

The background of the cover is a vibrant collage of autumn leaves in shades of yellow, orange, and brown, interspersed with several purple acorns that have a sparkling, glittery texture. The text is centered in the upper half of the page.

# st JOHN'S

*Living God's Love*

Parish Magazine

HARVEST 2020



# st JOHN'S

*Living God's Love*

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Our magazine is published four times a year and is delivered free to all homes and businesses in the parish.

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## PRINT

Newnorth Print Ltd  
[www.newnorth.co.uk](http://www.newnorth.co.uk)

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Copy deadline for the Winter issue:  
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# Introductory Letter

**H**ello and welcome to this latest edition of our magazine. This is both a 'Hello' and a 'Goodbye' but more of that shortly.

Our vicar Berkeley has been unwell and not working for a little while, which is why I am writing this introductory piece. We wish him well and pray for his speedy and good recovery.

This magazine is timed to reach you around Harvest time. Many of the things you will read in this digital edition are themed around harvest. This has traditionally been a time for gathering in crops and giving thanks to God for all that comes our way. Not only that but offering it back to God in thanks and recognition of the fact that ultimately all that we have, even life itself, is a gift.

Fewer of us are connected to food production than in previous generations, although lockdown has provided many with the time and impetus to reconnect with this fundamental part of life. Back garden growing of fruit and vegetables is more popular now than ever in recent years. The flour and yeast shortages of recent months show the desire for many to get our hands messy in the making of our own food.

Whatever it is that you make, be it food, education, music, conversations, may you have the liberating insight that all of this is a gift. May you also know the freeing ability to give it back to your Maker and in the service of those less fortunate than you. In the deepest possible way, our worth does not come from what we create or produce but because we *have been* made.

---

And so to 'Goodbye'. After three very happy years at St John's it is time for me to move from being its curate (apprentice vicar) to being a full time vicar. On 18th October I will take up the post of vicar at All Saints, Batford, working alongside others in the parish of Harpenden.

I am not moving far but my attention will move from 'here' to 'there'. I have been very lucky to find such a welcoming community to grow and learn within. Thank you to all at St John's for their love. It has also been wonderful to make connections with the wider community of Southdown. It was a privilege to help organise the Southdown Festival in its first two years. It has also been fantastic to connect with people at the Grove schools, the pubs, cafes, various musical groups and elsewhere.

I am very much looking forward to working alongside the people of All Saints, Batford but will also leave this community with many happy memories and good friends. God bless you all.

*Revd. James Brown*



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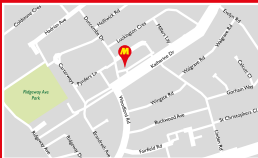
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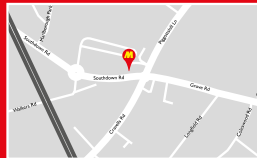
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# The Grape Harvest

## “Chateau Eglise” - 2020

*“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.” (John 15:1-8)*

**T**he grape harvest was one of the most important fruit crops in the agrarian society in which Jesus and his first disciples lived. Grape vines were grown in vineyards and even over rooftops and trellises. The grapes picked from them were consumed in a variety of ways; eaten fresh, dried as raisins, and often made into raisin cakes, or turned into wine.

A new vineyard was prepared by digging a boundary trench and erecting posts to support a perimeter hedge or fence. The young vines were planted in rows and the branches were raised up on supports. Each spring and early summer, the vines were pruned and, as the grapes matured, a shelter of branches or a stone tower was put up, and the

household would keep watch, to ward off both human and animal marauders.

In order to achieve a bountiful harvest, drastic pruning was required each year. The process could appear quite brutal, even destructive, but left to their own devices, the thick trailing vines would scramble haphazardly and attach themselves to other things, ending up as one big, tangled mess and producing a meagre crop of small, poor quality grapes. In order to achieve an abundant harvest of healthy, tasty and juicy grapes, a vinedresser was required to cut away and destroy dead branches and prune back productive younger branches to encourage fresh, green shoots. This cleansing and pruning would enable each plant to achieve a fruitful yield of

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luscious, juicy grapes, the best of which were found closest to the main stem, or heart, of the plant.

In this extract from John's gospel, Jesus tells us that God is the vinedresser, that Jesus is the vine and that the community of believers, the church, are the branches. The vine and the fruit of the vine are gifts from God without whose tending there will be no abundant harvest. We are required to trust in God as the one wielding the pruning knife – the plant may look dead and useless when it has first been pruned, but all the branches that remain connected to the vine are promised new life and new growth as result.

John uses the image of the vine as a symbol to explain that Christian communities will only flourish and yield a fruitful harvest if they stay faithful to Christ's word. The pruning and cleansing are in fact nurturing acts of divine love and salvation which we are required to respond to with naturally

flowing acts of discipleship. The plant that is pruned with care and love will respond naturally by growing strongly and bearing fruit. As disciples who experience the love of God in our lives, we should be motivated by the love shared with us to perform our own acts of love.

A large percentage of the annual grape harvest was, and still is, used to make wine. Every year a new vintage is produced with its own unique taste and character, depending on the particular growing conditions of that year. What will 2020's vintage be like? Our community of believers, our church, is a branch of the true vine, but the devastating spread of the coronavirus pandemic meant that it was pruned very hard in March. The vine's branches were severely challenged and were cleansed and pruned rigorously and harshly by circumstances beyond our control. As is always the case, the plant being pruned is entirely in the hands of, and at the mercy of, the gardener. The branches

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must have appeared particularly lifeless as church doors were closed and locked and no public Eucharist could be celebrated. But what were the green shoots that emerged? I would suggest that some of them were expressed as kindness, humility, neighbourliness, respectful appreciation of doctors and carers, a renewed awareness of our planet's fragile health, an increased concern for the needs of the most vulnerable. Nationally, even globally, there was an enhanced prayerfulness as online services attracted numerous viewings. Many people acknowledged an increased sense of sufficiency and perspective – what really mattered was family, health, the well-being of all those we cared for and the continuing protection of the most vulnerable in society. What a wealth of new green shoots! The branches were still thriving and bearing fruit - with a

slightly new flavour.

We must ask ourselves some searching questions and consider whether this year's vintage will be a wine that can be laid down and whose qualities will last. Have the branches responded positively to their cleansing and pruning and is the plant flourishing with renewed vigour? Have we as a community stayed connected to the true vine and are we fruitful? What is the fruit that we produce? As a branch of God's church, we are asked to place our trust in God's word and abide in him. As we emerge from this pandemic, whenever that will be, we must look with hope for more new green shoots to emerge, remain faithful in our discipleship and be confident that whatever pruning has taken place will ultimately result in a bumper harvest. ●

*Emma Bresslaw*

---

## Parish registers

### **Baptisms**

*Welcome to the family of God*

There were no baptisms in this period

### **Marriages**

*Joined by God*

There were no weddings in this period

### **Funerals**

*May they rest in peace*

27 April 2020

Gladys Jubb

18 May 2020

Barbara Phyllis Saban

### **Forthcoming Events**

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# Church Services In These Strange Times

While guidelines remain as they are, this is the pattern for worship together. You are very welcome.

## ONLINE

Since March we have have been making weekly online services.

These short services have been well received. Thank you to all who have contributed by editing, filming and being part of the church in this way.



The services 'premiere' on our YouTube channel at 9.30am each Sunday and are available to watch any time after that.

## IN THE BUILDING

5pm Evening Prayer, Monday - Friday

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Daily  
Prayer

5pm Sunday Service

Holy Communion or other specially designed service.

# BOUNDLESS GENEROSITY

I have been on the Santa Float both in Harpenden and in surrounding villages for very many years. I have knocked at hundreds and hundreds of doors asking for donations that go to support those most in need in our community. All of us who have collected have that uncanny instinct that it is those who can least afford it, who are most generous. The mother with a babe in arms and a toddler at her side who come from a block of flats; the old man who carefully unlocks his door and peers uncertainly into the unknown; the family man who emerges with a couple of small children in tow dressed in shabby and ill-fitting clothes. These are just some of the people who dig deep and give generously. It can be a humbling experience.

God blesses us with unlimited generosity. Everything we have in this life comes from God who created the world, who gave us his Son Jesus to die on the cross for our sakes and who sent the Holy Spirit to comfort and sustain us. As Christians, we respond to God's love and generosity with a love and a generosity of our own.

Like those we encounter on the Santa run, we want to stretch out to our loved ones and those around us who are in need in so many ways. We give our time in doing shopping, driving others to the hospital and by serving in charity shops. We give our money by contributing to appeals from local charities, to cries from emergency relief and much else.

St John's Church stands in the heart of our community, and we are grateful to have been able to continue to serve through this period of lockdown. Like many in this time, we have taken the opportunity to reflect on

our mission, our place in the community and our future. Our ministry today is as important as it has ever been, and we hope to grow, and to show God's love to more people in our Parish and beyond. But we face an uncertain future and ask you for your support.

This year we face a deficit of £30,000. We are very careful with what we spend but for a number of years, our income has not kept pace with our expenditure. Therefore, we are launching a Giving Programme. Nearly all our income comes from our church family and we will be contacting them, asking them to review their giving to St John's. Our programme will be launched at our Harvest Festival when we give thanks to God for his boundless generosity and during October, we will focus our services on the theme of generosity.

Please read the letter when it comes to you and reflect on how to respond. If you haven't heard from us by the beginning of October, please contact the Parish office.

*David Nye*

on behalf of the Giving Programme team



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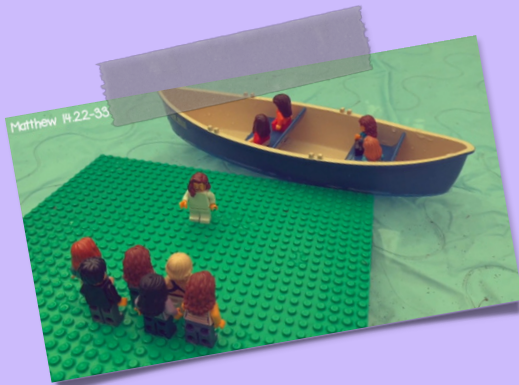
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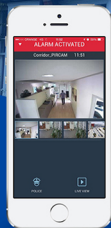
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# Quizzing for the Parish Centre

As a result of lockdown and with social distancing measures in place, our planned fundraising events for the new Parish Centre have sadly been on hold. However, to keep us connected and to keep our brain cells ticking over, we recently ran two successful quizzes.

Our first online quiz night on Sunday 21st June was a great success, with 40 participants in eight teams Zooming in to take part. The questions, compiled by our quizmaster Paul Bedding, ranged from well-known images of Hertfordshire to comedy classics, via music and intriguing links between books and films. The Bible round had an interesting twist as we were asked to identify a variety of different languages from passages about our patron saint, St John the Baptist after whom the church is named. Our host James Brown kept us all in check, and a good time was had by all. After a closely fought contest, team 'Don't forget the Wine!' took the (virtual) trophy. Many thanks to everyone who joined in and to everyone who organised the event.

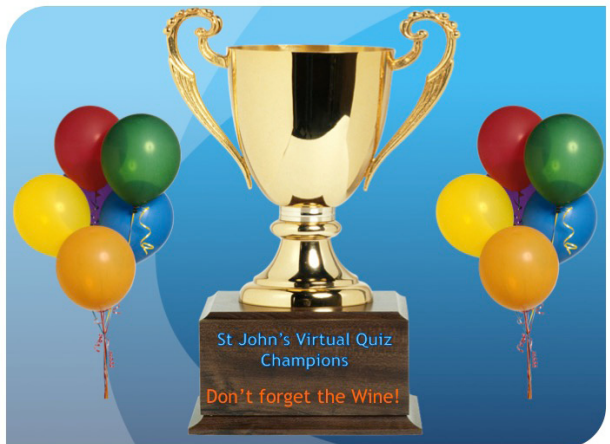
Our 'Across the British Isles' quiz also kept people pondering with a series of 60 questions (some deviously cryptic) where the answers were towns and cities in the British Isles. It was available on our website for two weeks in early June.

In total the two quizzes raised over £480 for our new Parish Centre.

Also, in early May, one of our congregation, Di Borthwick, began to make fabric facemasks to keep us safe out and about. There has been a huge demand as they are both comfortable and colourful. As a result, she has generously donated £1000 to the Parish Centre project. Our grateful thanks go to Di for this amazing effort.

Looking ahead to the autumn and winter, we hope to organise other safe and sociable events, and we'd be delighted if you would join us for our next quiz night.

*Liz Sergeant*



# Churchwardens' Report

Since our last report in the online magazine, time has passed rapidly even though we have been locked down and restricted in so many ways. At the time of writing this, we have seen a light at the end of the tunnel growing bigger every day. So many of our usual activities have not occurred – church services, social events, life events – but new and exciting ways to keep the St John's community together have been found.

The online services (on YouTube) have been very successful – the Easter one attracted 500+ views - and many have looked forward to them every Sunday, just as they would a live service. Our ministry team, and many other members of the congregation have contributed through readings, and prayers. There have also been several Midweek Meditations which have encouraged thought and contemplation. Every day there are prayers that can be accessed online. An innovation since the last magazine has been the weekly Junior Church at Home online services, led by the curate, James, supported by the Junior Church Leaders and in which lots of our youngsters have taken part. We are grateful to Chris Dodd and Henry Poppleton who have undertaken the technical aspects of putting all the recordings together; well done to them. We are pleased that Ian Pritchard and Michel Readman are also going to support the editing of the videos.

Some social events have taken place online – the Sunday café on Zoom, and a wonderful fund-raising quiz, with proceeds going to Project Phoenix.

This latter is still a main priority even though the situation has not allowed for any live fund-raising yet. We have already raised a substantial part of our target amount but still have a long way to go to achieve the goal. We hope to resume this endeavour soon.

An important network of friends, supporters and helpers has kept in touch and given practical aid to those shielding or who are vulnerable. Thank you to Margaret Creighton for organising this, and to the many who have given time and effort to keep our community together spiritually, even though it was not physically possible.

Although the APCM (Annual Parish Council Meeting) has been postponed until at least the autumn, the PCC has met online several times to ensure that the background business of the church continues. All of the church wardens and the ministry team have also met online regularly to keep everything up to date. The church office is open too.

A huge effort has gone into the preparations for the opening of the main church building for private prayer. Being closed for so long, the church was extremely dusty. A fantastic group of cleaners, led by Di Borthwick, banished the spiders and their silky cobwebs, and polished up the interior to make it a welcoming sacred space once more. Many items have had to be put away to make the church Covid-safe and easy to clean. There are regulations to follow and so posters give instructions of good practice when someone enters. Recently, the wearing of masks was advised, but as

we write this, has become mandatory. We hope that those who visit will keep to the guidelines so that everyone can stay safe.

From the last week of July, evening prayers have been held daily and have made a calm, contemplative and peaceful progress towards the end of the busy day. An app is used for the prayers.

The government has allowed churches to hold services and planning these within the safe rules has been rather difficult. However, we have adhered to the guidelines and our first 'service' took place on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August. It was delightful to see members of our congregation return to church for this short service, even though everyone was wearing masks!

We look forward to all children returning to school, college or university in the autumn; this is always a special time, a time of new starts and new resolutions about studying hard, but for many who have been away from their friends, it will be even more extraordinary; for their parents it may cause some concern too. Usually at St John's we have a special service for this; if it is possible or not, we will be thinking and praying for students of all ages everywhere and wishing them well in their future studies.

Harvest comes next in our tradition. As we remember the fear and panic at the beginning of the lockdown with regards to supplies of food and essentials, thanksgiving for our food and those that grow it, supply it and transport it, will be even more meaningful this autumn.

Similarly, the All Souls services at the beginning of November will have an added poignancy this year because of the consequences of the pandemic, the

loss of so many lives globally in painful circumstances. Funerals have been restricted and the grieving process often solitary. This special time is one where all the departed from all times are commemorated and remembered. The pandemic sharply focused our minds on the transience of life and highlighted those aspects of our faith in God, as lived by his Son, Jesus Christ.

St John's is very fortunate to have a wonderful ministry team and many dedicated volunteers who do a huge variety of tasks to support the church and its people. We look forward to the future with optimism and will be keeping our eyes on that slowly increasing bright light at the end of the tunnel until we are able to come into the full daylight.

Keep safe and well.

*James Hillman*

*Jane Donati*

Churchwardens



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# Getting to know the congregation

*An interview with Martin Myers*

## How long have you lived in Southdown?

My wife Rachel and I moved to Southdown in 2003 just prior to the birth of our daughter. I originally moved to Harpenden in 1999 on the advice of a couple of colleagues that it was an excellent place from which to commute to London, although I have had occasion to rue this when using the trains!

## What do you like about living here?

Rachel has spent most of her life in Southdown so it was a natural choice for us! We met through the local musical theatre group (HMTC) which I joined within a few weeks of moving here. The whole family have been involved in some form ever since. A particular feature of Southdown is the proximity of fantastic countryside. When lockdown began in March, walking became our daily exercise and we discovered wonderfully varied walks around parts of Heartwood, Nomansland and the Common, all directly from our front door. I also enjoy getting on my bike and using the old railway line paths such as the Nickey Line, Ayot Greenway and Upper Lea Valley Way.

## How are you involved at St Johns?

My link with St. John's also began in 2003 with the christening of our daughter. Following this introduction, I attended evensong occasionally over subsequent years (one previous incumbent - who shall remain nameless - suggested it was a chance to get away from the children for an hour). In early 2018 I was elected to the PCC and a year later (I'm not quite sure how it happened) I was asked to become one of the deputy churchwardens. As well as a deeper

involvement in the actual workings of the church - occasional meetings, being on the 9:30 warden rota for example - this has been a rewarding (interesting!) experience. I have come to learn about and know so many more people within the wider St. John's community. After all there is nothing like helping to put out/clear away chairs and tables for events to make new acquaintances!

## What does your faith mean to you?

I went to Sunday School at our local church and was also in the choir. A lovely tranquil location just apart from most of the village. The simplicity of the services had a lasting effect on me - it probably explains my particular appreciation of evensong at St. John's. In the quiet of a Sunday evening in the Lady Chapel I find a peace and stillness that is otherwise difficult to replicate. I even consider the walk to and from church as an extension of the service. It allows me to contemplate all that is going on in my life and around me and attempt to find perspective amongst it all. ●





# Harpenden Cares

A COMMUNITY RESPONSE  
TO THE CORONAVIRUS

Supported by



**Harpenden Cares is a community-led initiative, supported by the Town Council, created to help support our community in these unprecedented times.**

**If you need support, please call the...**

## **Harpenden Cares Contact Centre**

Open Monday to Friday from 10am until 2pm

**01582 460457**

**[www.harpendencares.org](http://www.harpendencares.org)**



## **Thank You to Our Volunteers**

We'd like to give a huge thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers who are offering befriending support, acting as street coordinators, helping deliver essential supplies, and relaying general advice & guidance through the Harpenden Cares Call Centre.



## **Donations**

If you would like to support Harpenden Cares, **we are now taking individual donations.** All donations received will go directly to supporting vulnerable people locally. Donations are managed through the Harpenden Trust. Please reference 'Harpenden Cares' when you donate. To donate directly, please go to:

**[www.bit.ly/HarpCaresDonation](http://www.bit.ly/HarpCaresDonation)**



# Harpenden Cares

## A COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS

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### **Did you know... We run an assisted shopping service for anyone that can afford to pay for food supplies but who is or should be self-isolating?**

You do not have to be over a certain age or have certain health conditions to access this support. If you should be isolating for whatever reason, let us help you with your essential supplies.

#### **How it works:**

1. You contact the Harpenden Cares telephone number (01582 460457) to register for assisted shopping
2. Your request is passed to our assisted shopping team who will call you back to take a shopping list of essential items
3. When you speak to our assisted shopping team you will make a secure payment over the phone using your bank card. Payment will be £50 for a large shop or £30 for a smaller shop
4. Once payment has been taken, the shopping list is passed to one of our volunteers, who will go shopping and purchase as many of the items as possible
5. The volunteer will deliver the shopping to your home without any contact
6. We keep a record of the amount we have remaining on your account, which we will use against future assisted shopping requests that you make



### **Harpenden Cares Contact Centre**

If you need support, please contact us between  
10am-2pm from Monday to Friday

**01582 460457**

**[www.harpendencares.org](http://www.harpendencares.org)**

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## **St John's Hall Hire**

**Are you looking for a hall or meeting room to hire on either a regular or occasional basis?**

Once it is deemed safe to do so, St John's Parish Hall will once again be available to hire during weekdays and is ideal for a playgroup or other group needing a large space. Our meeting room is perfect for smaller numbers.

Please contact: [parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk](mailto:parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk) or phone (01582) 712776 for further details or to arrange a viewing.



# A wander through my bookshelves

I suspect I am not alone in having a little more time on my hands than I would have expected to this year. As a full-time teacher, I tend to work at full throttle through the term. This, combined with all the reading involved in my job (teaching History and Politics at Secondary School), means I rarely get the time I would like to give over to reading for pleasure.

One of the silver linings of Covid-19 has been the time it has created during lockdown, which would normally have been filled with other things. My morning and evening trips down the M1 have been replaced with wanderings through the pages of books and instead of planned holidays, I have been travelling to foreign and imagined lands through the written word.

It's been a great opportunity to challenge myself to read some of the books I have bought/ been leant over the years but have never succeeded in getting past page 2. I have travelled to Revolutionary France with Baroness Orczy, up Snowdon and Ben Nevis with Griff Rhys Jones and taken an easy chair in the Stately Homes of P.G. Wodehouse's novels.

But as well as this, I've also spent my lockdown reading time going back to my first love, fantasy fiction. Now, I know that there's possibly no genre quite as Marmite-like as fantasy novels and if you are immediately thinking "aliens, rocketships, not for me," I won't be offended if you stop reading now. But if



that is your immediate response, maybe you will indulge me while I take a stroll through my fantasy lockdown bookshelf and explain why these books feel so important right now.



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Let's start with the *Discworld Novels* by Terry Pratchett. I've loved Pratchett since I was a teenager and lately, I've gone back to him because in a world so full of uncertainty and worry, it's great to find something that makes you laugh. Pratchett perfectly captures the sheer ridiculousness of situations. It's also great fun to spot the books and films that are so cleverly parodied in these books. I spent a very happy birthday this year locked down in the garden reading *Maskerade*. I highly recommend this book for anyone missing the opera or who has ever hummed along to the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Next, *The Immortals Quartet* by Tamora Pierce. I first discovered Tamora Pierce when I was thirteen. Pierce's world is recognisably medieval, with a fantasy twist. The heroine of the Immortals series, a young girl called Daine, has the gift of Wild Magic, allowing her to communicate with animals. Her adventures in the kingdom of Tortall centre around a growing war in which humans, animals and mythical creatures called Immortals all feature. The heart of the books though is the longing for family and connection and the importance of home, something that has been brought home to many of us through the current crisis.

Finally, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord*

*of the Rings* – JRR Tolkien. I was first read *The Lord of the Rings* when I was nine, by a very patient elder brother, and I have returned to Middle Earth many times since. Whilst I'm sure that elves, orcs, goblins and hobbits are not to everyone's taste, Tolkien's pages have provided me with important messages of hope. We may not be on a quest to destroy a magical ring, but for many of us the last few months have been a quest of sorts; whether it's learning new ways of working, home-schooling, or just trying to make perfect banana bread. When I stood on my doorstep for the NHS clap for carers, it was a line from Tolkien that seemed to best capture the feelings and emotions that that applause encapsulated:

*"the world is indeed full of peril, and in it there are many dark places; but still there is much that is fair, and though in all lands love is now mingled with grief, it grows perhaps the greater."*

I took an immense amount of comfort from lines such as these, together with the stories of courage and companionship that weave through all these stories.

The autumn may not bring dragons, but I am sure it will bring challenges and uncertainties. A good book won't bring us nearer the end of all of this, but it might just help. Right now though, the autumn is on the way and that can only mean one thing, it's time to head to Hogwarts. ●

*Susannah Pyke*



# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Diocese of St. Albans

Each peaceful day during lockdown I walked across the Common, through the woods and onto the strangely quiet and welcoming golf course where I was free to wander wherever I chose. I got to know every path, every wooden bench, every golden gorse bush and every patch of wildflowers as they changed from week to week through spring and into summer.

Things are different now. Families are out on bikes, friends share picnics in the shade of the Baa Lamb trees, there is the welcome sound of ball on cricket bat and the occasional call of “Fore” from an enthusiastic golfer which ensures I stick closely to the designated walking path.

The vast majority of the thirty-four members of Mothers’ Union at St John’s have also spent these last few months at home and have made the most of the English summer. E V Lucas, in his poem declaring his love of England could have been describing Harpenden as we have seen it in recent weeks:

“...Land of the hedgerow and the village spire,  
Land of thatched cottages and murmuring bees,  
And wayside inns where one may take one’s ease.  
Of village green where cricket may be played  
And fat old spaniels sleeping in the shade...”

E V Lucas

Our gardens and homes are immaculate, drawers have been tidied, cupboards have been cleared, boxes of photographs have been sorted, silver has been cleaned and delicious cakes have been baked. We have FaceTimed the family or met up with them (but not yet hugged the grandchildren), talked with friends on Zoom or in a garden and sat at home for the lovely Sunday Service from St John’s.

We are all remaining positive, but we wonder when our monthly MU meetings will resume. The committee room is far too small to allow for social distancing.

The urgent appeal from Central Mothers’ Union for financial help during these difficult months raised an amazing £750,000 so the good work supporting families



and vulnerable people continues.

We were all looking forward to the opportunity of meeting the Worldwide President, Sharan Harper at St Mary's Church, Hitchin on 16<sup>th</sup> July. The Diocese was to host a visit of spouses of the delegates at the Lambeth Conference. This has been postponed.

The MU Annual Gathering 2020 at the ICC Belfast been rescheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

I do hope Branch members manage to meet up one evening before too long, socially distanced of course. It would be lovely to pray together, to exchange news and to plan our course of action for the coming months.

In 1876, Mary Sumner, our wonderful founder, wrote a prayer which she prayed every day for the rest of her life. It is as relevant today as ever and is the inspiration for all that we do as Mothers' Union members.

All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee,  
 And every life I touch do thou by the spirit quicken,  
 Whether through the word I speak  
 The prayer I breathe or life I live. Amen

*Carol Cooke, Branch Leader*



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## Glaze Time



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**The Skew Bridge**, Southdown Rd, Harpenden

Tuesday 2.00-4.00pm

**Inn on the Green\***, Leyton Rd, Harpenden

Wednesday 11.00-1.00pm

**Park Cafe**, Leyton Rd, Harpenden

Thursday 2.00-4.00pm



Like to know more about Glaze Time? (m) 07958 324520  
(e) michelle@glazetime.co.uk (w) www.glazetime.co.uk

\* sessions run here during school holidays

## Internet and Telephone Prayer Resources

- Divine Office/Daily Prayer – for contemporary or traditional wording for each day's Morning or Evening Prayer :  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>
- For details of the link to join St John's Morning Prayer at 8.30 a.m. on weekdays via Zoom, please contact James or the church office directly
- Berkeley's introduction to praying the Jesus Prayer -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4J6BOoaiV4&t=63s>
- Church of England - Daily Hope Phone Line – 0800 804 8044
- Pray as you Go/Pray as you Stay – inspirational daily reflections and prayers to offer support at this time  
<https://pray-as-you-go.org/retreat/pray-as-you-stay>



## Southdown Methodists



Informal Worship gatherings on Zoom:  
Wednesday 4pm, Sunday 4pm.

Bible Bites - Thursdays 7pm.

Contact [stuart.dyer@methodist.org.uk](mailto:stuart.dyer@methodist.org.uk) for login details.

*Keep up to date via their facebook page:*

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthdownMethodist/>

# Season of Creation

As in previous years St John's will be joining churches around the world in celebrating the Season of Creation.

Look out for our online services as we explore the Christian wisdom and practical work to be done around:

13 September

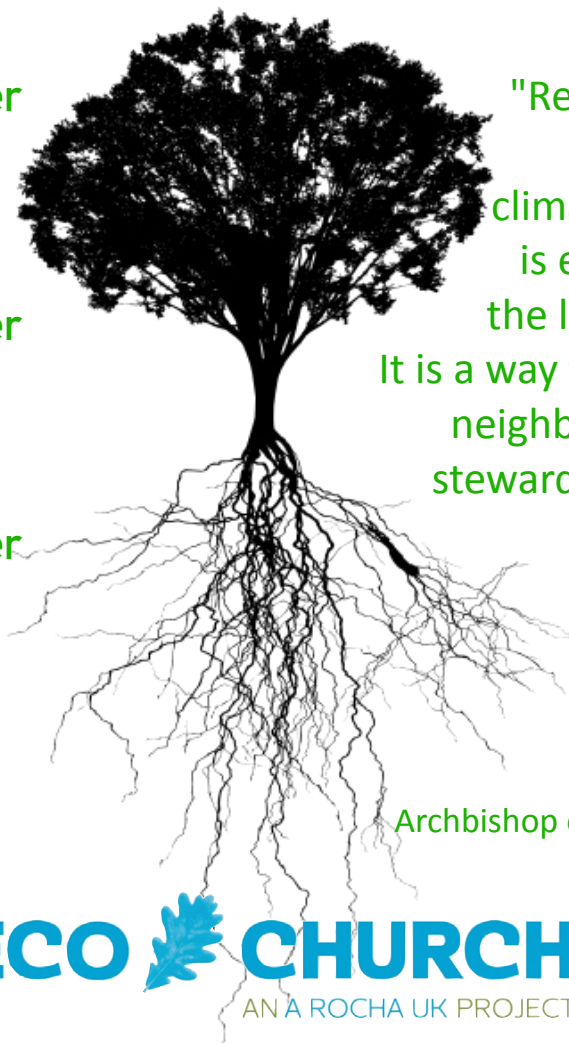
## Trees

20 September

## Land

27 September

## Rivers



"Reducing the causes of climate change is essential to the life of faith. It is a way to love our neighbour and to steward the gift of creation."

Justin Welby,  
Archbishop of Canterbury



# ST ALBANS & DISTRICT FOOD BANK

For some years, St John's has been supporting this local food bank, one of over 1200 food banks run by the Trussell Trust across the UK. They aim to provide emergency food and compassionate, practical support to people in crisis, while campaigning for long-term change to structural issues that lock people into poverty.

Over the past 5 years, food bank use in the UK has increased by 73%, mainly due to rising prices, static incomes, the introduction of the Bedroom Tax and then Universal Credit which involves a minimum 5 week wait (though it is possible to access a 2-week advance). And this was before Covid-19.

With growing financial insecurity, demand has soared over the past few months. Some who have previously given generously to the St Albans and Distract Food Bank have now become clients themselves. From March 2019 to March 2020, our local Food Bank fed 4057 people. Since April, already 3470 people have been fed and as the furlough scheme comes to an end and unemployment rises, this number will increase exponentially.

Most fortunately, donations have not dropped, and our local communities continue to be very generous with both food and money. Some of you may recall the recent Round Table street collections which were very successful.

Though well provided with most basic items, shortages remain, particularly:

**Custard, rice pudding, desserts, jams/spreads, snacks and vegan items.**

Equally as important, more van drivers, who can lift heavy crates, are needed to help on Wednesday and Friday afternoons.

If interested, please contact the St Albans and District Food Bank on 01727 613019 or [info@stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk)

Now the church has re-opened, if you are able to, please leave your donations in the porch, as before. Be assured they will be more appreciated than ever. Whilst some of us have survived the past months confident that our fridges and freezers are full, many of our fellow citizens are so much less fortunate.

Thank you very much for your support and prayers.

*Pat Hudis*





## Services at St John's

### Monday - Friday:

8.30 am Morning Prayer [via Zoom](#).

5.00 pm Evening Prayer in church.

Please would you **wear a mask** in the service and maintain the ongoing practices of **social distancing** and using **hand sanitiser**.

### Sunday:

9.30 am Online service and Junior Church @ Home [on YouTube](#).

This service is available to watch any time after this

5.00 pm Holy Communion in church.

Please would you **wear a mask** in any service and maintain the ongoing practices of **social distancing** and using **hand sanitiser**.

The church building is open for private prayer every day of the week, from 9am - 5pm.



PARISH OFFICE

*For enquiries, including marriages, baptisms, funerals and hall bookings, please contact the parish office open from Monday 9am to 5:30pm and Wednesday to Friday 9:30am to 1:30pm.*

**Julie Birkett**

Telephone: 01582 712776  
parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

*If you are in need of help or know anyone in need of support, please contact support@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk*

*Parish Directory*

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