

The Messenger



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

MAY 2021

Dear Friends,

I write to you in amidst our Eastertide season, as we continue to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the birth of the Christian church. Of course, I also write in the midst of a global health crisis. Although the restrictions greatly affected Lent and Holy Week, we were pleased to recommence our worship in church on Easter Sunday. We have been seeing 20-30 people in church each week since. We have a slightly larger number live online each week, as well as a group that watches the YouTube recording, so all in all the community of St John's has negotiated the disruption of the past year very well.

Gathering for worship has been rewarding and valuable and you are all welcome to attend if you can. We have capacity for around 60 persons, socially distanced. We remain under Covid restrictions for now, So, we cannot sing nor share coffee and fellowship, but we can worship and take communion.

Our next task is to think about how we open up further. We have a local support group using the church on Tuesdays, and the Chinese Church will resume worship here on Pentecost Sunday, having live-streamed their services up to this point. We are thinking about how we might restart concerts in the summer and autumn; no promises yet, but it is on the radar. We would also love to open the church up for prayer and quiet meditation if we can attract sufficient volunteers to do so. We are also thinking about how

to best to use online technology going forward, perhaps for the housebound or those still worried about worshipping in person, if we can find the right technical solution.

News

Covid-19 is not the only thing sent to test us unfortunately. Rev. Ajay's wife, Kavita, remains somewhat unwell with a form of encephalitis, and I continue to ask you to pray for them and the family. She is at home and recovering but will probably need a little while to get better. Fr David Byrne, for his part, managed to fracture a kneecap about five weeks ago. Happily, he is on the mend and will soon be back with us. I'm pleased to say that the Hingstons have avoided any such mishaps (so far) and we give thanks for the recovery of Jill's mum recently following a major operation. Please do pray for us as we seek God's will for this place at this time.

Victoria Hall and other matters

We are close to receiving the keys to Victoria Hall and starting the process of reopening. We have appointed a new manager, and the external landscaping is near completion. The new flats are now occupied. We plan to take our first bookings from September to allow us time to equip the Hall and ensure the exit from Covid-19 is robust. If anyone knows of any groups that may be interested in using the new Hall then please get them to get in touch with me.

Our own building programme is proceeding although it was hampered by the pandemic last year. We are proceeding with planning and faculty applications for the external annexe, which will house much-needed toilets, some cafe space and small kitchenette, as well as an upgrade to our power supply which will enable us to complete the kitchen in the former servers' vestry. The reordering of the interior of the church is now on hold as we feel we may not need it with the updated heating and the Hall available next door. We may revisit that at a later date. As ever, if

anyone has any questions, I am always available to try and answer them.

In all of this, I am incredibly thankful to God for being with us through this strange and troubling time. Although we have seen loss, the congregation and community here have been kept safe from Covid-19. Through the blessing of technology and servant hearts of certain people, we have been kept together in friendship, worship and support. Without wishing to deny the difficulties and loss of the past year, I am reminded of the words of the prophet Isaiah, *"But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you (Isaiah 43:2)."*

Praise God in Eastertide as we look forward to new life in the rest of 2021.

God bless you all

Rev. Barry Hingston
Vicar

Dates for the Diary

APCM 9th May 9:45 am
Ascension Day 13th May 7:30 pm (online)
Memorial Service 16th May 4:00 pm (online)
Pentecost Sunday May 23rd (in church and online)

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.

Pray this month for.....

Date	Daily Readings	Daily Prayers
1st	Isa 30: 15-21 Ps. 119: 1-8 John 14: 1-14	Philip and James, Apostles. The Christian witness of all Harrow churches; the discipleship of all St John's people.
Sun 2nd	Acts 8: 26-end Ps. 22: 25-end John 15: 1-8	The Chinese Church who meet weekly at St John's.
3rd	Acts 14: 5-18 Ps. 118: 1-3, 14-15 John 14: 21-26	Anglican Chaplaincy work at universities and schools. All young people in higher education.
4th	Acts 14: 19-end Ps. 145: 10-end John 14: 27-end	Harrow Mencap who continue to serve the learning disabled and meet at St John's.
5th	Acts 15: 1-6 Ps. 122: 1-5 John 15: 1-8	Give those who care sympathy and skill, and an ever deepening understanding of the task to which they are called.
6th	Acts 15: 7-21 Ps. 96: 1-3, 7-10 John 15: 9-11	We remember all who bear the responsibility of leadership, for heads of state, ambassadors and political advisers.
7th	Acts 15: 22-31 Ps. 57: 8-end John 15: 12-17	Lord we pray for peace in the world, create in us a love for peace.
8th	Acts 16: 1-10 Ps. 100 John 15: 18-21	We give thanks for friends and family, for fellowship, for shared laughter.
Sun 9th	Acts 10: 44-end Ps. 98 John 15: 9-17	Help us to be good listeners when friends and neighbours need us. Give us the right words and help us to know what simple acts of kindness may help someone else.
10th	Acts 16: 11-15 Ps. 149: 1-5 John 15: 26-16: 4	For the Covid-19 vaccination programme worldwide. May we seek to protect all Your children, particularly those for whom the vaccine is out of reach.
11th	Acts 16: 22-34 Ps. 138 John 16: 5-11	We pray for people with special needs. Please comfort, guard and guide them and strengthen and protect the doctors, nurses, family and carers looking after them.

12th	Acts 17: 15, 22-18: 1 Ps. 148: 1-2, 11-end John 16: 12-15	We thank you for the comforts of home, for food and shelter.
13th	Acts 1: 1-11 Ps. 47 Luke 24: 44-end	Ascension Day. Give thanks for our Lord's Ascension and his presence with us.
14th	Isa 22: 15-end Ps. 15 John 15: 9-17	Matthias the Apostle. Vocations to the Sacred Ministry.
15th	Acts 18: 22-end Ps. 47: 1-2, 7-end John 16: 23-28	All the Harrow Town Centre shops, banks and offices.
Sun 16th	Acts 1: 15-17, 21-end Ps. 1 John 17: 6-19	Pray for our on-line Memorial Service when we remember before God those who have died and light a candle to symbolise the light of Christ which eternally shines and brings hope.
17th	Acts 19: 1-8 Ps. 68: 1-6 John 16: 29-end	St Luke's Hospice, Macmillan Nurses and all carers.
18th	Acts 20: 17-27 Ps. 68: 9-10, 18-19 John 17: 1-11	Lord, direct the labours of those who work on the land, that they may employ the resources of nature to your glory, for our wellbeing, and for the relief of those in need.
19th	Acts 20: 28-end Ps. 68: 27-28, 32-end John 17: 11-19	Our church wardens Cath and Peter and members of the PCC.
20th	Acts 22: 30; 23: 6-11 Ps. 16: 1, 5-end John 17: 20-end	We pray for families in need either from their own mistakes or from the mistakes of others: for children separated from one parent and cut off from grandparents; for parents who see their children for only part of the week.
21st	Acts 25: 13-21 Ps. 103: 1-2, 11-12, 19-20 John 21: 15-19	Red Tribe Organisation, Kenya. For their Clinic, School, Farming Community and all projects they run with the Maasai community.

22nd	Acts 28: 16-20, 30-end Ps. 11: 4-end John 21: 20-end	We continue to pray for healthcare workers around the globe who are running ragged after months of high-risk essential work on the frontlines of this pandemic.
Sun 23rd	Acts 2: 1-21 Ps. 104: 26-36, 37b John 15: 26-27; 16: 4b-15	Pentecost. Give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Lord, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.
24th	James 3: 13-end Ps. 32: 1-8 Mark 10: 17-27	We pray for people who are frightened because they are ill. Give them courage, hope and peace, and the knowledge that you are present in their weakness, pain and suffering.
25th	James 4: 1-10 Ps. 50: 1-6 Mark 10: 28-31	Lord we pray today for Your church and for Christians in other lands.
26th	James 4: 13-end Ps. 79: 8-9, 12, 14 Mark 10: 32-45	Writers and journalists; all involved in the media.
27th	James 5: 1-6 Ps. 33: 1-9 Mark 10: 46-end	Those who help to maintain the life of our local community. Other faiths in our community.
28th	James 5: 9-12 Ps. 149: 1-5 Mark 11: 11-26	Pray for Justin, our Archbishop, Sarah, Bishop of London and Peter, Bishop of Willesden.
29th	James 5: 13-end Ps. 19: 7-end Mark 11: 27-end	Lord we pray for your church throughout the world, for those that are thriving and those which have lost a sense of direction.
Sun 30th	Isa 6: 1-8 Ps. 29 John 3: 1-17	Trinity Sunday. All our worship today. Give thanks for your Baptism into Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
31st	Zeph 3: 14-18 Ps. 113 Luke 1: 39-49	Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth. Pray that we may all walk closely to God and listen to his prompting.