

ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

February 2020

50p



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

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk

Email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com

The Vicar	The Rev'd Julia Palmer 020 8992 2333
SSM Assistant Priest	The Rev'd Brandy Pearson (c/o Parish Office)
Permission to Officiate	The Rev'd Robert Pearson
Assistant Curate	The Rev'd Bryony Franklin (Fri & Sun)
Commissioned Lay Minister to Japanese Anglican Church UK	Mrs Yuki Johnson (07572 324107) yukifunakawa@btinternet.com
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)
Churchwardens	Mrs Liza Ambridge (020 8992 3029) Mr John Wilson
Director of Music	Mr Kenneth Bartram (c/o Parish Office)
Magazine Editor	Rachel Balcombe

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)
Please title the email "magazine item"

They should reach the Editor by 19th February.
The March magazine will be on sale by 29th February.

Looking ahead to Lent

As well as snowdrops and St Valentine's Day, February usually brings with it the start of Lent. Shrove Tuesday this year falls on 25th February, with Lent starting on Wednesday 26th. Now is a good time to think about what Lent might mean for each of us this year, as a period of reflection and preparation for Easter.

Traditionally we've often thought about "giving something up for Lent" – when I was a child, this was always chocolate in my family, so that we could enjoy it anew when we got our Easter Eggs (although my brother and I always wanted to give up vegetables instead!).

But Lent is also a good time for taking something on – whether spiritual or practical or both. If you are interested in exploring different spiritual practices, we will be running a Lent course this year in collaboration with one of our neighbouring parishes, St. Mary's Acton. This will be a course exploring different forms of Christian meditation, on the theme of "MARANATHA – COME LORD JESUS". This will run over the five weeks of Lent, starting the week beginning Monday 2nd March, with two sessions per week – one on a Monday lunchtime (12-1.30pm) at St Martin's, and one on a Wednesday evening (7.30-9pm) at St Mary's.

Subjects covered will include meditation inspired by the early Christian Desert Fathers and Mothers focusing on the word "Maranatha", Ignatian style meditation, using religious icons to meditate, Sacred Reading and The

Mandala. The Monday session will take place at St Martin's Vicarage, 25 Birch Grove, West Acton, W3 9SP. The Wednesday session will take place at St Mary's Vicarage, 14 Cumberland Road, Acton, W3 6SX. Do speak to Rev Julia Palmer or Rev Brandy Pearson if you would like more information.

And if you would like to do something practical, the Church of England's Lent campaign for 2020 is #LiveLent: Care for God's Creation, inspiring us to think about what steps we can take to appreciate and take care of the world that God has created. You can sign up for daily reflections and ideas here on the Church of England website. If you would like to join me in a "plasticfast" please do let me know!

–Rev Bryony Franklin, 22 January 2020



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DATES FOR THE DIARY!

Saturday 1st February

10am-12.30pm: Japanese café

1pm-4pm: St Martin's clear out. Can you help to clear out the church basement? Let the clergy know.

Sunday 2nd February

10am: All Age Service for Candlemas

Sunday 9th February

This will be our organist Ken Bartram's last service – please come along to wish him well. Please sign up at the back of the church if you would like to attend the lunch afterwards. £5 each plus donations of wine welcome.

Tuesday 25th February

Shrove Tuesday: Pancake Day

Wednesday 26th February

Ash Wednesday: The first day of Lent

Saturday 29th February

2pm: Questors Choir rehearsal, all welcome. To register, please go to www.questorschoir.org/mendelssohn or call 07939 064 247.

Sunday 1st March

6.30pm: Taize Service

A Big Thank You from the Women's Refuge

The women, children and staff at the local refuge really appreciate the ongoing support which they receive from St Martin's. Just before Christmas, I made several visits to the refuge and took a large number of presents from the Sunday School, from the Brownies and Guides, and from members of the St Martin's congregation. These included special gifts for the children, toiletries, biscuits and sweets for the women, as well as craft items, toys, warm winter clothes, more gifts of food and other useful donations.

I have revisited them since Christmas and can report that they had a very enjoyable Christmas. They held a large party to which they invited all the women and children, together with residents from the refuge in Harrow (a smaller establishment which is also managed by Hestia). The party was a very happy occasion, at which everyone felt secure and warm and could forget their problems for a little while. Everyone received presents and there was plenty to eat.

At Christmas we listen to the story of Mary, Joseph and their young son Jesus fleeing from the violence of Herod. It seems particularly appropriate that we are able to help women and children who have had to flee from domestic violence and find themselves in the refuge in Ealing. We continue to pray for all who flee from violence, and also for those who work to help and care for them.

–Margaret Jones

"Hope" is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at all.

And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.

I've heard it in the chilliest land
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.

–Emily Dickinson



The Holy Family: Refugees

Throughout the period of Advent, our icons of Mary, Joseph and their donkey travelled from home to home, looking for a place to rest. Their journey symbolised the 70-mile journey that Mary and Joseph took from their home in Nazareth to Bethlehem, the town that Joseph's family came from – only to discover that there was no room for them to stay once they arrived. Mary and Joseph eventually found room in the stable of an inn. Our icons found room at our altar in time for Christmas Day.





Epiphany in Junior Church

As we celebrated the Epiphany on Sunday 5th January, we thought about gifts. The Wise Men brought Jesus gold, frankincense and myrrh. Our young people thought about what they might like to give Jesus instead. They wrote or drew what they would give – such as their prayers, their time, their kindness to others – and wrapped them as beautiful gifts and laid them in our Nativity scene.

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Baptism

On 12th January, we celebrated Jesus's baptism in the River Jordan. We also celebrated the baptism of Paige Grayson, and welcomed them into our church family at St Martin's. Our Old Testament reading was particularly apt:

I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness,
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations [...]
See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

–Isaiah 42:6 & 9



St Valentine's Day

Celebrated on 14th February, Valentine's Day is a time to show affection for those we love, usually by sending cards, flowers or chocolates. The day gets its name from the famous saint – but there are differing stories of who exactly St Valentine was, and how his feast day came to be celebrated in the way that it is.

A popular belief is that he was a priest from 3rd century AD Rome who married people in secret after Emperor Claudius II banned marriage, believing that married men were bad soldiers. When he was discovered, St Valentine was thrown in jail and sentenced to death.

Another story claims that, while in jail, St Valentine fell in love with the jailor's daughter. When he was taken to be killed on 14th February, he sent her a love letter signed "from your Valentine".

Valentine's Day also coincides with a Roman festival called Lupercalia which was celebrated in the middle of February, officially the start of the Roman spring. It's thought that it was traditional for people to court one another during this festival – and perhaps even get married afterwards.

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Lent Traditions

Shrove Tuesday is at the core of a number of traditions: In Spain, it's known as 'Día de la Tortilla' or 'Omelette Day'. Mexico and Louisiana celebrate Mardi Gras by eating brightly decorated king cake, while Nice in France hosts several parades.

However it's known, Shrove Tuesday marks the final day before Lent, during which many Christians spend time fasting or exercising self-discipline in order to focus on their relationship with God and grow closer to Him. Shrove Tuesday, then, is a final chance to indulge in the things you may be about to give up for 40 days – traditionally represented by eating pancakes.

Simple Pancake Recipe

Looking for an easy way to whip up a batch of pancakes? I can absolutely recommend this recipe I've been using for several years – you won't even need to get the scales out!

Ingredients:

2 eggs

6 tablespoons plain flour

Milk

Oil, butter or lard to fry, according to preference

Flavours according to preference (vanilla, cocoa powder)

And that's it! Beat the eggs and flour together, then add the milk gradually until you have a mixture about as thin as single cream, and with no lumps. Pour about two tablespoons of mixture into the pan per pancake, and tip the pan to spread it around. Don't forget to flip it!

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, the 40-day period of reflection before Easter. It's a holy day of prayer and fasting, in sharp contrast to the indulgences of Shrove Tuesday the day before. Traditionally, the remains of the previous year's Palm Sunday leaves are burned, and priests will draw a cross on parishioners' foreheads using the resulting ash, as a powerful reminder of mortality and the life of the resurrection to come.

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The Parish of St Martin Hale Gardens, London W3 9SQ

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www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk
email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com

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