

# **THE BEACON**

## **MAGAZINE OF**

### **ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH**

#### **MARCH 2019**



#### **NORMAL WEEKLY SERVICES**

##### **SUNDAYS**

**8.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)**

**9.30am Family Communion (United Anglican / Methodist Service)**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month – All Age Worship Service (Usually not Communion)**

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month – Methodist Local Preacher**

**5.30pm 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month, Choral Evensong (Book of Common Prayer)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in the month, Evening Worship (various styles)**

***Changes to these details are given in the weekly Notice Sheet, available free of charge at the back of the church.***

## WEEKDAYS

Daily – Morning Prayer 9.00 – 9.30am

Third Friday in the month:

11.30am Short Service of Holy Communion, followed by lunch in the Community Hall.

The Vicar's bit

I have recently been pondering over the role of Saint John's as the parish church of Belmont. Two things particularly have triggered these thoughts.

The first was a conversation that I have had quite a few times throughout my ministry. "I don't suppose I can have...?" Sometimes it is "I don't suppose I can have my baby baptised at Saint John's?" Occasionally it is "I don't suppose I can have my wedding at Saint John's?" Quite regularly, the question is "I don't suppose I can have [*some choice, perhaps of music*] at my service?". It seems that so often people expect the answer "no!", and are pleasantly surprised when they hear instead "of course you can". Leaving aside questions of taste in music, why do some people expect the worst? I have had people thinking they could not get married in church because they have been 'living in sin', or because one of them has been divorced. I have had mothers thinking that they could not have their child baptised because they were a single parent, or because the couple were not married. The comedy programme *Little Britain* has a character who refuses any request with the words "the computer says no!". Why do people expect "the church says no!"?

Many people, some even church members, are surprised to find that the church is there not so much as a 'private chapel' for the worshippers, but for the whole of the community. That is the point of a parish church. Even should we want to, we cannot turn people away... it is their legal right. I am delighted to tell people that they are welcome – and love to see the look of surprise, and sometimes relief. We share God's love with the people of this place – we are the body of Christ, and should express His overflowing, unconditional love and acceptance.

The second event was when between a hundred and fifty to two hundred mainly young people gathered to remember their friend who had died. The church provided a place... a holy space for them to gather and share memories, light candles etc.. Saint John's regularly provides a place where people may come to be quiet... to pray... to seek perhaps something (or someone) to bring strength and peace. After the tragic Dunblane shooting, many years ago now, in the immediate aftermath, cathedral staff discovered weapons had been left in the hedges surrounding the cathedral. People had rejected the way of violence, and the cathedral was the place they felt that they could honour and enact that profound choice.

I am both humbled and excited that a church... our church... can play such a role in the lives of our local community. And I pray that all of us at Saint John's model the love of God in all we do.

To paraphrase the words of the Ghost of Christmas Present, come in and know Him better!

*Mark*

## **Services at Saint John's March and early April 2019**

3 March	9.30 am	All Age Service (Next before Lent)
	5.30 pm	Choral Evensong
6 March	8.00 pm	Ash Wednesday (said Communion and Ashing)
10 March	9.30 am	Family Communion (Lent 1)
15 March	11.30 am	Holy Communion and Lunch
17 March	9.30 am	Family Communion (Lent 2)
	5.30 pm	Healing Service
24 March	9.30 am	Family Communion (Lent 3)
31 March	9.30 am	Mothering Sunday/Lent 4
7 April	9.30 am	All Age (Next before Lent)
	5.30 pm	Choral Evensong

8.00 am Holy Communion (traditional language) every Sunday.

9.00 am Morning Prayer, Monday – Saturday in the Lady Chapel.



*By Denise Rooke*

The January meeting is always subject to the vagaries of the weather so we plan something 'home-grown'. It was Cathy who had the bright idea of Biblical Charades and she undertook to prepare the clues. She did say afterwards that working in the Office gave her access to a special resource, i.e. Mark and we were delighted that he

was able to join in. We had feared some members might be reticent about participating but how wrong we were. The first clue in each case was which book of the bible contained the story/quote. After that it was down to everybody's excellent miming and biblical knowledge. We all agreed it had been a fun activity.

We also had a Bring and Buy stall of surplus Christmas presents which raised £43.00 for Mothers' Union charities.

The meeting on 27 February meeting will begin in Church with Corporate Communion before going through to the hall for the AGM and tea and cakes.

There will not be a March meeting at the Church. It is hoped that members will be able to attend the Festival Service at Southwark Cathedral at 11.30 on 16 March and the Lady Day service on 25 March at Saint Barnabas Church, Sutton (the timing for this to be announced in due course).



## **LFTOO:**

*By Pat Lancaster*

*(As the February meeting took place after the copy date for the magazine there is no actual report this month but set out below is brief note from Pat and the programme for the next few months)*

The following schedule is in draft form and may be subject to change - according to availability, interest and location to accommodate some of our members whose availability on Thursdays is limited. I have also taken the liberty of shifting the month when certain activities were originally scheduled e.g. The quiz walk... As well as April when the use of church rooms is restricted. Do let me have your feedback if switching between a Thursday and a Tuesday in a month is not good for you... best wishes Pat

Thursday            Hot Cross Buns - love them or hate them - home versus bought... a  
7th March            taste test

Tuesday            Easter traditions continued - decorating eggs and other things -  
7th April            meeting at my place (as its jumble sale week at church)

May	Theatre trip - TBD
June	"180" or "Bulls-eye": Games in a local garden: no noise please we're British... Well that will be a tall order especially testing old skills using darts and boules - bound to be fun
July	Quiz Walk -- where is it to be this time...!!!
August	BBQ get together time again
September	Craft night - gift tags etc...

## **Renewing the Electoral Roll 2019:**

Every six years each parish is required to prepare a new electoral roll. During the period of preparation of the roll, members on the previous roll need to apply to be included - inclusion is not automatic! New people can also apply during this period. A person applies by filling out an application for enrolment form. The preparation of the roll needs to be completed by a fixed date between fifteen and twenty-eight days before the Annual Parish Church Meeting – essentially by the end of March.

The ECC needs to ensure that reasonable efforts are made to let everyone on the old electoral roll know that a new one is being prepared. These steps do not have to be taken for anyone who is no longer qualified to be on the roll, i.e. anyone who has become a clerk in Holy Orders or anyone living outside the parish who no longer worships regularly in the parish.

Those who can apply have to be baptised, and over sixteen years of age (or who will become 16 in the following year – to be added to the roll when they become sixteen). In addition, they must either be:

- Living in the parish and a member of the Church of England or a Church in communion with the Church of England, or
- Not resident in the parish but is a member of the Church of England (or a Church with which the Church of England is in communion) and has regularly attended worship in the parish during the six months prior to enrolment, or
- A member in good standing of a Church which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and they are prepared to declare themselves a member of the Church of England, having regularly attended worship during the six months prior to enrolment.

The Electoral Roll is the nearest thing that the Church of England has to a 'membership list'. It does not, however, define who 'belongs' to the church; neither is it required to take part in worship or other events.

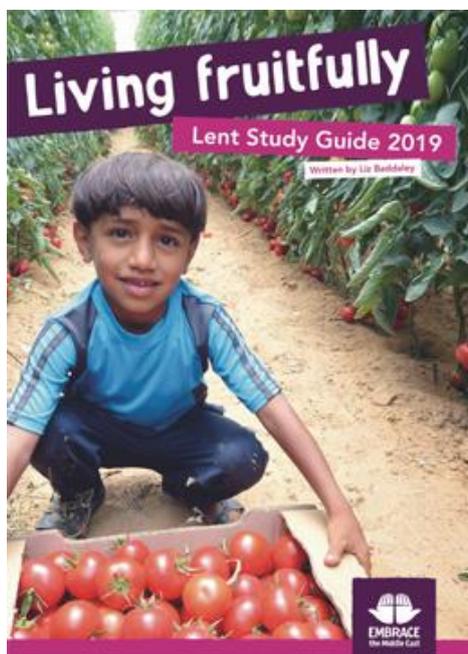
So, what then is the point? It basically means that the person on the roll is able to take part in the governance of the church – either by voting at the Annual Meeting (and any other meetings called), or by standing for the ECC, PCC or Deanery Synod.

Is there any other point to be on the roll? It does allow one to be married in the church by Qualifying Connection. However, gone are the days when this needed to be 'fiddled' by parents to allow this possibility! Qualifying Connections give most who want it permission to be married in the church anyway. Other members of the family must not be on the roll unless they qualify as above – it is a legal status

## **Lent Course – 2019**

**Fridays 2.00 – 3.00pm, starting Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March**

### **Lent Study Guide: Living fruitfully**



'Journey with Embrace this Lent using our six session study guide. Explore the fruits of the Spirit and other key New Testament passages on growing in Christ-likeness; reflect on Jesus' own character; and be further inspired by our partners as they live fruitfully to bring transformation to those experiencing poverty or injustice in the Middle East today.'

#### **Each session includes:**

- Bible study questions and reflections:
- Prayers:
- An Inspired by the Vine meditation, exploring different aspects of Jesus' own character:
- Stories about Embrace's partners living fruitfully to bring fuller lives to those experiencing poverty and injustice in the Middle East today:
- Simple, practical actions you can take to make a difference:

This Lent, be inspired to grow in fruitful living!

## **A Pastoral letter from Bishop Christopher**

*(With Lent on the Horizon I feel it appropriate to include the Bishop's Letter this month as it deals with the Bishop's Lent Call for this year. Full details of each project will be on the screens at the back of the church and there will be a box on the round table each Sunday for gifts towards the cause .for the week. The Passover supper on Palm Sunday will be to raise funds for the appeal as a whole. Editor)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The theme for the 2019 Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call is "*I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly*" (John 10.10b) and I am pleased to send to you now the materials for this year. As you and your parish prepare for Lent and look forward to Easter, I commend to your prayers the projects and peoples that we are supporting this year.

As you pray for them I hope too that you will want to give to these worthwhile and life changing and also support the work of our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe. This year we are pleased to be able to tell you something of the work of the Leprosy Mission in Sri Lanka, Church Army Africa's Carlile College in Nairobi, Kenya, three projects here in the Diocese as well as information about work in Zimbabwe. In all these places there is a real need; but as I write the situation in Zimbabwe is particularly difficult and we hope that the monies raised through the Lent Call this year help the people of that land to know that they are cared for as we extend prayer and practical support. The Dean of Southwark, the Very Revd Andrew Nunn, has written a prayer for Zimbabwe and I would urge you to use it throughout Lent. You can find it at the end of this letter.

I am glad to be able to continue the tradition of the Bishop's Lent Call here in the Diocese of Southwark. We have been supporting work here and around the world through the Lent call for over twenty years now and last year we were able to give grants of over £92,000 to work in the Holy Land, Zimbabwe and here in our own Diocese.

I hope and pray that you will want to display this material and encourage those in your churches to pray and to give as part of their Lenten discipline. This year, following feedback from the parishes, we have printed some extra project sheets so that you can display both sides more easily. Do contact Press and Communications if you would like extras on 020 7939 9400.

Lent is a penitential season when we reflect upon our lives and let God's light shine into them. This Lent is a time of great change in our nation and our world continues to be a complicated and at times unjust place where there is violence and often despair. If we can keep the wonderful words in John 10 at the forefront of our minds as we pray this Lent we can be part practically and prayerfully of helping those in our troubled world to know that Jesus came for us all so that we might have abundant life. It is possible to give to the Lent Call online as well as by cheque, which should be sent to John Jackson at Trinity House. As well as information concerning the projects we are supporting you will find enclosed worship sheets for use in schools or Sunday Schools. Do follow our Twitter feed ([@southwarkcofe](https://twitter.com/southwarkcofe)) and Lent Call blog as we will be adding extra material about the projects each week. I hope and pray that you will find them useful as you encourage those in your care to use Lent well and to give generously to the Bishop's Lent Call.

The Lent Call materials can be found on the Diocesan website where you will also find the extra material, at: [www.southwark.anglican.org/lentcall](http://www.southwark.anglican.org/lentcall)

With my thanks and prayers for our partnership in the service of the Kingdom,

**The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun**

In 2019 the Bishop's Lent Call is supporting projects within Southwark Diocese and in Kenya, Sri Lanka and our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe.

**Projects in Zimbabwe:**

Initiatives supporting agribusiness, education and infrastructure in our Link Dioceses of Central Zimbabwe, Matabeleland, Masvingo and Manicaland.

Improving leprosy-affected communities in Sri Lanka

Urban mission training at Carlile College, Nairobi

**Projects in the Diocese of Southwark:**

The Sutton Women's Centre

Christian CARE, Merton

Salmon Youth Centre

**Praying for the people of Zimbabwe**

*May there be ... no cry of distress in our streets. (Ps 144.15)*

Loving God, strong and merciful,

we hear the cry of our brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe

and we place them into your hands.

May the hungry be fed: the sorrowful consoled: the injured healed,  
the hopeless encouraged: and the dead have new life in you.

May justice flow like a river and may your peace rest upon them.

Amen.

**God in Art**

*The National Gallery at Trafalgar Square in London houses one of the finest collections of European paintings in the world. Built in the style of an ancient Greek temple, it is home to 2,300 works spanning the centuries of artistic creation. During this year we shall be journeying through the gallery to explore one of those treasures each month. By the Rev Michael Burgess.*

## Christ blessing John the Baptist - by Moretto da Brescia



George Herbert wrote a poem entitled 'Lent' which contains these lines:

Who goeth in the way which Christ hath gone,  
Is much more sure to meet with Him than one  
That travelleth by-ways.

And so each Lent we seek to journey with our Lord through the forty days of this season. Lent is an Old English word for 'Spring.' It is not a negative, depressing time, but a season full of hope and promise. We begin it on Ash Wednesday when we are encouraged to look at our lives honestly, seeing what we need to turn from and where we need to grow. Jesus always had a soft spot for sinners, and so aware of our own sins, we begin Lent in a positive frame of mind. We rejoice in the welcome and invitation He gives to follow Him.

This month's painting in the National Gallery has a very unusual theme. It shows Christ blessing John the Baptist by Moretto da Brescia, an Italian artist who died in 1554. It is not a scene we find in the Gospels, but it is likely that the artist was thinking of that moment in Matthew's Gospel when John admits that he needs to be baptised by Jesus.

"Let it be so now," Jesus replies, and He is baptized by John. It is the prelude to our Lord's wilderness experience – that time of testing when Jesus emerged with heart and will purified and refined for His ministry. Around Jesus and John in this painting

we see the hills and countryside which lead to that wilderness.

As we are drawn into this intimate scene, we can give thanks for our own baptism and pray that Jesus will bless us as we see Him blessing John the Baptist. George Herbert allowed the Christ he loved to transform his life. We pray for the blessing of Jesus to transform us with His grace and mercy as we say with the poet, 'Welcome dear season of Lent.'

## **CHURCH GARDENING 2019**

A message from Peter Baker

March is when we begin our maintenance of the area around the church and hall. As well as being enjoyed by parishioners, we know from comments received that many local residents and those working in Belmont also appreciate this oasis of calm in the centre of the community. Unfortunately, it is becoming increasingly difficult for our diminishing team of volunteers to keep on top of everything that needs to be done.

The numbers able to support our Saturday morning working party sessions has reduced considerably in the past two years. This season we will therefore be holding sessions every 6 to 8 weeks, rather than monthly, in the hope more of our very active and robust members will feel able to spare a little time to help. There are all sorts of jobs to be done and not many need gardening skills or no-how. An added bonus is it can provide as much exercise as jogging, keep-fit, dancing, golf etc! Please check the dates below and make a note in your diaries.

We are very grateful to those who spend time working in the garden in their own time during the week. Anyone is very welcome to do this and I will be pleased to suggest the priority areas if required. We are also very grateful to our team of hedge-cutters and those on the grass-cutting rota who generally work on weekdays. The rota would benefit from another two volunteers to spread the fortnightly mowing "duties" more widely through the summer months. Again, do contact me if you can handle a medium sized motor mower and feel you could help in this way. I look forward to seeing our gardening volunteers – established and hopefully some new ones – back in the church garden on some or all of the following dates:-

23 March    11 May    6 July    31 August

12 October    9 November    14 December

All from 9.30am to 12 noon with coffee and biscuits around 11am

## **The Flower Ministry**

***by Philomena White***

If you have spotted the words "Flower Ministry" followed by someone's name in the "Today's Worship" box of our weekly Notice Sheet and wondered what they refer to, here is a chance to find out.

Each week, usually on a Friday, a small, flowering pot plant is collected from the Belmont florists, London & Belcher, and is displayed on the table beside the steps of the Lady Chapel.

After the Sunday morning service, the plant is taken by one of our team of volunteers to deliver to a recipient of their choice. It can be given to someone who is sick or housebound, someone who needs cheering up or someone who has had a celebration of some kind. It can be given to a church member, a friend, a neighbour or someone in the local community.

The plant is paid for by donations from members of the congregation of St John's Church. Financial donations to support this Ministry will be very much appreciated. Also, volunteers who would be interested in joining the distribution team will be most welcome and should contact me, or Cathy in the Parish Office.

The flower ministry is very rewarding to participate in and it can bring much pleasure to those who receive this rather special gift. I would like to share with you this lovely message sent by a recent recipient -

*Friends from St. John's*

*Now I am feeling more myself, can I say a big thank you to you all for the lovely plant, which happens to be one of my favourites. The surprise gift gave me a real lift. Thank you all very much.*

With your support, hopefully this ministry will be able to continue as a token Christian love and fellowship long into the future.

## **The Work of the Building and Maintenance Committee**

***By Eleanor Pinfold***

When I was elected on to the ECC in April 2017, I did not think that I would then become (by accident!) the Chairman of the Building and Gardening Committee to give it its correct title.

What this Committee does is to look at the Quinquennial Report (QR) which the Architect carries out every 5 years and sees that by the time of the next report the work which the Architect says needs to be done is done.

The QR was carried out in May 2017 so that we have 5 years to carry out what the Architect advises us to do.

Strangely the boilers were not on her list, but they have been the major problem for the Committee from the time before the time I became Chairman until just before Christmas 2018 when the works were completed, and we had heat again.

Now the real work starts on the roof (squirrels apparently like lead!) at the East end of the Church which will be undertaken in two parts, the first part to deal with the hole left by the squirrels, the other and more expensive part to do remedial works on the stones over the Lady Chapel.

Following on from the completion of those works, we need to make sure that our electrical system is working properly, and then the West Window.

As well as the major works, the Architect advised that we should remove all the small trees and bushes around the Church walls to prevent damp. While I appreciate that many of you will think that this will make the Church look very stark, I think you will also appreciate that we cannot ignore this advice. The members of the ECC are Trustees for the Church and as such are liable to the Church if we do not fully carry out the Architect's firm recommendations.

When I started dealing with Churches the rules were much more relaxed than at present. The simplified faculty procedure is not as simple as is made out and the Rules themselves have been tightened so that Churches are looked after properly.

Oh! And we seem to have a crack in the old meeting room wall which also needs to be dealt with - but more of that later - let us get our roof sorted out first.

## **Mothering Sunday**

*(taken from the Diocese of Worcester website)*

Mothering Sunday is celebrated on the fourth Sunday of Lent [this year on 31 March] and is traditionally the day when children, mainly daughters, who had gone to work as domestic servants were given a day off to visit their mother and family.

Centuries ago it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church once a year. So each year in the middle of Lent, everyone would visit their 'mother' church - the main church or cathedral of the area. Inevitably this return became an occasion for family reunions when children who were working away returned home and most historians think that this led to the tradition of children being given the day off to visit their mother and family. As they walked along the country lanes, children would pick wild flowers or violets to take to church or give to their mother as a small gift.

Mothering Sunday was also known as Refreshment Sunday because the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed that day. Simnel cakes have particularly been associated with the day. A Simnel cake is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste, one on top and one in the middle. The cake is made with eleven balls of marzipan icing on top representing the eleven disciples (Judas is not included).



Please pray on Mothering Sunday for all mothers, as well as for those who will find this day difficult.

## *The Month Ahead*

### **LF Too**

**Thursday 7 March  
8.00 pm I the Meeting  
room**

**Hot Cross Buns –Homemade v/s bought– a  
tasting test**

### **Vicar's Pub Night**

**Monday 11 March**

**From 7.30pm Downs Tennis Club**

**Holland Avenue** Session 3 of "Resolve" enquiry  
course

### **Friday Holy Communion and Lunch**

**Friday 15 March 11.30  
am**

### **Mothers' Union**

**Saturday 16 March 11.30  
am**

**Festival Service at Southwark Cathedral**

**Monday 25 March**

**Lady Day Service at Saint Barnabas Church,  
Sutton**

**Wednesday 27 March  
10.45 am**

**Diocesan Council at Trinity House**

## **SUNDAY CLUB**

Sundays at 9.30am in the Community Hall (Age 3yrs and above)

## **SCOUTS (1<sup>st</sup> Belmont)**

**Beavers:** Tuesdays 5.30pm - 6.30pm.  
**Cubs:** Tuesdays or Thursdays 7.00pm - 8.00pm.  
**Scouts:** Mondays 6.45pm - 8.15pm  
**Explorer Scouts:** Mondays 8.45pm - 9.45pm

## **GUIDES, BROWNIES & RAINBOWS**

**Rainbows:** Thursdays 5.00pm-6.00pm.  
**Brownies:** Fridays 5.15pm-6.45pm.  
**Guides:** Tuesdays 6.30pm-8.30pm  
**Guides & Rangers:** Fridays 7.00pm-9.00pm.

## *Beacon dates for issue*

### **Copy Date**

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

*(if leaving in pigeon holes, by Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> January, please)*

### **Distribution Date**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019**

### **Items for inclusion.**

Leave it in pigeon hole for Caroline Everson (Editor)  
E-mail: caro1902@hotmail.co.uk  
*Please ensure that items are not left in the church office.*

# St John's Community Church Hall

The Church Office, St John's Church,  
Northdown Road, Belmont, Surrey SM2 6DY  
Email: [office@stjohnbelmont.org.uk](mailto:office@stjohnbelmont.org.uk)

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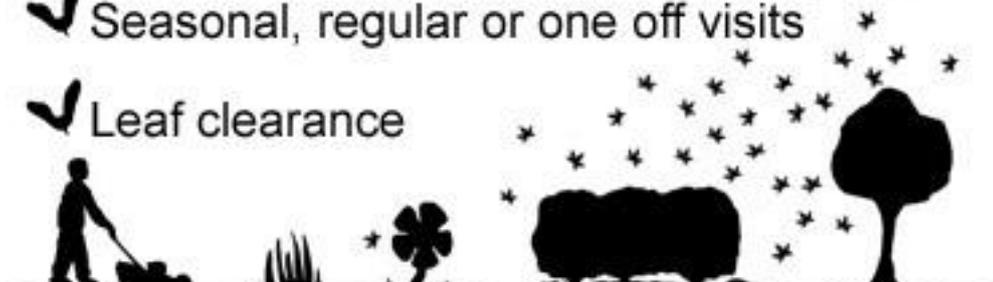
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