Red House Farm, Stowmarket

For ages 8 to 23 years - No group too large or too small

For more information and to book go to:
3Generate-local.eventbrite.org.uk



 The Methodist Church
East of England

CHURCH GROUPS

More information at: stjohnspb.org.uk

Bible Study (Wednesday 7.45pm)
Lesley Humphreys 01707 851320

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 07931 167531 or Laetitia

Worship Band
Paul Guppy 07528 858390