

The Messenger



Monthly Newsletter of St John the Baptist Church,
Greenhill, Harrow

APRIL 2021 - Easter and Beyond

Dear Friends,

I am writing this Messenger on the National Day of Reflection, a day of remembrance for the 126,000 people who have succumbed to Covid 19 since the lockdown started a year ago. That first wave peaked at around Easter time last year, and we have endured an incredibly difficult year since. As things stand we are entering sunnier times, but still look anxiously elsewhere for signs that the crisis may not be over.

But we have come through, we rejoice and give thanks for new life in another Covid Spring, and we thank God for the vaccine programme and the roadmap that hopefully will rescue 2021. For us in church, we are planning a tentative return to normal which I will write about in subsequent Messengers. For now, by the grace of God, we will return to worshipping in church under the usual restrictions on **Easter Sunday at 9:00 am**. Because two thirds of our congregation worship online at the moment, we will retain the 10:30am Zoom service for the foreseeable future.

As the roadmap unfolds and becomes reality, we will discuss what to do in future months and how and when we can move back to a more normal service pattern. We will also review the aspects of our church life to restore and which ones to sadly, let go. In having the conversation, I will be asking you what aspects of church life you would be willing to volunteer for, because without you, there

is no church. I am so looking forward to St John's being open again for the people of Greenhill.

For now, we focus on the climax of the Christian year, the source and object of our entire faith and hope, the Resurrection. We walk a journey of faith and reflection where we recall the last week of Jesus' life on earth.

Palm Sunday: YouTube and Zoom March 28th (10:30 am) - This service tells us of Jesus' entry as King into Jerusalem, redefining kingship as riding on a donkey. It also shows us how we sometimes misunderstand him and want to turn him to our own purposes as many in Jerusalem did. Jesus is King and has his own purposes, and we are invited to join in with him, not the other way around.

Maundy Thursday: April 1st, Zoom 7:30pm (usual church link) - Normally I would be off to St Paul's Cathedral, and then back to Harrow to preside at the Eucharist and wash peoples' feet. Once again, this year has to be different of course. Renewing my vows at St Paul's (online this year), and washing feet at St John's, firmly reminds me that this holy life is a servant's life. Jesus shows that his Kingdom is bound up in putting other people first. If holiness means anything, it means taking on the heart of Jesus. The whole of this past year has been a challenge to us in learning how to serve people in new ways, and in being thankful for those who serve us. Seldom before have we ever seen how interdependent we are.

Good Friday - April 2nd : 2 services - 10:30 am : Churches Together - Stations of the Cross Service - Zoom : Meeting ID: 383 886 8539 - Passcode: 1111)

12:00pm : St John's : Reflections and Meditations (usual Zoom link)

Jesus proceeds from washing feet to hanging on a cross. This is the ultimate declaration of God that, when he came to share in human life in the Incarnation, he really meant it. He came to be one of us even unto death (Philippians 2:8). We need not concern ourselves with how Jesus' death affects salvation for mankind, just rejoice that it does - hence we call it "Good Friday". It is a day of sadness, we reflect on our need for salvation, but also of hope as we give thanks that we have it.

Easter Sunday - April 4th: 9:00 am Eucharist in Church, and a 10:30 am Zoom service - The resurrection changes everything. Christ is the "firstborn of the dead", first to rise in new life and preeminent in that new life (Colossians 1:18). We cannot gloss over our fear of death, especially as it seems so near right now, but Christ has conquered death for us, and our resurrection bodies will be like his. That changes everything. If we can take it on board, it calms our fears (I know that is easily said).

Each scene in Holy Week depicts God's humble, servant kingship. Riding on a donkey, washing dusty feet, dying on a terrible cross, and rising to new life not for himself, but for all humanity, shows us that God was, is and always will be, for us. He is on our side.

Those of you reading paper copies of this will not be receiving my emails. Please do contact me at the vicarage (020 0907 7956) or at the office (020 8863 3690) if there is anything you need to speak about. God bless you all. Stay in touch and keep looking after each other as best you can.

Rev. Barry Hingston

Pray this month for.....

Date	Daily Readings	Daily Prayers
------	----------------	---------------

1st	1 Cor 11: 23-26 Ps. 116: 1, 10-end John 13: 1-17, 31b-35	Maundy Thursday. All priests and those training for the ministry.
2nd	Isa 52: 13-end of 53 Ps. 22 John 18: 1-end of 19	Good Friday. Show us how to walk with others, who live in fear, who face death through hunger or war.
3rd	Roman 6: 3-11 Ps. 98 Mark 16: 1-8	Easter Eve. Give thanks for our Baptism into Christ Jesus. Father God, we pray you would help churches who are having to re-imagine how to do services during this season.
Sun 4th	Acts 10: 34-43 Ps. 118: 1-2, 14-24 John 20: 1-18	Easter Day. Pray for a blessed Easter Day for all the St John's family.
5th	Acts 2: 14, 22-32 Ps. 16:n 1-2, 6-end Matt 28: 8-15	All who are unemployed and families of our Borough who are in need. The Harrow Foodbank.
6th	Acts 2: 36-41 Ps. 33: 4-5, 18-end John 20: 11-18	Our clergy team: Barry, our Parish Priest; Ajay, Associate Vicar and Fr David, Hon. Curate.
7th	Acts 3: 1-10 Ps. 105: 1-9 Luke 24: 13-35	All pupils and teachers on holiday especially teachers involved in religious education.
8th	Acts 3: 11-end Ps. 8 Luke 24: 35-48	God of Hope, Sustainer of all life, we give You thanks for the Coronavirus vaccines, for the skill and wisdom of scientists, NHS staff and key workers.
9th	Acts 4: 1-12 Ps. 118: 1-4, 22-26 John 21: 1-14	We think of the elderly, the housebound and those in care homes.
10th	Acts 4: 13-21 Ps. 118: 1-4, 14-21 Mark 16: 9-15	Our Archbishop Justin, Sarah, Bishop of London and Pete, our Area Bishop.
Sun 11th	Acts 4: 32-35 Ps. 133 John 20: 19-end	Pray that we may give a warm welcome to all who return to our Sunday services after the lockdown closure.

12th	Acts 4: 23-32 Ps. 2: 1-9 John 3: 1-8	For peace in all countries of the world where violence, war and terrorism are taking place and we pray especially for those who seek to make peace in this divided world.
13th	Acts 4: 32-end Ps. 93 John 3: 7-15	All who work in the medical health professions; District Nurses.
14th	Acts 5: 17-26 Ps. 34: 1-8 John 3: 16-21	All who work in journalism, industry and finance. Pray that they may be truthful.
15th	Acts 5: 27-33 Ps. 34: 1, 15-end John 3: 31-end	For the safeguarding of our planet so that our children and future generations will benefit from the natural beauty.
16th	Acts 5: 34-42 Ps. 27: 1-5, 16-17 John 6: 1-15	We pray for any known to us who are in special need of our prayers at this time.
17th	Acts 6: 1-7 Ps. 33: 1-5, 18-19 John 6: 16-21	Pray that the UK Government would be a strong force for good in foreign policy and bringing relief to those suffering throughout the world.
Sun 18th	Acts 3: 12-19 Ps. 4 Luke 24: 36b-48	We pray today for your church and for Christians in other lands where they are a minority; let them find strength in knowing you are with them.
19th	Acts 6: 8-15 Ps. 119: 17-24 John 6: 22-29	Lord we bring to you our thanks and praise for the beauty of creation, and we pray that you would open our eyes to see all the beauty around us.
20th	Acts 7: 51-8: 1a Ps. 31: 1-5, 16 John 6: 30-35	Those who are ill or in need of God's help at this time: We pray for the sick, both at home and in hospital or hospice and of those awaiting consultations and treatments.
21st	Acts 8: 1b-8 Ps. 66: 1-6 John 6: 35-40	Birthday blessings for her Majesty the Queen, give thanks for her long reign.

22nd	Acts 8: 26-end Ps. 66: 7-8, 14-end John 6: 44-51	For all suffering with mental health illnesses; Lord free them from panic and worry. Anchor their thoughts and minds in your great power and love and send them into each new day with your peace in their hearts.
23rd	Rev 12: 7-12 Ps. 126 John 15: 18-21	St George's Day. Give us the bravery of St George to stand up for the truth and the glory of God that we have seen in the face of Jesus Christ. Pray for our country.
24th	Acts 9: 31-42 Ps. 116: 10-15 John 6: 60-69	All banks, offices and shops in our town centre. Transport workers.
Sun 25th	Acts 4: 5-12 Ps. 23 John 10: 11-18	People of the parish of Greenhill. All schools, especially St Jerome's, Quainton Hall and Alpha Prep Schools.
26th	Acts 15: 35-end Ps. 119: 9-16 Mark 13: 5-13	Mark the Evangelist: St Mark, you became a great Evangelist, preaching the Good News of Christ. May you help us to know Him well so that we may faithfully live our lives as followers of Christ.
27th	Acts 11: 19-26 Ps. 87 John 10: 22-30	All people with disabilities, their families and helpers. Harrow Mencap clients, workers and volunteers.
28th	Acts 12: 24-13: 5 Ps. 67 John 12: 44-end	Pray for good relationships between churches and their local MPs and that churches will seek ways in which they can support MPs in serving their communities.
29th	Acts 13: 13-25 Ps. 89: 1-2, 20-26 John 13: 16-20	We pray for those whose hearts have been saddened by the death of someone close and dear to them.
30th	Acts 13: 26-33 Ps. 2 John 14: 1-6	The local police, the fire and ambulance service, Street Pastors, and all who keep Harrow safe.