



st JOHN'S

Living God's Love

Parish Magazine

HARVEST 2021

st JOHN'S

Living God's Love

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ADDRESS

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www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

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

We are very grateful to those who write contributions and the many volunteers who distribute and deliver the magazines, come rain or shine, to everyone in the parish.

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Introductory Letter



New beginnings

I don't know about you, but September always feels to me like a new beginning. August always feels like the time to have a break, or at the very least the pace of life seems to slow down and we tend to find more time to enjoy what our lovely English summers have to offer. Then, as September arrives we pick everything up again – hopefully with renewed energy! It's a good time to reflect on the many ways we might try and give ourselves rest and time for renewal, and also what new beginnings might lie ahead for us.

I'm particularly aware of this this year for two reasons.

Firstly, because I am soon to become the new Vicar of St John's and your local parish priest - my new beginning. I'm moving from Bushey where I have been Associate Rector. Before Bushey, I was curate in Redbourn, so Harpenden is a familiar place. It's not just a new job but also a new place to live for us all, Sophy (my wife) and two boys – Jem and Laurie. We are really excited to get to know everyone and this lovely community in this part of Harpenden.

Secondly, and at the forefront of everyone's minds at the moment, is the new beginnings that lie ahead for us as the pandemic restrictions are lifted and we can start to do more of those things we want to do, which we haven't been able to. Albeit with a degree of anxiety or cautiousness whilst knowing that it isn't over yet. It is going to take some time to process the effect of the last 18 months on ourselves and those around us, and also to figure out how we might want things to be different as we look ahead. As we start this, I hope you will all manage to give yourself some time to rest and slow down.

I wonder what your new beginnings are as we approach September? Maybe you are in a new and exciting place? Maybe you are somewhere you would rather not have to be?

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For all kinds of reasons, we find ourselves on the cusp of something different. With any new beginnings comes the settling into new patterns and habits and new ways of being, the letting go of some things, but also mourning the loss of others. It's an exciting, demanding and even terrifying time. It will require us to navigate through new pastures and make decisions which affect us all.

I regularly wonder to myself how God might be helping us prepare for this next new beginning? As I do, I'm drawn to the writings of the Prophet Isaiah, writing in the 6th century BC. The people of Israel have been exiled to Babylon – they are living in a strange land.

Yet in Chapter 40 the Lord speaks through the prophet that they are to return to Jerusalem, and the words of the prophet announcing this good news begin with 'Comfort, O comfort my people says your God'. After hardship God brings comfort. To our modern ears that means much needed care and support for each other and ourselves. During the pandemic we have discovered the depths of this care and I hope that it continues into the future too – we certainly still need it.

But comfort also has another meaning, literally 'to give strength'. God also promises to strengthen us from all we have been through but also for the new challenges and beginnings that lie ahead. It was not just a new beginning for the people of Israel, but a new beginning in their relationship and journey with God.

I pray that we will all receive both these kinds of comfort from God, especially those of us who need it most. I hope that we, as your local church, will be a comfort to those who need it, and that we might all – whether we have been a regular through lockdown or not – make our new beginnings with God and with each other, whether it is this September or any other time you feel ready.

With every blessing

Tim





WASP GUYS

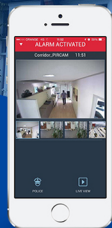
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Churchwardens' Report

As the seasons change, and although still enjoying the beautiful summer weather and the joys of nature, we are looking forward to the autumn. September is a time of new starts: the school year, and a change of schools or classes for many children; new beginnings for those off to college or university. These are all very exciting, yet often daunting, prospects because of unfamiliar places or faces. At St John's we are awaiting the installation of our new vicar, Tim, on September 12th. For both him and his family, and us too, this will be a new chapter in the history of our church.

Since last autumn and throughout the various lockdowns, we have been privileged to have been able to live stream our Sunday services on YouTube so that the most vulnerable and those nervous about coronavirus, have been able to share in our worship. This

service, which has reached out to so many, will continue even as we take small cautious steps towards developing activities. Our grateful thanks go to Neil Middleton, and his team of film directors, who have enabled these events. Michael Readman has used his considerable specialist knowledge to enhance the sound quality too and is also forming a team for this purpose.

The musical elements of our services have been sustained and built upon by Roger Carter, the Director of Music, and a small team of wonderful singers. We have also sung outside at the end of a service, and begun to sing inside as well, albeit rather muffled through our masks. The music and singing makes a most welcome uplifting addition to the service.

Owing to the sterling efforts of David Nye, one of our Readers, we have every week hosted a succession of celebrant priests, including Bishops and Archdeacons, since last September. Many interesting, intriguing, and thought-provoking sermons have been delivered. The Ministry Team have supported all services, including evening prayers, funerals, family services and baptisms.

The church building has been kept clean, and disinfected, to allow for the few activities that have taken place, and for that we must thank Di Borthwick and her general cleaning team, as well as those who do specific coronavirus cleaning. It is looking good, even though some things are not yet back in place. We thank Margaret Creighton





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for her care of the sacristy, and Alan and Lesley Tree who dress the altar according to the church calendar.

In August a 'giving campaign' took place and an appeal to people's generosity to support our church was made. We do not receive any funding except that from gifts which enable us to maintain the church, develop our mission, and continue to offer God's love to all who need it. Monetary gifts are essential in this respect but we do also recognise and appreciate the gifts of time and effort from our huge number of volunteers in every sphere. To find out more, please visit our website, www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk where lots of information about us and our activities can be found.

Harvest will come next in our tradition when we remember the importance of our food, thanksgiving for those who grow it, supply it, and transport it, as well as those who do not have enough.

The All Souls' service at the beginning of November is always moving but will have an added poignancy this

year because of the consequences of the pandemic, the loss of so many lives globally in painful circumstances. Many funerals have taken place, yet the grieving process is often solitary and long. This special time is one where all the departed from all times are commemorated and remembered. The pandemic has 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.

Many thanks to everyone, and especially to all our magazine deliverers, efficiently marshalled by Steve Whiting, whose street-pounding efforts have enabled you to read this report.

We look forward to the future, and our new vicar, with great optimism and will be hoping to see many of you in our church at some future time, or if you wish, continue to follow us online.

Keep safe and well.

*James Hillman
Jane Donati*

Churchwardens

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An invitation to begin (again) with prayer...

Although we don't know what lies ahead (do we ever though?) we are entering into a new phase in response to the pandemic which will be more about personal decisions and responsibility, rather than legal rules and guidelines.

It's hard to know what the best thing to do is. What do we focus on first?

St Cuthbert, a 7th century saint from Lindisfarne in northern England, was faced with the similar situation. He was given land by the king. What did he do first? Build the chapel, sort out the farm to live off, or where to live? All very important things. Instead, he spent 40 days praying – seeking God's guidance.

So, following his example before we act, we are going to spend some time in prayer – asking God for guidance and to listen to what we hear and see around us, both for ourselves as well as those around us.

Over the next few months, we will prayerfully reflect on what services to start again in person, what various aspects of church life need to be re-started, and maybe even what new things need to happen.

We are also planning some prayer walks around the Parish (to walk and pray along every road). If there is something you would like us to pray for you or you would like to join us as we walk around and notice what God is telling us, please get in touch.

If you would like to know more, please sign up to our weekly email.



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

UPDATE FROM THE ECO CHURCH TEAM:

Litter pick. We had a very successful litter pick on Environment Sunday (June 6th), as our contribution to the St Albans Sustainability Festival. We collected a wide range of rubbish in the Cravells Road/Walkers Road area. We hope this will become an annual event.



Encouraging wildlife in the church grounds: You may have noticed that much of the grass around the church was not cut during May. This allowed wildflowers to bloom, providing food



for bees and other pollinators. The grass slope between the vicarage and church will remain unmown until late summer, to encourage different wildflowers. Steve, who looks after the wonderful North flowerbed, already includes many plants for bees and butterflies, and has recently added some 'bee hotels' to provide nest sites for solitary bees. Do take a look when you are next passing.

We are now collecting used **medicine blister packs** (the foil containers for tablets) for recycling by the recycling company TerraCycle. The collection is being organised by Harpenden Girlguiding to raise money for local charities, and our box will be one collection point for that scheme. There is a labelled box in the church porch, which will be regularly emptied, which is accessible whenever the church is open. Please ensure that all packs are *empty* (no tablets) and please don't include any cardboard/plastic wrapping or paper inserts - these should go in your home recycling where appropriate. This is an easy way to recycle these blister packs, which would otherwise have to go to landfill. Thank you for your help.

Margaret Charlston



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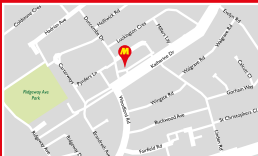
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FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD!



In Waitrose's "Weekend" paper for the 5th July, there was an article looking at some research conducted by WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) into how many blackcurrants were falling on to the ground and not being collected by the harvesting machine. The four farmers doing this were surprised to discover it was as much as 39% of their crop. But what caught my attention in this article was the fact that roughly one third of food produced around the world is wasted, accounting for about 8% of total man-made greenhouse emissions.

That sounds awful – one third of world produced food wasted - producing 8% of total manmade greenhouse emissions.

However, have you ever considered how much greenhouse gas the food we throw away creates – good food bought but never eaten because we bought too much. Reading this article led me to a Hertfordshire County Council website where I discovered that if more food waste was recycled rather than put in

the bin for general waste £2.5 million could be saved (helping to keep our Council tax down), that collected food waste is recycled into energy for our homes and compost for farmland, and that food waste that ends up in landfill with our regular rubbish creates methane, a harmful greenhouse gas 25 times stronger than CO₂.

In the UK we throw away more than 7 million tonnes of food and drink every year – enough to fill Wembley Stadium. So, if you want to save on your food bill and cut down on food waste and greenhouse gas for which you're responsible, these four steps could help:

1. Plan ahead – plan your menus and shopping. Don't buy more than you need – even though the supermarket offers seem appealing.
2. Store correctly.
3. Cook only what you need.
4. Recycle what you can't eat.

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stick to your shopping list. Did you know you can get a discount on home composters? Once you've got some really good compost, your flower and vegetable beds will benefit not only from the compost but also the worms that will come with it.

There's a website "Love Food, Hate Waste" for tips on food planning, storage, recipes and money.

Talking about recipes, one of the things I find difficult sometimes is reducing a recipe for 4 or 6 people to

just one. I don't always want several portions in the freezer, and anyway some don't necessarily freeze well. Then I discovered Delia Smith's "One is Fun", and I have had fun working my way through her book – I can highly recommend it!

PS By the time you read this I hope some of you will have discovered the recycling bins at the Co-op in Southdown, where we can take bread bags, crisp packets, pasta bags, fruit and vegetable wrappers, and pizza wrappers as well. ●

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 10 - 16 MAY 2021



For the first time, we tried Delivery-only envelopes (instead of the usual House-to-House collection) which enabled us to cover many more roads, including the majority in the parish. We hope that most people were inspired to give online, but as an alternative, we arranged a few drop-off points across the town which yielded £5348 plus £919 in Gift Aid, totalling £6267 - a very good result!

At this stage, the national total for CAW from digital income stands at over £2 million, but this is still very provisional as cash income takes longer to arrive.

This generous response will make a substantial difference to those poor rural communities in Kenya losing their access to a reliable water supply, because of climate change. During the pandemic, we have experienced the loss of aspects of our lives that we had previously taken for granted, but, at least, we have drinkable water literally on tap. CAW highlighted the plight of 67yr old Rose who had to walk for hours each day to collect water for her grandchildren. Thanks to CA support, her community can build an earth dam so when the rains do come, they will have the water they need to live, regardless of any extreme weather events.

Despite this positive story, the need remains huge and so Christian Aid has launched a Global Hunger Appeal for 30 million people in 20 countries teetering on the brink of famine, including South Sudan, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. If you want to support this appeal, please go to the Christian Aid website for more details.

Many thanks for all your continuing support - this is Christianity in action. ●



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Forthcoming events

Sunday 5 September	4pm	Faith and Light
Saturday 11 September		Bike n' Hike Event
Sunday 12 September	3pm	Institution, Induction & Instalation of Rev Tim Vickers
Tuesday 14 September	8pm	Standing committee
Sunday 19 September	4pm	All Age service
Wednesday 29 September	8pm	PCC meeting
Sunday 3 October		Harvest Festival
	4pm	Faith and Light
Saturday 16 October		Quiz Night
Sunday 17 October	6.30pm	Deanery Evensong St Nicholas, Harpenden
Sunday 31 October		All Saints/All Souls Sunday
Sunday 7 November	4pm	Faith and Light
Wednesday 10 November	8pm	Standing committee
Thursday 18 November	8pm	PCC meeting

Note: Other regular events will recommence when circumstances permit.

Please see our website <https://www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk/> for up to date information.

Parish registers

Baptisms

Welcome to the family of God

30 May 2021

Sienna Rose Brocklehurst &
Lucas Reece Brocklehurst

25 July 2021

Thea Jane Wilding-Ayre

Marriages

Joined by God

There were no weddings in this period

Funerals

May they rest in peace

5 May 2021

Lorna Vera McGown

18 May 2021

John Gillespie Drysdale

25 June 2021

Sheila Margaret Tilbrook



Services at St John's

Please note the services listed below and their times may have to be changed and / or cancelled depending on Government regulations. It is unlikely that the Eucharist (said) on Sunday at 8.00am and on Wednesday at 9.30am will take place until the arrival of a new Vicar.

Please visit our website at www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk, our Facebook page, and our latest newsletter for up to date information on our services each week.

Sunday

- 8.00 am Said Eucharist
- 9.30 am Parish Eucharist (*also live streamed*) followed by coffee in the hall.
All Age Eucharist, *normally first Sunday of the month*
- 9.30 am Junior Church, *except for All Age Eucharists*
- 11.30 am Holy Baptism, *last Sunday of the month*
- 6.30 pm Evening Worship

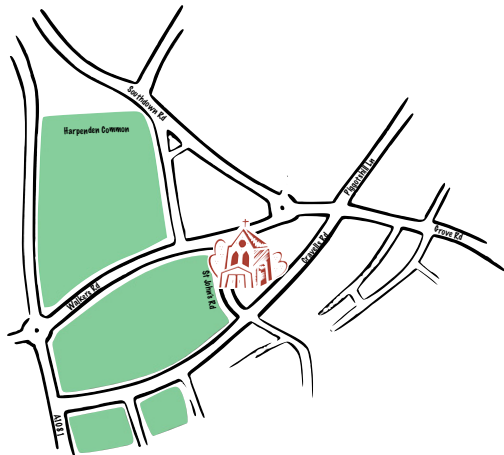
Mondays - Fridays

- 8.30 am Morning Prayer (by Zoom only)

Wednesday

- 9.30 am Said Eucharist
- 5.00 pm Evening Prayer

Church is open on Saturdays and Sundays for private prayer from 11am (Sundays from 10.30am) to 4pm



PARISH OFFICE

For enquiries, including marriages, baptisms, funerals and hall bookings, please contact the parish office.

The parish office at St John's is run by Julie who works from both home and the office itself. From September her regular hours in the office will be changing but she will respond to emails/voicemails promptly.

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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Revd Julia White

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