

Dear Friends,

A huge thank you to all of you who have so helpfully and willingly contributed to the process of discerning our vision and priorities for the next chapter of serving our local community together. You can find our vision and priorities inside the Signpost this week. On Wednesday the PCC agreed the parish profile. This was after the Archdeacon and Area Dean had been given the opportunity to comment and advise. **Huge thanks** are due to our Churchwarden Mr Chris Perry for the work he has completed on our behalf. This means we are on track to advertise in March and, assuming we receive applications, interview in May. Please do continue to pray for the process as it unfolds and even for the person God is calling to be our next priest. As we approach Lent, we have the opportunity to seek to deepen our faith. Please do pick up a copy of our special Lent Signpost which offers plenty of ideas to help you in that challenge. *Rev Dan*



Pick up your Bible with a new joy

Martin Niemöller was a Lutheran Pastor, best known for his opposition to the Nazi party during the 1930's. As a consequence he was imprisoned between 1938 and 1945, first in the Sachsenhausen and secondly in the Dachau concentration camps. He was fortunate to survive these experiences and, on his release, became a pacifist and a committed campaigner for nuclear disarmament.

A former U Boat Commander, in his book, 'From U Boat to Pulpit', he wrote about what the Bible meant to him during his imprisonment which included years of solitary confinement. He wrote: 'The word of God was simply everything to me, comfort and strength, guidance and hope, master of my days and companion of my nights. The bread that kept me from starvation and the water of life which refreshed my soul. And even more, solitary confinement ceased to be solitary.' These extraordinary words remind me of the hymn 'Lord thy word abideth.'

The Bible is still the most published and the most read book in the world. What makes it unique however, is that the books of the Bible were inspired by the Spirit of God and is the place where Christ is found and proclaimed and where God speaks. And St Paul, writing about the scriptures (The Old Testament) said, 'For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.' (Romans 15:4)

As we come to Lent might I suggest that we pick up our Bibles with a new joy, with fresh eyes and with a renewed determination to spend time each day reading the Bible. If we do we will find, as Niemöller and countless other people before us have done, that the Bible is indeed the Word of Life, the pathway to Jesus and the doorway to salvation. If we are looking for comfort and strength, guidance and hope we can find all those things within its pages.

The Right Revd Peter Hancock

COLLECTS AND READINGS

16th February Second Sunday before Lent Genesis 1.1-2.3; Romans 8.18-25; Matthew 6.25-end

Collect: Almighty God, give us reverence for all creation and respect for every person, that we may mirror your likeness in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Post Communion: God our creator, by your gift the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise, and the bread of life at the heart of your Church: may we who have been nourished at your table on earth be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross and enjoy the delights of eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

23rd February Sunday next before Lent Exodus 24. 12-end; 2 Peter 1.16-end; Matthew 17.1-9

Collect: Holy God, you know the disorder of our sinful lives: set straight our crooked hearts, and bend our wills to love your goodness and your glory in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Post Communion: Holy God, we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ: may we who are partakers at his table reflect his life in word and deed, that all the world may know his power to change and save. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our Pastoral Prayers

To include somebody on this prayer list please let Liz in the office know by 8am on Thursday, making sure the person you wish to be included wants their name in print.

Marriage

Couples preparing for marriage especially Dan and Meg to be married at St John's, Keynsham next Friday by Rev Dan



Baptisms:

We pray for all parents and godparents

Those in need of our prayers:

Margaret Moyle, Hazel, Christine Marston, Val & George Crawford, Maureen & Ian Thompson, Gloria and Ken Vivash, Pete, Brenda, Olive, Victoria Yassenko

For those who have died:

We pray for those who have recently died and their loved ones who grieve their loss.

Peter Davey

Those whose anniversary falls this week:

Michael Gordon, Lilian Dukes

PRAYER FOCUS

Sunday:

Pause for a moment and give thanks to God for the many blessings you receive

Monday:

For the pupils and staff of our local schools as half-term begins

Tuesday:

For those who are struggling in our community

Wednesday:

For the person God is calling to be our next priest

Thursday:

For all with leadership responsibility and additional tasks during the vacancy

Friday:

For Rev Dan as he returns to his sending church in Keynsham to conduct the wedding of Dan and Meg

Saturday:

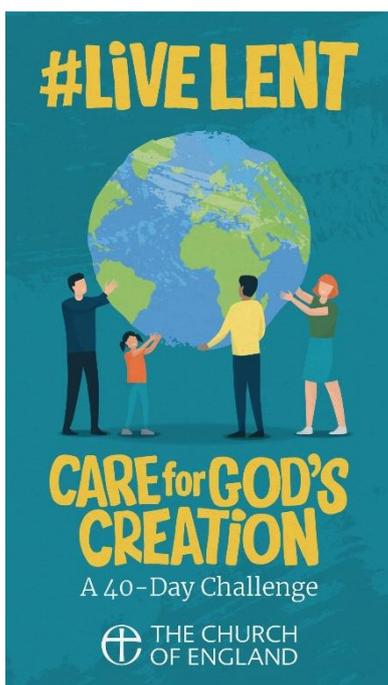
For those who love and care for us



Please remember the Parish office will be closed for half term from 12.30pm on Friday 14th February reopening on Wednesday 26th February at 9.30am



**ASH WEDNESDAY
26TH FEBRUARY
9.30AM
COMMUNION SERVICE
WITH ASHES
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH HALL**



Rev Dan would love you to join him in reading this Lent book this year.

Copies are available for **£2 each** from Rev Dan as soon as they are delivered!

More information about this and our Lent plans is available in our special Lent Signpost which is available now!

Vision

We have a new vision statement, developed through our activities and parish survey.

We believe God is calling us to be people of courage 'sharing God's love across our community.'

With this vision in mind six priorities emerge. These should enable us to grow together in worship, build up the body of Christ and bring newcomers to faith, help us to listen effectively, and share God's love across our community.

- Engaging effectively with our local community
- Shaping our worship to reflect the congregation and the community we serve
- Intentionally increasing our engagement with children and families, including links with Churchfield school.
- Building on our existing strengths and activities, to see our community of faith shaped by all ages, while enabling young and old to feel comfortable in the church space.
- Increasing the effectiveness of our communication both within the church and with the community, with a particular priority on consolidating our social media presence
- Exploring opportunities, in collaboration with others to meet the needs of the community as they are identified.

Sunday 1st March

At the 9.30am service we will be joined by The Right Reverend Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton.

Children's Society Boxes

Children's society boxes are now due in. Please hand to Ian Chedzey. If anyone is interested in having a children's society box please speak to Ian as he has a few spare.

200 Club

200 club subscriptions are now due. To renew your subscription or if you would like to join please speak to Ian Chedzey

There is NO Truly Scrumptious café in the church hall on Friday 21st or 28th February

Who's Who at St John's:

Vicar: Vacant

Curate: Rev'd Dan Crouch 325194

Churchwarden: Chris Perry 783753

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

Sun 16th Second Sunday before Lent 9am Communion 3pm Communion & Tea

Tues 18th 10am NO Toddlers in church hall (half term)

Wed 19th 9.30am Said Communion & 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall

Thurs 20th 10.30am NO Little Angels in church hall (half term)

Sun 23rd Sunday next before Lent 8am Communion 9.30am Communion

Tues 25th 10am Toddlers in church hall

Wed 26th 9.30am Said Communion (Ash Wednesday)
& 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall

Thurs 27th 10.30am Little Angels in church hall

MARCH

Sun 1st First Sunday of Lent 8am Communion 9.30am Communion with Bishop Ruth Worsley

Tues 3rd 10am Toddlers in church hall

Wed 4th 9.30am Said Communion & 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall

Thurs 5th 10.30am Little Angels in church hall

Sun 8th Second Sunday of Lent 8am Communion 9.30am Family Communion

Tues 10th 10am Toddlers in church hall

Wed 11th 9.30am Said Communion & 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall
7.30pm PCC meeting in church hall

Thurs 12th 10.30am Little Angels in church hall

Sat 14th 4pm Highbridge Festival in Church

An advance notice

Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting is on Tuesday 21st April starting at 7pm with a light supper served from 6pm.

Please do put this date in your diaries and calendars

To submit an article for the Signpost Weekly please e-mail:

**stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com or leave a message on 01278 780633 by 8am on
Thursday**

Parish office opening hours

Wednesday 9.30am – 2.30pm, Thursday 12 noon – 2.30pm, Friday 9.30am – 12.30pm

Term time only

Please ring in advance