

St John's, Brooklands

Extending God's welcome to everyone!

Autumn Newsletter

Richard writes...

September marks my third year here in Brooklands and writing the Annual Report during the summer has helped me to reflect on my time here and where we're heading as a parish.

Admittedly it has been slightly strange to be reviewing 2019 towards the end of 2020, this strangeness being heightened by the fact that 2020 has been a year none of us had anticipated. In reflecting on 2019 I was overwhelmed by the sense of what could have been. I remain deeply saddened that we were unable to celebrate the Sunrise Service this year (not simply because I missed my prosecco and bacon butties). I am also unsure whether our Pumpkin Party will be able to go ahead in October, though I have 6 pumpkins growing in the vicarage garden just in case!

Whilst we've now reopened for public worship it is nothing like being 'back to normal'. The normal that we knew has gone, we must now look to a new future. I love the message Isaiah tells in Isaiah 11. The nation of Israel had been taken away into exile, pictured by a tree that has been felled and all that remained is a stump. The image is one of destruction. Yet, a green shoot emerges giving hope for the future. In this newsletter there are plenty of green shoots, God is not done with us yet. Read and be encouraged!



Revd Richard Sherratt

0161 973 5220 | vicarbrooklands@gmail.com



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www.stjohnsbrooklands.org.uk

St John's, Brooklands

We believe that God is calling us to be the missional heart of our community as we invite everyone in Brooklands to hear God's invitation of a new relationship, belong to God's family, believe the good news about what Jesus has done for us, and experience the radical hospitality Jesus extends to everyone: an invitation to sit and eat in God's kingdom.

Our Vision

Extending God's welcome to everyone

Our Mission

Welcoming you into God's family as we grow in Christ together

Our Values

We are a **welcoming** church...

Worship: growing as disciples formed by God's word and Spirit

Evangelism: making disciples as we introduce people to Jesus

Liturgical: living lives shaped by God's story

Community: belonging to our church family

Outward-looking: going out beyond our four walls

Missional: serving God's purposes for the world

Invitational: inviting everyone to know Jesus for themselves

Nurturing: equipping everyone for ministry

Generous: excelling in the grace of giving

Our Strategy

welcome to the family → grow in faith → share life together → serve in God's mission

A Year in Review – Some highlights from 2019



In 2019 we had 14 people come on our **Alpha** course and a number of those on the Wednesday morning course continued to meet forming a **Connect Group** which seeks to help them connect with God, with each other, and our community.

We now hold all **baptisms** within our main Sunday morning service and during the year we conducted 12 baptisms. They typically take place on the second Sunday of the month and correspond with key feast days; for example, the Baptism of Christ in January and Pentecost in May.

A **Discipleship Group** ('Reading Galatians Together') met in the vicarage on Fridays during Lent to read through Paul's letter to the Galatians and explore its meaning for us today.

We held our first **Sunrise Service** this Easter which was attended by 40 people. Beginning outside with the lighting of the 'new fire' we reaffirmed our baptism promises, celebrated the first Eucharist of Easter and enjoyed prosecco and bacon sandwiches afterwards!



Children and Families Ministry



Bumps and Babies Our new baby group launched in September. It runs during term time in the Church Hall on Tuesday mornings between 9.30-11am. It is for expectant parents and babies under the age of 12 months or when they start walking, and we provide an opportunity to meet new people, catch up with friends, and find support from others in a similar life stage.



Children's Parties We have run a variety of parties this year – at our **Pancake Party** on Shrove Tuesday; at our **Dinosaur Party** we had an afternoon of fun as we explored the fascinating world of the Dinosaur; and on Halloween we held our second **Pumpkin Party** which has quickly established itself as a family favourite!



Messy Church – On Good Friday we held our **Messy Easter** as we explored the Easter story. Each craft was related to Holy Week and we even built the walls of Jerusalem out of cardboard boxes! In October at our **Messy Harvest** we collected food for our local Food Bank. In December held our **Messy Advent** as we looked forward to Christmas with hopeful expectation.

Senior Ministry



Good as New: Every Thursday, between 10-12pm, Good as New provides a place of welcome where everyone can meet for a friendly chat, listen to music and hopefully find a bargain or two.



Crafty Chat: Crafty Chat meets twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays. We are a very friendly group where you can bring your own craft, join in with the latest project or simply watch and chat. The chat is as important as the craft and due to growing attendance, we have now moved back into the hall.



Women's Fellowship: The ladies of the Women's Fellowship have enjoyed a very varied programme and count ourselves fortunate to have enjoyed listening to several speakers on some extremely interesting subjects.

Alpha Online

**Ask the big questions from
the comfort of your home.
Try Alpha Online**

#AlphaOnline



You're invited to explore life and the basics of the Christian faith in a friendly, open, and informal environment.

Alpha provides you with the chance to ask the big questions in life and to share what you think with a small group of people just like you. Each session looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. No matter who you are Alpha is for you! It's fun, relaxed, and there's no pressure.

Alpha Online will meet using Zoom at 8pm on the following dates. If you're interested you can register on our website or by contacting our vicar directly.

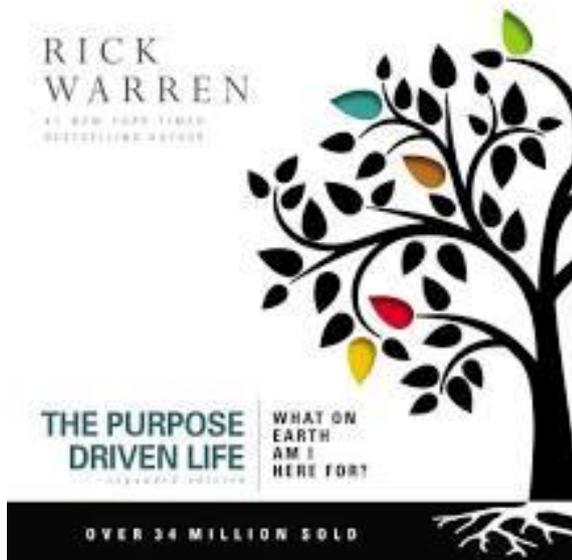
Date	Topic
9 th September	Alpha Taster - Life: Is this it?
16 th September	Jesus: Who is he?
23 rd September	Cross: Why did Jesus die?
30 th September	Faith: How can I have faith?
7 th October	Prayer: Why and how do I pray?
14 th October	Bible: Why and how do I read the Bible?
17 th October	<i>Saturday "Away Day"</i>
21 st October	Telling Others: Why and how should I tell others?
4 th November	Healing: Does God Heal today?
11 th November	Church: What about the church?

Connect Groups

Connect Groups are groups of between six and twelve people who meet regularly to build lasting friendships. They are the best way to belong to our church family and provide an opportunity to connect with God, with others, and with our local community. We're in the process of creating a variety of groups so that everyone has an opportunity to belong. If you are interested in belonging to one please let Richard know.

Autumn Preaching Series

Every year we have a preaching series during the Autumn term
This year we're basing it on *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren



Rick Warren founded Saddleback Church in 1980 and it currently has an average weekly attendance of over 22,000 making it one of the ten largest churches in the US.

His book *The Purpose Driven Life* was first published in 2002 and has since sold over 32 million copies!

A new and expanded edition was published in 2012 and this is the one we'll be using since it also provides various opportunities to engage with online content.

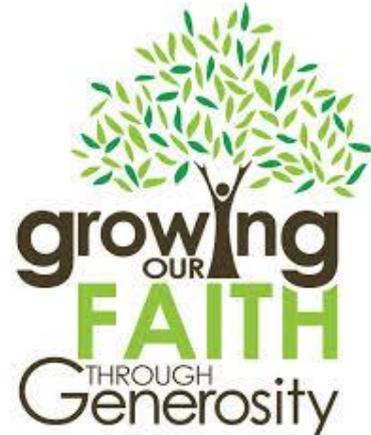
Each week we will focus on one of the five purposes for which we have been created. We'll discover that each one of us has been created by God with five purposes:

- (1) planned for God's pleasure,
- (2) formed for God's family,
- (3) created to become like Christ,
- (4) shaped for serving God, and
- (5) made for mission.

This series will both encourage to think about the purpose for which God has created you and challenge you to live it out. We hope you'll enjoy it!

Excelling in the Grace of Giving

Thank you to everyone who supports financially the mission and ministry of our parish! Your generosity is appreciated, and it is especially important during this time of crisis and as we begin to look ahead to what lies beyond 2020. We are working on our Parish Budget for 2021 and as we do this there are four ways you can help us in our financial planning:



- 1) If you currently give through the collection plate either giving cash or using the blue envelopes, this might be the perfect time to join our Planned Giving Scheme and set up a monthly Standing Order (*our bank details are below*).
- 2) If you currently give through the envelope scheme please consider switching your method of giving to a monthly Standing Order (*our bank details are below*). This also has the added benefit of reducing the amount of administration required, including the practicalities of counting the money and taking it to the bank.
- 3) If you currently give through the envelope scheme, instead of setting up a Standing Order you may wish to either: **(a)** make a payment direct to our bank account if you bank online, using the bank details below; or, **(b)** send a cheque made payable to 'St John the Divine, Brooklands' to our treasurer: Mrs Adele Lane, 81 Broad Road. Sale. M33 2EU.
- 4) If you are a tax payer please could you complete a Gift Aid form which allows us to 'top up' your gift by reclaim a further 25% at no cost to you?

Our Bank Details

Bank: NatWest

Sort Code: 01-07-71

Account No: 02596334

Account Name: St John the Divine, Brooklands

Reference: *Please use your full name*

Looking ahead...

Harvest Festival | 4th October @ 9.30am



Our Harvest Festival shall take place on the first Sunday of October, however at this stage we're unsure of the exact format of this service. We'd encourage you to put it in your diary and begin to fill a shoebox with items for our local food bank. We'll confirm details closer to the time

Annual Parochial Church Meeting | Sunday 25th October @ 9.30am



Our Annual Meeting (APCM) will be a great opportunity to hear about what we did in 2019 and the exciting things we have planned going forwards into 2021. It will take place within our Sunday morning worship at 9.30am.

All Souls Service | 1st November @ 9.30am



During our morning service we will provide the opportunity to read out the names of loved ones whom we love but see no longer and to light a candle in their memory. Exact details will be confirmed closer to the time.

Remembrance | 8th November @ 9.30am



We gather to commemorate the lives of those who have died serving in the Armed Forces, and pray for peace. Our Remembrance Sunday service will include Holy Communion and so it will have a different shape to previous years.