

NEWSLETTER-MARCH 2024

St John the Evangelist, Hurst Green

Welcome All | Deepen Faith | Inspire Action

Welcome to St John's!

When we undertake a journey or a project, I wonder what preoccupies our thoughts and attention the most? Is it the destination that matters or do we value and welcome each step along the way? We began a journey of Lent in February which continues in the first part of March. Lent reminds us of the importance of taking time to reflect on the truth of ourselves and the mercy of God.

In the fourth week of Lent, we celebrate Mothering Sunday at the 9.45am service.

Posies of daffodils, given out to everyone, will add a wonderful splash of colour.

We then journey on towards the Passion of Christ, rejoicing with the crowd on Palm Sunday only to hear murderous shouts of 'Crucify him' and bear witness to the shame and sorrow of his death on the cross on Good Friday.

Then at last, a joyful celebration on Easter Day. The pain and failure of humanity is transformed and transfigured from darkness to light in his resurrection. So then, have we reached the final destination on Easter day or is it actually only the beginning of a new journey of life and faith?

Lent, Passion Week and Easter are like a mirror of our own lives. We all have times of sorrow, regret and failure as well as times of joy. The worst and best moments of our lives are the very place in which we will see the risen Jesus and where his work in us begins.

With love and prayers for a blessed Holy Week and Easter, Revd Sue



"Teach us to walk more gently on your earth"

A group from the Oxted team (see photo above) joined around 70 other pilgrims for the first in a series of journeys of prayer, repentance and vision for justice in response to the climate and ecological crisis. The walk started in Merstham, went up a steep hill (where there would have been amazing views if the mist had lifted!), a stop for lunch in Merstham and ending some seven miles later in Chaldon. Along the way, we had great conversations with people who had come from across the diocese and we stopped regularly to consider different aspects of the climate and ecological crisis such as water and air pollution, extracting minerals and other substances from the earth and the disappearance of hedgerows. At one point we were rewarded by the sight and sound of a skylark which was magical.

More walks are planned (24 February, 1, 8, 20 and 28 March) and you can find details of how to register at <https://southwark.anglican.org/news-events/events/whats-on/lent-climate-pilgrimage/>. Do consider joining one of these if you can (see the map in the porch) - you'll learn a lot, think a lot, pray and hopefully make new friends as well as experience wonderful, warm welcomes from the people in the churches along the way.

Services at St John's this month

Sunday 3 March: Lent 3

8.30am: Said Eucharist 9.45am: Parish Eucharist
with Sunday School - more information overleaf

Sunday 10 March: Mothering Sunday (Lent 4 at 8.30)

8.30am: Said Eucharist 9.45am: All Age Eucharist

Sunday 17 March: Lent 5

8.30am: Said Eucharist 9.45am: Parish Eucharist
11am: Community Brunch followed by Café Church
5pm: Service of music and readings for Passiontide
*Please join us for this short reflective service,
with music led by the chamber choir, Levante*

Sunday 24 March: Palm Sunday

8.30am: Said Eucharist 9.45am: Parish Eucharist

Thursday 28 March: Maundy Thursday

7.30pm: Sung Eucharist (followed by short vigil)

Friday 29 March: Good Friday

9.30am: Liturgy of Good Friday

Saturday 30 March: Easter Eve

7pm: Short service of night prayer

Sunday 31 March: Easter Day (clocks forward 1 hour!)

8.30am: Said Eucharist 9.45am: Parish Eucharist

The April Newsletter will be available on Sunday 31 March.

***Please send anything to be included by Sunday 24 March to Janet Harman at
office@stjhurstgreen.co.uk, or phone 715301 (and leave a message if I'm out!) Thank you.***

St John's Notices

 facebook.com/stjohnshurstgreen

SUNDAY SCHOOL ON 3 MARCH: Usually on 2nd and 4th Sundays, today will involve preparations for the all age service the following week by making and decorating Simnel cake. It would be helpful if children brought their own aprons, but there will be spares.

LENT GROUPS are now underway following this year's CTOD Lent course 'The Gift of Christ' by Olivia Amartey. If you haven't signed up, you are very welcome to come along on any Monday morning, 10am for 10.15am to The_Space, Oxted Community Hall, until and including 18 March. More information from Janet Harman.

Wednesdays during Lent at St John's Eucharist in the Lady Chapel at 12 noon followed by a simple lunch of delicious home made soup and bread in St John's Room



Collection for the
Bishop's Lent Appeal



The 12 noon Eucharist and lunch will continue on the 4th Wednesday of every month from 24 April.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, FRIDAY 1 MARCH: Services at 10am at Oxted URC and 7.30pm at St Peter's Church, Limpsfield. Everyone is welcome to attend. The service was devised by the Christian women of Palestine long before the current conflict began, and in which they speak of a people deeply rooted in the country, of rich heritage with the hope always to return to Palestine.

MARION EASTON had her 99th birthday on 13 February. Many congratulations to her. She spent a few days in hospital beforehand, but managed to return to her Sycamore Court home on her birthday. Her two daughters were there, and Mary visited. Marion looked very happy and was smiling from ear to ear.

UPDATE ON PLANS FOR ST JOHN'S: It has been a while since the Crossing the Threshold (CTT) group reported to the congregation about our activities so this is an overview of what we have been up to recently. You may recall that our original brief from the PCC was to work on a big project that would involve a significant extension of the porch area and various works within the nave and other parts of the church. The goal was to create flexible spaces that could be used when the church was not in use for services. That big project was conceived with a view to seeking major grant funding, the large part to come from one particular source. Revd Anna and others had exploratory discussions with that grant body and it had initially looked promising that such funding could, with lots of work, good fortune and prayers, be obtained. As our thinking developed, though, and we established the cost of obtaining plans and reports from architects and other professionals just to be eligible to apply for the funds, we realised that we are not yet in a financial position to do this. We then encountered another setback when, for personal reasons, the director of the Keeta Flexi-school (which had just opened at St John's) had to cease trading. By the start of January 2024, the York Rooms and St John's Room were vacant again during the week in term-time (after-school, evening and weekend hires/use continued throughout).

Every setback and challenge brings new opportunities. Our mission, as directed by the PCC, is still to enable greater community use of our buildings here at St John's when the church is not in use for services, but the PCC has resolved that we take a fresh, staged

approach. From our experience with Keeta, CTT drew lessons - not least that, despite the herculean efforts of Liz Sone and the Yo Yos team to make the space work (for which many, many thanks), the nave is not yet suitable to use for many activities. There are several practical problems that must be tackled. The biggest issues are: the lack of step-free access directly to the nave from the drive; and the different levels of the nave flooring and other trip hazards.

We are now addressing those discrete projects as our priority and we have met with builders to see what is possible and to obtain quotes. Whilst CTT comes at this looking to make the nave more accessible for "non-church" use, improvements to access will bring benefits to those setting up for and attending services. We believe that many of our regular worshippers would welcome a safer path into and out of the church! Although a smaller project than the original big extension plan, this building work will still incur a significant cost. It will take time to source grants and other funds to complete this. CTT will present recommendations to the PCC shortly for full discussion... watch this space.

In our next update, we will focus on increased use of our church rooms. Our revised strategy there is to ensure that the rooms remain available for Yo Yos and other activities already part of St John's programme of outreach and fellowship; accommodate occasional use ancillary to special services; and host activities that bring in additional much-needed income and serve the wider community. This is but a snapshot. Do please feel free to ask for more information from any member of the CTT sub-committee.

Sara Bartolozzi – chair of Crossing the Threshold

Other Notices

MUSIC BEYOND BARS, 6PM SATURDAY 9 MARCH: Piano and flute recital performed by local musicians at the United Reformed Church, Oxted. In aid of 'Prison Fellowship Albania', bringing restoration, dignity and hope to women and their children for international Women's Day. Refreshments served - wine and soft drinks. Tickets: £7 adults, £3 children, are available on the door - see poster on porch noticeboard.

'GREAT IS THE COMPANY OF WOMEN': 11am Saturday 23 March at Southwark Cathedral. All are invited to celebrate the vast contribution of women to the life of the church, particularly within our own diocese, at this special Eucharist which also marks the 30th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood. Bishop Rosemarie will preside and Archdeacon Moira Astin will preach. All women who were ordained in 1994 are invited to robe. Bubbly and cake will be served afterwards.

During the service, everyone will be invited to offer a symbol of thanksgiving for women's ministry. This could be a poem, a picture, a bible verse or a prayer. It could be a special memory or refer to an area of ministry that you yourself are involved with or have benefitted from. The symbol will be collected in an offertory basket so we ask that it is small enough. It may not be easy to return items afterwards.

COFFEE and a CHAT
St John's Room, 10.30am - 12 noon
Thursdays 7 and 21 March



If you need a lift, please ring Barbara: 715636

SAVE OUR FROGS AND TOADS! Please remember that until early April there are likely to be frogs and toads trying to cross Church Way and Oast Road near the T-junction in the hours after dusk. We have a Toad Patrol to help them on their journey. These little amphibians can be seen and avoided if we all drive slowly and carefully in that area. Please help us to spare God's creatures.

www.stjohnshurstgreen.org.uk

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st John's
HURST GREEN