



# St. John's Newsletter

Charity No 1162162

[www.stjohnschurchbroadstone.org.uk](http://www.stjohnschurchbroadstone.org.uk)

February 2024



## Letter from the Vicar

Dear all

This year Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, falls on Valentine's Day, but I wonder how much you know about the story behind why we have Valentine's Day?

St Valentine has a confused history. We know he died on 14<sup>th</sup> February 269 AD as a martyr executed by Rome for his evangelism and witness to his faith, but there is some confusion to the story, and it is possible that two separate Valentines, possibly even three (it was a common name) have been conflated into one, with a good dose of legend added in during the Middle Ages. The story that has emerged is as follows:



He was a priest of Rome or Bishop of Terni in Umbria, Italy. Placed under house arrest by Judge Asterius, they held conversations about the Christian faith. Asterius decided to test him, and brought his blind daughter before him, saying if he could cure her, he would do as Valentine asked. Valentine prayed for the girl, who was healed. The Judge complied with all that Valentine then asked of him: he removed all idols from his house, fasted for 3 days, and was baptised into the Christian faith along with his whole family – 44 adult family members and servants in total. That is some church growth story! The Judge also freed all Christian prisoners for whom he had responsibility.

Valentine continued to evangelise widely and was eventually arrested and sent to the Emperor Claudius II, who told him to recant his faith or be killed. He refused, and was executed on 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 269 AD. A story that is most likely apocryphal, is that he sent a note to the healed daughter of Judge Asterius the night before he died, signing it 'From your Valentine', which has since been associated with the sending of Valentine's Day cards.



It was not until the Middle Ages that Valentine's Day became associated with romantic love – the Age of Chivalry, as we sometimes call it, was big on stories of romance! A belief in the Middle Ages that birds paired up in mid-February also became tied to Valentine's Day and added to the romantic element.



Interestingly, our book of saints, *Exciting Holiness*, which we sometimes use at Wednesday services, informs us that, 'For Christians, the day marks an acknowledgement of an all-loving God who blesses those who love one another, as Jesus implored his own disciples so to do.' I wonder how many of us make that link?



Valentine's Day can be a complex day – I remember the difficulty of being asked at school how many valentines cards we had received that year – always none in my case, but hard to admit as a teenager. Even now it can be a day people find hard – it can be very difficult to witness couples celebrating romantic love and feeling ourselves on the outside of it.

But love itself is a tremendous thing to celebrate. I am all for taking Valentine's Day back to its origins, away from the Middle Ages nonsense that got associated with it, and remembering it as a celebration of God's love for ourselves, and as a celebration of all our loving relationships, whether parent, child, sibling, friend, or indeed partner.

So I think it rather fitting that this year Valentine's Day falls on Ash Wednesday. This is the day with which we begin Lent, a day of repentance, fasting, prayer, and of humbling ourselves before God. A day for reminding ourselves that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. A day to turn away from our sin, and be faithful to Christ. A day in which all of that is marked, in ash, on our foreheads, as a sign of our penitence.



But how important it is, to come before God with all of that repentance, knowing that despite our unworthiness, this is a God whose love, forgiveness



and joy in our presence can never be taken away from us. This is a love which holds all of us, for all time. This is love which is unconditional, absolute, perfect. This is a love that will never let us go. That is a Valentine's Day which we all can celebrate. A divine love from which infinite grace flows. Love doesn't get better than that. And this comes with my love too, as always.

*Helen*

# Come & See! Family Work at St John's!

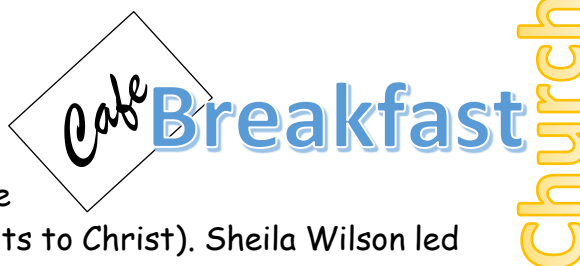


**CHRISTMAS FUN!** We were thrilled to welcome the school and all parents into church for their nativity service. Christingles at the Crib had 337 attend (plus 2 donkeys!) - doubled from last year! Our Christmas Tree Festival brought in over 500 people from the community, raising over £800, and our

Christmas Fayre was also a great community success, bringing in £1700. Meanwhile our Carol Services and Christmas Eve / Day services brought in the highest numbers we've had in years. What a joyful Christmas!



**CAFÉ BREAKFAST CHURCH** Our Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January celebration saw us considering Epiphany with its moments of revelation and linking it also to greater understanding about the gifts God has given us (in a way the magi gave gifts to Christ). Sheila Wilson led us in considering these themes and making gift boxes of chocolates to give to ourselves or to others. Our next will be held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 10 - 11am. Do consider joining us! This is Saturday Church for everyone, old and young alike, and you get breakfast too!



Our December Wreath-making was a fantastic event, with 50 present! The Big Winter Solstice Christmas Party with Nativity was also a raging success, with 49 coming to the party.



In January, our theme was 'Muddy Church goes Bananas for Apples'. We looked at why the apple is a spiritual fruit, made Calenning Welsh Apples and

apple seed bird feeders, learnt what wasailing was and sang a wassailing song whilst blessing the fruit trees in the Vicarage gardens. Our next Muddy is Sat 24<sup>th</sup> February at 10.30am: our theme is 'Antarctica and Penguin Dreams!'





## Holy Grounds Coffee Morning

We are thrilled to be announcing that the St John's Holy Grounds Coffee Morning is soon to be launched! We don't have an exact date yet but are hopeful this will be open by the end of February.

It will take place every Thursday morning, 10am – 12 noon in Northreach. All drinks will be free, but we are able to accept donations. I am pleased to let you know that Paul Winsworth is going to be the Lead Co-ordinator for this, and we are gathering a team of around 10 so far who are willing to help serve tea and coffee. As we are open to the community, we are taking everyone through a simple safer recruiting process – but if you are interested in helping, do let Revd Helen know asap as we shall soon be rota-ing the team.

We look forward to announcing the opening date and welcoming you all soon! *Revd Helen*

## APCM - SAVE THE DATE!

This year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting takes place on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 7.30pm in NorthReach. It is an important meeting, and everyone on our electoral roll is welcome to attend. If you are not on the electoral roll and would like to be, please see Revd Helen or Diane Sharp and we will give you a form to fill in! We will need all new electoral roll forms in by 18<sup>th</sup> March to revise the roll, which then closes to new members until after the APCM.



This is the meeting where we review the year 2023, and hear from the Vicar about the vision for 2024. Everyone on the electoral roll will get the parish and statutory reports sent to them prior to the meeting. If you want a hard copy printing, ask at the office.

This is also the time we need to recruit new members for our PCC! We are looking for four new members, who join for a three year term. We have 6 PCC meetings a year, on the third Thursday. Please discuss with Revd Helen if you are interested – we welcome those who have served on PCC before as well as first-timers. The PCC at St John's is a friendly and supportive group of which to be a part. We also have to appoint people to the offices of church warden, PCC Secretary, Electoral Roll Officer, Safeguarding Rep. I am happy to report that people have offered for these roles but that doesn't preclude others also offering, in which case there would be an election for the post. *Revd Helen*

# Diary Round-up: Events at St John's in February

Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	10am – 11am, Safeguarding Awareness For All, followed by sidespeople fire risk training for those who missed it.
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 10am Parish Eucharist 12 noon Baptism 10.30am Eucharist
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup> Feb	7.30pm, St John's Fellowship
Thurs 8 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am LPA meeting at The Vicarage
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	2pm, St John's Craft and Chat Group
Sat 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb	8am Holy Communion 10am Parish Eucharist
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb	OFFICE CLOSED
Mon 12 <sup>th</sup> Feb	OFFICE CLOSED
Tues 13 <sup>th</sup> Feb	2pm, Funeral of Dorothy Mitchell at St John's Church 7pm Pancake Party
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am and 7.30pm Eucharist with ashing.
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Feb	8am Holy Communion 10am Parish Eucharist (Lent 1 All Age)
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb	OFFICE CLOSED
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> Feb	10.30am Eucharist
Sat 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am, Muddy Church: Antarctica and Penguin Dreams
Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	8am Holy Communion 10am Parish Eucharist
Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10.30am Eucharist



## Service readings in February

Date	Sunday	OT	Psalms	NT	Gospel
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb	2 before Lent	Proverbs 8.1, 22-31	Psalm 104.26-end	Colossians 1.15-20	John 1.1-14
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Next before Lent	2 Kings 2.1-12	Psalm 50.1-6	2 Corinthians 4.3-6	Mark 9.2-9
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Lent 1	Genesis 9.8-17	Ps 25.1-9	1 Peter 3.18-end	Mark 1.9-15
Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Lent 2	Genesis 17.1-7, 15-16	Ps 22.23-end	Romans 4.13-end	Mark 8.31-end

## Occasional Offices from December & January

### Funerals

15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Janet (Jan) Moorcraft (St John's)
22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	Shirley Robinson (St John's Church)
17 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Vivien 'Jane' Mills (St John's Church)



# St John's News from the Pews

*A more detailed look at what is happening in and around the church...*

**CONGRATULATIONS to Keith Manston and Kathy Carr** who have just announced their engagement! I know that you will be thrilled for them and wish them every happiness in their married life together. It is wonderful to get good news to cheer our January! *Revd Helen*

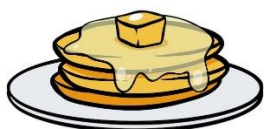
*Thank you!*

**JIM BULL'S RETIREMENT** Last week we announced Jim Bull's retirement as organist at St John's. He has been our organist for over 20 years, faithfully serving us week-in, week-out, and everything in between. Only a couple of years ago did others start to provide some cover for Jim. I know you will join me in heartfelt thanks for all he has done and been for this congregation. He sends his love to you, and I will send your love to him. The PCC has just agreed that we will advertise and seek to appoint a new full-time organist. This make take us several months (organists are not so easy to appoint!) and we will inform you of progress. In the meantime, we are grateful for all those who help cover our services so wonderfully by playing the organ for us. David Hopkins and Adrian Jones are helping us cover most of our services over the next 3 months. *Revd Helen*

**DRINK AT THE GOODS YARD Wednesday 31st January 5 - 7pm.** A few of us are gathering for another drink at The Goods Yard (opposite The Junction Sports Centre). Do join us for their offer of 2-for-1 drinks on house wine / Prosecco when buying SAME drink.



**SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS FOR ALL Saturday 3rd February 10am to 11am**, held in NorthReach. For sidespeople who missed the fire safety briefing, we are hoping there will also be opportunity to catch up with that at 11am. Many thanks, *Revd Helen*



**PANCAKE PARTY AND RAFFLE Tuesday 13th Feb at 7pm** is our annual pancake party. Tickets £5 for 3 pancakes and tea / coffee; children under 12 are free. We are also holding a raffle and appealing for prizes! Please drop off at the parish office. Many thanks!

**WEDNESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY ASH WEDNESDAY** We will have a service at 10.30am and at 7.30pm, and will offer ashing at both. This is a Day of Holy Obligation for all Christians, and we encourage you to try to get to one of these services.

**SINGING GROUP FOR SERVICES IN CARE HOMES** We have a small singing group to accompany a short service in local Care Homes. *Revd Helen* will be taking two services in February: The Links 10.45am Thurs 8th February and The Potteries 2.30pm Friday 9th February. Anyone who would like to join the singing group to lead the hymns would be very welcome. Please contact Pat Longstaff (01202 691148) if you are interested.



**LENT GROUPS** We will be sharing these across Churches Together as usual. This year there will be no need to buy a book as we will be studying the Sunday lectionary readings during Lent. Lent Groups will be run on Wednesday evenings 7.30pm - 9pm at the Methodist

Church, and Thursday mornings 10.30am - 12 noon at St Anthony's. These start on Wed 21st Feb and Thurs 22nd Feb. Please let Revd Helen know which session you are coming to.

**HEALTH CHECK EVENT** Aged 40 – 74? Get a free NHS health check at St John's Northreach Annexe Mon 26<sup>th</sup> Feb. Book at [NHS Health check - form · LiveWell Dorset](#)



**PLANT SALE** Early notice of Plant Sale for 2024 for you to put the date, **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May** in your diary. It has been decided to have an additional stall this year of preserves and chutneys. If you are making your marmalade with this month's Seville oranges, perhaps you could make some extra jars for the preserves stall. If you don't make your own marmalade, jam, or chutney, perhaps you could buy a jar of something tasty to give to the Sale in May. More information from Marion Marsh.

**ACTS 435 UPDATE** Thanks to St. John's, over Christmas we have been able to help a family who, despite both being in full employment, needed help to pay their energy bill and buy their food. If you would like to help someone in need please log on to <https://www.acts435.org.uk/needs/> If you know anyone who could do with a helping hand please get in touch on [janetgreen34@hotmail.com](mailto:janetgreen34@hotmail.com) Many thanks from Janet Green

**CORFE MULLEN FOOD BANKS** Thank you all for your support for our foodbank collections on Sundays and Wednesdays. All donations given to Corfe Mullen foodbank run by St. Nicholas's Church: they provide food for individuals & families local to Broadstone, and issue vouchers to all Broadstone and Hillbourne Schools. If you would like to make a cash donation, visit their website [parishofcorfemullen.church/foodbank](http://parishofcorfemullen.church/foodbank) or speak to Gez or Elaine.



## Further Afield

**THE WILLIAM TEMPLE ASSOCIATION** On Monday 5th Feb, the Very Revd. Catherine Ogle, Dean of Winchester, will reflect on 30 years of Women's Ordination. Meetings at the Marsham Court Hotel, Russell Cotes Road, Bournemouth. Talks start at 8.10, coffee from 7.45. Cost for non-members £4.50. Everyone welcome. For more information ask Paul or Val Renyard.

**CHARITY CONCERT 'I HAD THE PERFECT DREAM'** in aid of Macmillan Caring Locally and St Martin's United Reformed Church on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2.30pm at St Martin's Church, West Moors. Tickets can be reserved via the church website [www.urc-eastdorset.org.uk](http://www.urc-eastdorset.org.uk)

**DONATIONS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS** Sharon Bull from BCP works in the asylum seeker hotels on activities and improving wellbeing. She has asked for games such as chess, draughts, connect 4, playing cards, uno etc. for the 4 hotels. Judith 01202 460162 Mob 07840490525

**STRICTLY COME TEA DANCING** Come and dance to live music at the Memorial Hall on Tudor Road. Usually the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm – 4pm.

**CHITTER CHATTER CLUB** Every Wednesday, 2.30pm – 4pm at Cafe Gardenia.

**BROADSTONE LUNCH BUNCH Baptist Church, York Rd.** Every last Thursday in the month, from 11am - 2.30pm. Tea and biscuits on arrival, and 2 course hot lunch for £5. Transport can be arranged. To book your place contact Dave Turner on 0777 308 2092.

**TUESDAY CLUB AT BROADSTONE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH** Broadstone Tuesday club, URC hall every Tuesday.

# And Finally... Eco Ideas for Lent



Our Eco Christmas Tree brought us some wonderful ideas and some positive news about what can be done to help our environment. It is really inspiring to see how much people in our community care about their natural world. Not only that, but they plan to do something about it. Here we share the suggestions they wrote on labels to hang on our tree. Some of them were clearly from children, others from adults and one is waiting for a kind Ukrainian to translate for us – let me know if you know of anybody who can do it! Perhaps we could all try one (or more) of these during Lent and then, who knows, it might become a habit we can continue.

<i>Keep litter clear</i>	<i>Don't throw rubbish on the floor</i>	<i>Grow vegetables</i>
<i>Grow your own</i>	<i>Eat more plant based meals</i>	<i>Turn the lights off or walk to school</i>
<i>Walk to school</i>	<i>To walk, cycle or scoot and turn off the light</i>	<i>Establish a better public transport or car share system so we don't rely so heavily on cars</i>
<i>Recycle</i>	<i>Buy less stuff</i>	<i>Buy less new items</i>
<i>Stop buying new clothes</i>	<i>Walk gently in this world</i>	<i>Awaiting translation!</i>



There were also 50 responses to our Christmas Carbon Survey; the most popular pledge was to re-use, mend or recycle more, with 11 sticker votes, and on a similar theme there were 6 votes for buying less new and 4 for buying 2<sup>nd</sup> hand. These were all about reducing 'Stuff' i.e. the use of raw materials, the carbon footprint of manufacture and transport and the environmental cost of disposing of unwanted items. The next most popular topic was Home, with turning off lights and using low energy bulbs coming top in that section. Food came next, with using up left-overs the top pledge. Travel had the fewest pledges but is clearly in people's minds. These responses show us that something can be done by every one of us and, in Broadstone, it is happening. *Nicky Hoar, Eco Church Co-ordinator*

**DEADLINE FOR MARCH EDITION SUBMISSIONS FRIDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> FEB.**  
 Please email all items to [admin@stjohnschurchbroadstone.org.uk](mailto:admin@stjohnschurchbroadstone.org.uk),  
 AND a copy to Revd Helen at [revdhelenbailey@gmail.com](mailto:revdhelenbailey@gmail.com)