

# ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

February 2019

50p



# **St Martin's Church, Hale Gardens, London W3 9SQ**

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

[www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk](http://www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk)

Email: [stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com](mailto:stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com)

**SSM Assistant Priest** The Rev'd Brandy Pearson  
(c/o Parish Office)

**Permission to Officiate** The Rev'd Robert Pearson

## **Commissioned Lay Minister to Japanese Anglican Church UK**

Mrs Yuki Johnson (07572 324107)

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## **Parish Administrator (weekdays: 9.30am – 1.30pm)**

Parish Office, rear of Church Hall,

Hale Gardens, W3 9SQ

020 8992 2333

**Reader** Dr Margaret Jones (020 8997 1418)

**Reader Emeritus** Mrs Lynne Armstrong (020 8992 8341)

**Commissioned Lay Minister** Mrs Jacqueline Nicholls (c/o Parish Office)

**Churchwardens** Mrs Liza Ambridge (020 8992 3029)

Mr John Wilson

**Director of Music** Mr Kenneth Bartram (c/o Parish Office)

**Magazine Editor** Lizzy Edgington

The Vicar is available for consultation and enquiries by appointment.  
Please ring the Parish Office.

Articles for the next month's magazine should be sent to  
The Parish Office (email: [stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com](mailto:stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com))  
Please title the email "magazine item"

**They should reach the Editor by 22<sup>nd</sup> February.**

**The February magazine will be on sale by 3<sup>rd</sup> March.**

## **Note from Brandy**

What's in a name? - Long before I became a Christian, I was interested in Candlemas, if only because it fell a day before my birthday! In the Christian Calendar February 2<sup>nd</sup> is named as the Feast of the Presentation of Christ, when the infant Jesus was taken to the Temple in Jerusalem, 40 days after his birth in obedience to the Jewish Law. Less commonly nowadays, it is called the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, following the idea that women needed to be purified after childbirth, a practice of the church in much more recent times! So why is it called Candlemas?

The pagan Celtic people called this feast Imbolc (and modern pagans still do!). Imbolc comes from a word to do with pregnancy. This is the very beginning of spring, and the time when lambing started. Having watched many editions of "Lambing Live" on TV, I realise that it is still a very important time of year for the farming community. In the cycle of the year, February 2<sup>nd</sup> falls halfway between the Winter Solstice (the shortest day) and the Spring Equinox (when day and night are of equal length). Therefore it is a festival of the light returning, which the Church adopted and the tradition developed to bring forward all of the candles to be used for the rest of the year for a special blessing.

So is any of this relevant to us here in London? I discovered recently that there are sixteen city farms in London – so lambs are being born in London, probably at this very moment! In July, London is becoming a National Park City, and we Londoners are being challenged to get outdoors, discover our great city in new ways, and to find ways to make it better for everyone. City life is not separate from rural life or the natural world. As Christians

it is good to remember that, all through the year and not just at our Harvest Thanksgiving.

St Martin's is blessed with electric lights that come on with the flick of a switch, but the church in former times relied on candles for lighting. Our gospel procession, where the servers bring up their candles, not only symbolises the light of the gospel, but reminds us of a time, when the candle light would have been needed for the words to be read.

As we look forward to spring, it is a good time to move on from the past and to look to the future, clearing out the old, making both outer and inner space for new beginnings. This might include some spring cleaning at home, as well as spending time in quiet prayer and reflection on life and faith - to allow inspiration to enter for the rest of the year.

Brandy Pearson



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### **Update on the search for St. Martin's new vicar:**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> January, the diocese interview panel interviewed a number of very good candidates. However, they were unable to make an appointment and St. Martin's will be re-advertising the post of vicar in the near future. We will continue pray that we find the right person for the parish.

### **A prayer for God's guidance**

Almighty Lord and everlasting God,  
we ask you to direct, sanctify and govern both our hearts  
and bodies  
in the ways of your laws and the works of your  
commandments;  
that through your most mighty protection, both here and  
ever,  
we may be preserved in body and soul;  
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.



## **St. Brigid of Ireland**

1<sup>st</sup> February is the feast day of Saint Brigid who was the abbess of Kildare and died in c.525 AD. She is also one of the patron saints of Ireland.

There is very little information about Brigid, her story has been pieced together from various different sources and passed down through the generations. The most widely believed version is that her mother was a slave and her

father a nobleman. She and her mother were sold to a druid who was later converted to Christianity by Brigid.

Brigid was emancipated and returned to live with her father, but he tried to either sell her or marry her to the king of Ulster. Brigid refused, declaring that she wished to remain a virgin and serve God. Impressed by her piety, the king of Ulster removed her from the care of her father and granted her the Curragh, a plain in Kildare. Here, Brigid founded the first nunnery in Ireland. As the religious community in Kildare grew, it developed into a double abbey for nuns and monks. Significantly, the abbess ranked higher than the abbot.

As well as founding more communities of nuns across Ireland, Brigid is credited with turning water into beer for a leper community.



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## Editorial – 12 months, 12 resolutions...

Dry January is over (hurrah!) and February's challenge is to think about the everyday words that I use. Increasingly I have to be careful as my daughter is currently like a sponge and keeps repeating everything that I say. Proverbs 22:6 says 'Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.'

However, for me, this month is not just about trying to find more positive ways of saying 'Don't do that!' and trying to say 'no' less often. Research has shown that simply taking a breath, and trying to use more positive words can help remove stress from a situation. Negative words activate the fear centre of the human brain creating stress and all the associated hormones; whilst positive words engage parts of the brain that support problem solving, seeing the big picture and empathy. Personally, I like the idea of less day-to-day stress.

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## **St. Valentine**

14<sup>th</sup> February is of course, St. Valentine's Day! The feast day commemorates Valentine who was martyred during the persecution of Christians in 3<sup>rd</sup> century Rome. There are two legends surrounding Valentine which ultimately led to today's romantic celebrations.

The first is that during his imprisonment, Valentine befriended his jailer's daughter, healed her from blindness and wrote her a letter which he signed 'from your Valentine'. The other legend says that he actively defied the Roman emperor and secretly married couples in order to spare their husbands from war.

One of the lesser known facts is that St. Valentine is also the patron saint of beekeepers.

There are around 20,000 species of bee, but Britain's bees are in trouble. 35 UK bee species have been identified as under threat of extinction and all species face serious threats.

The main reason for this has been a dramatic decline in bees' natural habitat. Bees play a vital function in the natural world, most significantly pollinating food crops. Perhaps this year we can help, alongside the chocolates and the cards, we can commemorate St. Valentine by doing something to help the bees?

## **Do you have some outside space for plants?**

Whether it is a patio, a large window box, a hanging basket or decent patch of grass, just providing some bee-

friendly plants can help. Bees and other pollinating insects need food, water and shelter and so flowering plants which are rich in nectar (containing sugar for energy) and pollen (providing protein and oils) provide the best diet. Different bees are active at different times of year, so if you have the space, try a range of plants that will collectively provide flowers from spring to winter. Bee species' tongues vary in size – so have fun choosing different shaped flowers.

### **Suggestions for trees and shrubs:**

**Spring** – Apple or crabapple trees provide blossoms for the bees which in turn pollinate the fruit for us. The Pussy Willow tree is a good source of food for queen bumblebees establishing new colonies, including the Chocolate mining bee.

**Summer** – Lavender, plant in the sun and trim for new growth. The great thing about lavender is that it thrives even in poor, dry soil. Hawthorn, a good plant for hedges.

**Autumn** – Abelia – an evergreen shrub with scented white flowers, particularly popular with bumblebees and honeybees. Honeysuckle – a vigorous climber, popular with bumblebees during the day and moths at night.

**Winter** – Mahonia – an evergreen shrub covered in bright yellow flowers. Ivy – great for fattening up bees before hibernation.





## **Suggestions for bee-friendly flowers:**

**Spring** – Lungwort – blue and purple flowers, it is a good low maintenance option. Crocus – provides any garden with strong vivid colours.

**Summer** – Monarda ('bee balm'), tall fuchsia pink flowers which make an impressive statement. Phacelia – very popular with bees, and also increases fertility of the soil.

**Autumn** – Sedum – produces large umbrella-shaped flower-heads and can survive drought.

Perennial wallflowers are great because they are low-maintenance, can survive even in poor soil and produces bursts of bright colour.

**Winter** – Winter aconite provides a carpet of bright yellow flowers. Snowdrops – an early sign that spring is on its way they provide an abundance of pollen.

## **Suggestions for bee-friendly herbs:**

With the added bonus of providing fresh herbs for cooking!

**Spring** – Majoram

**Summer** – Chives

**Autumn** – Sage

**Winter** – Rosemary

## **Bee-friendly fruit and veg:**

**Spring** – Kale

**Summer** – Strawberry

**Autumn** – Runner/Broad bean

**Winter** – Raspberry



**It sifts from leaden sieves**  
**By Emily Dickinson**

It sifts from leaden sieves,  
It powders all the wood,  
It fills with alabaster wool  
The wrinkles of the road.

It makes an even face  
Of mountain and of plain, —  
Unbroken forehead from the east  
Unto the east again.

It reaches to the fence,  
It wraps it, rail by rail,  
Till it is lost in fleeces;  
It flings a crystal veil

On stump and stack and stem, —  
The summer's empty room,  
Acres of seams where harvests were,  
Recordless, but for them.

It ruffles wrists of posts,  
As ankles of a queen, —  
Then stills its artisans like ghosts,  
Denying they have been.

# **First Sight**

**By Philip Larkin**

Lambs that learn to walk in snow  
When their bleating clouds the air  
Meet a vast unwelcome, know  
Nothing but a sunless glare.  
Newly stumbling to and fro  
All they find, outside the fold,  
Is a wretched width of cold.

As they wait beside the ewe,  
Her fleeces wetly caked, there lies  
Hidden round them, waiting too,  
Earth's immeasurable surprise.  
They could not grasp it if they knew,  
What so soon will wake and grow  
Utterly unlike the snow.

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## **Dates for the diary:**

### **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> February**

Candlemas, an all age service  
followed by Bring and Share Parish Lunch!

### **Prayer Support Group**

The group meets once a month after the Sunday 10am service.

The next meeting will be **17<sup>th</sup> February.**

### **Ash Wednesday**

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March** – with Ashing from at 11am and 8pm.

### **Lent:**

A Lent Group with Supper will be held on Thursday evenings – the what and how of prayer. 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> March and 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> April.

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## Junior Church

On Sunday 13th January we celebrated the baptism of Jesus. In junior church we talked about baptism. The children were very knowledgeable about this and talked about using water to represent washing, having a candle to represent Jesus being a light to us all, how the whole church prays for the person being baptised, and that we are baptised "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit". We also talked about how the priest uses the person's name at their baptism, and how special it is that God knows each of us by name. The younger children had lots of fun "baptising" a doll and giving him/her different names. The children and young people then decorated biscuits lovingly made by Amy, Freya, Luke and Katie, to represent different aspects of baptism, and with their names on to remind us of this - that God knows and loves each us by name.

Bryony Franklin





## Puzzle Page:

E T A B B E S S J W J O N W L  
P R S V Y C L Y T K L C O Z N  
U R Q I V U S E P Q A F I U A  
X O A V R S Q E A N L A T X J  
Q E G Y V A V H D E M I I R H  
S Q P W E I H L V U C T D L M  
F Z N J O R E C R F Z H A O Q  
I B P X Q M C E U V I B R X D  
L W N S A R D K D E G B T S J  
J S W S N N B E K S P H K A Z  
U L O R E E U G V Y A W R V O  
U H D V E I Q P S C Z T W J M  
S Y A E Z P N H J N L M H P G  
I L C G B Z M O G I S H Z L R  
Q K E E N I T N E L A V Y U K

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### **Usual Sunday Services**

8am: Holy Communion  
10am: Parish Communion  
6.30pm: Evensong

Our Junior Church meets in the Church Hall at 10am  
except when there is an All-Age or Parade Service.

### **Japanese Anglican Church UK**

meets every third Sunday of the month:  
(except July, August and December)

3pm Bible Study and Evening Worship in Japanese

Every **Wednesday** in the Parish Room

11am: Informal Eucharist followed by the Coffee Club at 11.30am

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