

**St John the Evangelist**  
**Sunday before Lent**

**Signpost Weekly**  
**23rd February 2020**

Dear Friends,

I was so disappointed to miss our parish lunch last Saturday due to a sickness bug. It was organised so expertly by Ian and Olga – thank you both – and it is incredibly encouraging that in this parish events continue without a priest! I have also heard reports of what fantastic food and fellowship was shared – particularly from 3-year-old Martha who enjoyed celebrating her birthday there! I am also incredibly grateful to Rev Lynne for leading our 9am service last Sunday so that I could continue my recovery. When we are involved in ministry, as members of the congregation or as ordained ministers, there are moments where God reminds us that not only do we need his love and help but we also need the love and help of those he has placed alongside us. As we continue to navigate our way through the vacancy together may we be thankful for each person God has placed alongside us – and those we serve together - at this significant time. *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

**23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

**1<sup>st</sup> March First Sunday of Lent** Genesis 2.15-17;3.1-7; Romans 5.12-19; Matthew 4.1-11

**Collect:** Heavenly Father, your Son battled with the powers of darkness, and grew closer to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer that we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Post Communion:** Lord God, you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven; by it you nourish our faith, increase our hope, and strengthen our love: teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread, and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth; 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 and those recently married, especially Dan and Meg married at St John's, Keynsham last 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:

Marina Jones, Eunice Scott



## PRAYER FOCUS

### Sunday:

*Pause for a moment and give thanks to God for those we share ministry with here in Highbridge*

### Monday:

*For those who are today beginning a new working week*

### Tuesday:

*For the person God is calling to be our next priest*

### Wednesday:

*For those who volunteer with our Foodbank and the clients they will serve in our local community*

### Thursday:

*For all with leadership responsibility and additional tasks during the vacancy*

### Friday:

*For Bishop Ruth as she prepares to join us on Sunday*

### Saturday:

*For clergy spouses across the diocese – including Sarah – as they gather together for an annual day at the Bishops Palace, Wells.*

Please do collect a copy of our Lent Signpost from the back of St John's if you have not already done so.



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

## *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 1<sup>st</sup> March

At the 9.30am service next Sunday 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

**#LIVELENT**



**CARE for GOD'S  
CREATION**

A 40-Day Challenge



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

Copies are available for **£2 each** from Rev Dan and he hopes they will have arrived by today (Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb)!

# CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

There is NO Truly  
Scrumptious café in  
the church hall on  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup>

## Who's Who at St John's:

Vicar: Vacant

Curate: Rev'd Dan Crouch 325194

Churchwarden: Chris Perry 783753

**Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday next before Lent 8am Communion 9.30am Communion**

Tues 25<sup>th</sup> 10am Toddlers in church hall

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

Thurs 27<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Little Angels in church hall

Fri 28<sup>th</sup> 5.30pm Prayer stations of the Cross in church

## MARCH

**Sun 1<sup>st</sup> First Sunday of Lent 8am Communion 9.30am Communion with Bishop Ruth Worsley**

Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> 10am Toddlers in church hall

Wed 4<sup>th</sup> 9.30am Said Communion & 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall

Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Little Angels in church hall

7.45pm Lent book group in church hall

Fri 6<sup>th</sup> 5.30pm Prayer stations of the Cross in church

**Sun 8<sup>th</sup> Second Sunday of Lent 8am Communion 9.30am Family Communion 3pm Baptism**

Tues 10<sup>th</sup> 10am Toddlers in church hall

Wed 11<sup>th</sup> 9.30am Said Communion & 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall

7.30pm PCC meeting in church hall

Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Little Angels in church hall

Fri 13<sup>th</sup> 5.30pm Prayer stations of the Cross in church

Sat 14<sup>th</sup> 4pm Highbridge Festival in Church

**Sun 15<sup>th</sup> Third Sunday of Lent 9am Communion 3pm Communion & Tea**

Tues 17<sup>th</sup> 10am Toddlers in church hall

Wed 18<sup>th</sup> 9.30am Said Communion & 10.00am Foodbank Listening Place in church hall

Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Little Angels in church hall

Fri 20<sup>th</sup> 5.30pm Prayer stations of the Cross in church

An advance notice

Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting is on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto: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***