

Windsor Church News



Anne Casson
Licensed Lay Minister

Thank you to Anne who reflects on how we can grow in faith

'That was the best thing I ever did' said the seven-year-old king's page after handing the precious gift to the child Jesus, sitting on his mother's lap in a house in Bethlehem.

Where were we? Not in Bethlehem but in the hall of Queen Anne's School just after one of our Open the Book sessions.

But it obviously felt like Bethlehem; it obviously felt very special offering a precious gift to Jesus. That is the gift of

a powerful imagination; of being able to enter into a scene. This young boy had the gift in abundance.

We all have the ability to imagine things, some more easily than others. This happens when we are totally engrossed in a story; when we engage in the story with as many of our senses as we can. What do we see? what do we feel? what do we smell?

Members of our Open the Book team have felt a similar frisson of excitement during the storm on the Sea of Galilee, when the boat is rocking wildly and we're all trying hard to keep it on track. Suddenly Jesus commands the storm to stop. Immediately the sea is calm and we are all safe.

This is a way of prayer encouraged by St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491 - 1556) to the many people in Rome who came for him for spiritual guidance and help in their prayer life. Fortunately for us today, Ignatius wrote down his ideas in

a structured form called 'The Spiritual Exercises'. Just as we need to practise structured physical exercises to improve our physical fitness, so we need to practise praying in a careful way if we want to grow closer to God and to get to know Jesus better.

Thousands of Christians over the centuries have found Ignatius' suggestions of different ways of praying life changing. His Spiritual Exercises even more so. If one is going to sign up to the full Spiritual Exercises, they will take a bit more than thirty days on a full silent retreat, and about a year if one plans to follow them with a spiritual guide in daily life. But Ignatius' suggestions for prayer are available to anyone at any time. Just as simple as in our Open the Book session: If we read a Gospel story about Jesus slowly and carefully and spend some time entering into the story with all our imagination, we can learn a lot about how Jesus is in our lives. If we follow this with talking

February 2024

the online newsletter from
the Church of England in Central Windsor



Ash
Wednesday

14 February

11am

**Holy Communion
(BCP) with ashing**
Holy Trinity Church
Claremont Road
& Trinity Place

7.30pm

**Sung Eucharist
with ashing**
**St Stephen
& St Agnes Church**
Vansittart Road

All welcome

continued on next page

continued from previous page

to Jesus in prayer about our experience, about our life, we are likely to grow deeper in our understanding. This way of prayer is called Imaginative Contemplation. Ignatius has several other suggestions for us to try. Many of them were practised by monks and nuns in the earliest years of Christianity. All of them will deepen our faith and encourage us.



Ignatius of Loyola
from a contemporary painting

Ignatius led a very interesting life: he lived at the same time as our very own Henry VIII. Indeed, he travelled to London at one time and is said to have commented that the English were the most generous people in Europe. He was born to a minor aristocratic family in Loyola, Spain. He travelled widely, as far as the Holy Land and Morocco. He had dedicated friends who became passionate about this way of prayer. They travelled the world to share their love of Jesus, as members of the Society of Jesus that Ignatius founded.

If you would like to know more about Ignatian prayer, feel free to speak to me. There are many books on the subject, helpful courses, and on-line resources from the London Jesuit Centre, where I help. A personal chat is often the most helpful way to find out about something as practical as prayer and there are plenty of people in the parish who can help.

Anne Casson

Friends of Windsor Parish Church

Organ Recital
by John Halsey



2pm - 4pm
Saturday 10 February

Windsor Parish Church
of St John the Baptist
High Street

Everyone welcome

From the Rector

Ash Wednesday 14th February

An alternative way to spend Valentine's Day!

This year Ash Wednesday falls on 14th February, Valentine's Day.

Like Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, Ash Wednesday is a Principal Holy Day which means its place in the church calendar is as important as Christmas Day and Easter Day. Under Church Law, Holy Communion must be celebrated in every parish or benefice and, as such, it is a day when traditionally all Christians are expected to attend church.

Ash Wednesday marks the start of Lent which for centuries has been a time of self-examination, penitence, self-denial and preparation in readiness for the great festival of Easter. The 40 days of Lent reminds us of the 40 days which Jesus spent in the wilderness before he took up his public ministry.

Church services on Ash Wednesday often include the ancient practice of the imposition of ashes. Ash has been a sign of penitence since the Middle Ages when it became customary to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross, signifying Christ's victory over sin and death. The practice of "ashing" has in recent years seen

something of a revival and often attracts the attention of the press who seem to like photographs of Church of England bishops imposing ash on the foreheads of passers-by in shopping centres and at railway stations!

Attending church on Ash Wednesday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect, repent and prepare. We all need time out of our hectic lives to listen to God and to think about the way in which we live personally, in community and globally.

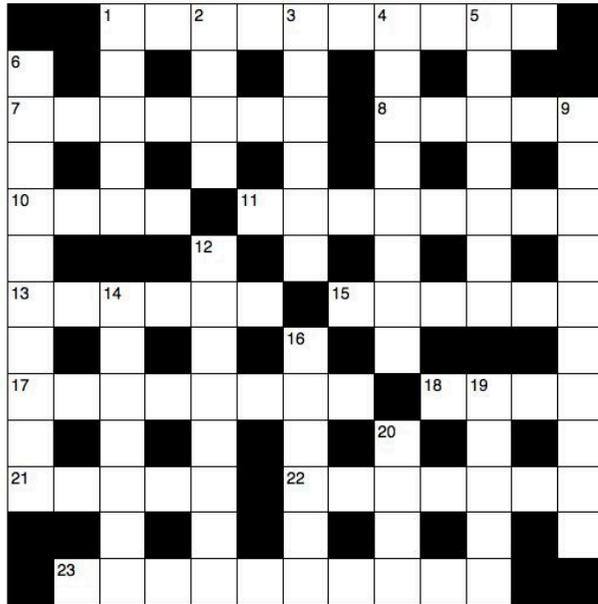
Whether you are an Ash Wednesday regular, whether you have in the past attended on Ash Wednesday but have fallen out of the habit or whether you have never attended an Ash Wednesday service, you are very welcome to come along this year. This Valentine's Day, experience God's love, that great love which passes all understanding. We would love to see you.

Our two Ash Wednesday services are at Holy Trinity Church at 11am and St Stephen & St Agnes' Church at 7.30pm.

The service at 11am will last about 30 minutes and the service at 7.30pm will be about an hour. Both services will include the optional extra of "ashing".

Please do be in touch if you would like any further information.

Puzzle Page



The Bible used is the New International Version.



Down

- 1 Arrogance (Proverbs 8:13) (5)
- 2 Roman poet from first century BC (4)
- 3 So rapt (anag.) (6)
- 4 Declare again (2 Corinthians 2:8) (8)
- 5 Paul's 'fellow worker', to whom he sent two epistles (Romans 16:21) (7)
- 6 God's foreseeing care and protection (Job 10:12) (10)
- 7 Traditional form of Roman Catholic Mass (10)
- 8 'The Lord... has given the — of Israel to David and his descendants for ever' (2 Chronicles 13:5) (8)
- 9 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my —' (Luke 1:46-47) (7)
- 10 The central element in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, identified and interpreted by Daniel (Daniel 2:31) (6)
- 11 'On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of — will not overcome it' (Matthew 16:18) (5)
- 12 City where Paul was under house arrest for two years (Acts 28:16) (4)

Across

- 1 Success or wealth (Deuteronomy 28:11) (10)
- 2 Forbidden fruit for Nazirites (Numbers 6:3) (7)
- 3 Concede (Job 27:5) (5)
- 4 Look at (Psalm 48:13) (4)
- 5 Much in evidence after weddings (8)
- 6 Condense (Job 36:27) (6)
- 7 Breakwater (6)
- 8 Give a tan (anag.) (8)
- 9 More usually now called Pentecost, — Sunday (4)
- 10 After living for 365 years, it was said of him that 'he walked with God' (Genesis 5:23-24) (5)
- 11 Trampled (Judges 9:27) (7)
- 12 For example, Miriam, Deborah (Exodus 15:20; Judges 4:4) (10)



February is the month of romance. Millions of Valentine cards will be sent in the next week or two, as we celebrate our romantic love for that special person in our lives. But there are other kinds of love to celebrate: and on Candlemas we remember Mary and Joseph taking their baby son to the temple to present Him to God. Jesus' whole life was a loving present to us from God. Through His death for us on the cross, and His resurrection, His love can now transform anyone's life. Romances can die, but God's love for us is always there. But it won't do us much good – unless we accept it!

Valentine	Restaurant	boyfriend	baby
Rose	Hearts	fiancé	temple
Romance	Kiss	worship	Mary
Love	hug	repentance	Candlemas
Present	girlfriend	angels	presentation

Puzzle solutions are on page 12



I propose to offer once again a Lent course with the title 'The Letter to the Hebrews; Hebrew quotations and Greek Philosophy'.

We do not know the author, date and destination of this lengthy letter. The writer quotes extensively from the Old Testament scriptures,

and is familiar with the traditions of Jewish worship. But, as we will see, his mind has been influenced by Greek thought, especially by Plato.

Meetings will be held in All Saints vestry from 11.00 till 12.00 on Thursdays beginning February 15th. All are welcome. Bring a Bible and be willing to join in discussion. If you wish to take part please e-mail jeremyrichardhurst@gmail.com and I will send you the programme.

Jeremy Hurst



Candlemas

We celebrate Candlemas (Presentation of Christ in the Temple) at our Sung Eucharist on Sunday 4th February at St Stephen & St Agnes Church. This special service is an opportunity to give thanks for the joy of the Christmas and Epiphany seasons as we prepare ourselves for the forthcoming season of Lent.

Pause for a Poem

When, in December, I heard that poet and writer Benjamin Zephaniah had died, I reached for my copy of "The Nation's Favourite Twentieth Century Poems". The first two poems (on facing pages) are Rudyard Kipling's "If" and Benjamin Zephaniah's "What If". Copyright rules prevent me including "What If", even though the words are freely available on the internet at <https://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/poems/what-if>

In his poem Kipling focuses on the individual's response to triumph and disaster. Zephaniah echoes Kipling's poem, but looks at how the individual exists within a corrupt and threatening society. Zephaniah's 2009 words are as apposite today as they were when they were written. If you can, look for the Zephaniah poem, but now enjoy Rudyard Kipling's "If".

Michael Bailey

If

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling (1865 – 1936)

December 2023 & January 2024

Our Advent Service was full of joy as we prepared to celebrate the birth of Jesus and prepare for His second coming. The candles on the Advent wreath prepared by Katy, were lit and verses said explaining the lightings by Michael, Cathy, Margaret Pettitt, Mike and Don. Prayers were led by Anne C and the carols ably led by Sally M. We sang with gusto! Anne Harding knew all the words and it was a pleasure to hear her enjoying the moment.

A tradition of favourite poem reading is Jill Church and 'Twas the night before Christmas'....she didn't let us down! But Jill never reads the poem, it's all from memory! We all thoroughly enjoyed the poems selected by Caroline Ash, Mike Bailey, Anne Casson, Mary Skelton and a Dylan Thomas short story.

This was followed by a splendid tea of Mince Pies and Stollen cakes. We were so sorry that illness prevented many from joining us on such a happy occasion.

At our January meeting we heard from Mike Bailey about his meeting six days earlier with Katherine Sheil, Professor of English at Minnesota University. She was interested in monuments in Windsor Parish Church and their possible connections with Shakespeare. Mike gave an extremely interesting,

informative, indeed fascinating presentation. But I'm not going to enlarge on it as in next month's Magazine you will be able to read all about Mike's meeting with Professor Shiel.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 8th February 2024 at 3.30 pm at New Windsor Parish Hall at All Saints' Church. Our speaker is our friend, Jeremy Hurst. His chosen subject is the poet, John Donne. You can be assured of an enjoyable interesting afternoon.

**Everyone is welcome.
We look forward to seeing you.**

May you be blessed in 2024
with good health, hope and joy.

Estlyn Davies

2023 Statistics

Every year parishes submit information regarding the number of people on their electoral roll, church attendance, baptisms, weddings and funerals.

This is now paced throughout the year with parishes submitting certain information shortly after it can be gathered, such as the October attendance figures (the month is selected to gather information on average attendance).

The October data has recently been analysed and last month Bishop Steven

(Bishop of Oxford) wrote to the parishes as they brought a little good news, he writes:

I am very happy to report that we have strong evidence now that this recovery continued in 2023. The early analysis of returns from the annual October count demonstrate that attendance recovery from lockdown has continued and by October 2023 was at 84% of the 2019 level, a further increase on the 81% seen in 2022. This recovery from October 22 to October 23 represents an average of an extra three people attending each church each week.

It's been very good to hear also many stories of very large congregations in the Christmas period. In some cases – including our Cathedral – numbers were higher even than 2019 figures.

We also experienced a good attendance in our churches in the Christmas period. They were all joyously busy during Advent, with Advent services in the larger two churches of St John the Baptist and Holy Trinity having a combined attendance of nearly 7,000 people.

There were fifteen funerals in our churches last year. With more choice about how we say goodbye (or not), it was wonderful that our clergy and churches were there to help celebrate the lives of the departed, commend their souls to God and support their families. In addition our clergy also conducted funerals at crematoriums and gravesides.

There were seven weddings in our churches during 2023 (two more than in 2022) and one Renewal of Vows. There were also thirty-four baptisms last year!

Messy Church continues to be popular with families, as does our Sunday Club (during most of our 10am Sunday services). Bishop Steven writes:

Our ministry to children and young people is taking much longer to recover from the pandemic across all sizes and traditions of churches. This will need to be a major priority in every parish, benefice and deanery in the coming years. We follow a saviour who places the highest priority on children.

Parish Share is the money that each parish in the Church of England gives to their diocese for the provision of clergy and for the running of central services.

This sense of recovery is underscored by our Parish Share returns in 2023, with 94.5% of share collected. Thanks be to God for the generosity of God's people and the work of many parish and deanery treasurers.

Finally Bishop Steven writes

But for now we give thanks for the prayers and ministry of so many dedicated clergy, lay ministers and officers and volunteers in this steady work of rebuilding. We give thanks to God who gives the growth.



Paws for Thought



Dear Friends,

I was very pleased with one of the presents which The Boss found in her Christmas stocking on Christmas Day. It was a coaster for her coffee mug with a picture of a happy dog and the words "Start each day with a wagging tail".

Starting each day with a wagging tail has been my aim ever since I took on this role of caring for The Boss so I was delighted that my efforts have been recognised. When The Boss comes downstairs in the morning, the first thing I do is wag my tail. Sometimes I'm still feeling very sleepy but I always make an effort. I do this because I know The Boss loves it and it makes her laugh and feel happy. It also makes me feel happy so I suppose it's a win/win

situation. We both start the day happy even if it's a dark and cold February day.

I often wag my tail during the day too, especially when someone comes to visit. I know they notice because they usually comment to The Boss and it makes them laugh, which is always a good start I think. If humans laughed more, the world would be a happier place. I mentioned this once to The Boss. She agreed with me and told me that she loved the bit in the bible when Abraham and Sarah have a baby and Sarah is so happy to have given birth to an unexpected child that they call their son Issac which means "one who laughs". She says, 'God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.'¹

There's probably still time to make a New Year's resolution and I think starting each day with a wagging tail is a jolly good one. It's easy to do once you try and those who lack tails can always use their imagination!

Happy wagging!

*Barnabas
The Vicarage Dog*

¹Genesis 21.6

Windsor Parish Church of St John the Baptist

Palm Sunday 24th March 2024

6.30pm



Windsor Parish Church and Thames Valley Church Music invite you to come and take part in a devotional performance of

Come and Sing Stainer's Crucifixion

- 2.15pm Registration and welcome
- 2.30pm Choir Practice in Parish Church
- 4.15pm Tea (congregation welcome)
- 5.15pm Opportunity to join the congregation for Evensong in St George's Chapel
- 6.30pm Stainer's Crucifixion in Windsor Parish Church**

£7 for singers

Free with retiring collection for congregation

For more information or to book your place in the choir please click or see windsorchurches.org.uk

No booking necessary for the congregation



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This month it was...

150 years ago, on 15th Feb 1874 that Sir Ernest Shackleton was born. This Irish-born British polar explorer was one of the leading explorers during the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. He led three British expeditions to the Antarctic.

100 years ago, on 5th Feb 1924 that BBC Radio broadcast the 'six-pips' Greenwich Time Signal for the first time.

Also 100 years ago, on 12th Feb 1924 that George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* was performed for the first time, in New York.

90 years ago, on 23rd Feb 1934 that Edward Elgar, the British composer, died.

75 years ago, on 22nd Feb 1949 that Niki Lauda, Austrian racing driver was born. He was Formula One World Champion in 1975, 1977 and 1984. He was severely injured and burnt in a crash at the 1976 German Grand Prix. He died in 2019.

70 years ago, on 23rd Feb 1954 that the first field test of the polio vaccine began in Pittsburgh. It grew into a year-long national trial involving 1.8 million children.

65 years ago, 3rd Feb 1959, became 'the day the music died', when American rock-and-roll performers Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper were killed in a plane crash in Iowa.

60 years ago, on 7th Feb 1964 that the Beatles arrived in New York for their first US tour. They were met by thousands of screaming fans.

50 years ago, on 7th Feb 1974 that Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath called a snap general election following the miners' strike and three-day week. It resulted in a hung parliament, and the Labour leader, Harold Wilson, became Prime Minister.

40 years ago, on 14th Feb 1984 that figure skaters Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean won the gold medal in ice-skating at the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo. They scored the first perfect 6.0 in Olympic history.

25 years ago, on 1st Feb 1999 that the International Maritime Organisation stopped using the Morse code 'SOS' distress call. All sea-going vessels were required to have a Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) fitted by this date.

20 years ago, on 4th Feb 2004 that Facebook, the social media networking platform, was launched.

15 years ago, on 7th Feb 2009 that the Black Saturday bushfires took place in Australia. The worst in Australia's history, they destroyed 1.1 million acres of land, killed 173 people, injured 414, and burned down more than 3,500 buildings, including 2,000 houses.

Bells of Windsor Parish Church of St John the Baptist

How do you follow a legend? Well, that's a tricky question. Frank Blagrove was a legend. His ringing abilities were renowned. The more you look into his achievements the more you appreciate his contributions. However, much has already been said since his death and now I'd like to focus on his bells. And they were Frank's bells. No one went into the tower at St John the Baptist unless invited by Frank. That included the church, other ringers and bell maintenance experts. Frank looked after the bells, clock and flag. And he did it with no fuss, stress or self-promotion for many, many decades. However, people and bells become tired and worn and aged. So the last few years of Frank's time at Windsor the bells were rung less and maintained less and their glory became former glory. Then came Covid. As we know, everything stopped. Frank decided that enough was enough and handed the keys to me. A little bit of a challenge and a huge responsibility. But also time to reflect and plan.

The idea was to find out what was what and then see what could be done. Frank was very much of the 'keep it in house' if at all possible persuasion so that is what we decided to do. (We being Lesley Cross from Clewer and myself, and Rob Taylor-Ailes, also from Clewer, has taken on the flag and clock duties. Although really we're all Windsor ringers too now.) Whites, very kindly carried out an inspection which gave us a lot to ponder but we decided that

now was not the time for a massive project and fund raising campaign as St John's was part way through a 3 year £300k organ renovation project. One has to be realistic and timing is everything - as all bell ringers know!

So we chipped away at the bells. Greasing, tightening, straightening, securing, replacing. Time and time again. Even during the heat of 2022 summer where the temperatures reached 45C amongst the bells. Slowly the bells improved. New ropes were added just in time for Frank's funeral in November 2022 and a quarter peal was rung on all eight of the bells for the first time in years. A fitting remembrance.

We continued with fine tuning how the bells handled, until in early 2023 we came to a bit of a dead end. We needed more help, suggestions and hands on experience. So I contacted Tony Crabtree of the ODG Towers and Belfries committee and in the time honoured way said 'help'. He, and the committee were great. They organised a training/inspection/maintenance day at Windsor in September 2023. They arrived with tools, experience and ability and worked with us all day to improve our cranky bells. Sorry, Frank, they're ours now. Thank you to all the team. And, my, did that do the trick! Don't get me wrong, there is still a list a mile long of things that need doing and we were up there the next weekend doing quite a few of them but they are much improved.

In fact they were so improved that we thought it was time to ring a Peal and this fulfilled our hope of commemorating the first anniversary of Frank's death in October. Now Frank, amongst all his other ringing achievements (did you know that he used to ring quarter peals on two bells at the same time? And that on the 7th and 8th at Windsor. Not light bells. To Major. And conduct them too?) was a very firm believer in championing first time peal ringers. His 1744 peals included 97 first time peal ringers. It was, therefore, the logical time to give Rob his first chance at ringing a peal. The band came together on the afternoon of 11 October and we very successfully rang a peal of Grandsire Triples in 3 hours exactly (see below). Rob rang really well. And Lesley rang her first peal on eight bells. A grand achievement by all concerned. Thank you to all the band.

So, St John the Baptist Church is back on the map. We continue to work on the bells regularly so hope they will stay viable for a good few years yet. We would appreciate assistance at our irregular Friday evening practices which will be advertised during the week before each instance by Rob. And if anyone would like to book a ringing event at Windsor then please do feel free to contact me.

Vikki Bulbeck, Tower Captain

Middlesex County Association & London Diocesan Guild

Windsor, Berkshire St John the Baptist

Tenor: 17-2-11 in Eb

On Wednesday, 11 October 2023 in 3h

5040 Grandsire Triples

Composed by J. J. Parker

1 Rob Taylor-Ailes

2 Mary E Gow

3 Edward C Westlake

4 Vikki E M Bulbeck

5 Stephen R Smith II

6 Stephen J F Mitchell

7 James White (C)

8 Lesley S Cross

Remembering Frank T. Blagrove, former tower captain at this church, on the first anniversary of his death. First peal: 1. First on eight: 8

Church Opening Times

**Windsor Parish Church
of St John the Baptist,**
High Street - daily, all day

~

St Stephen & St Agnes Church,
Vansittart Road - daily, all day

~

All Saints' Church, Frances Road
Mon-Wed & Sat, all day

~

Holy Trinity Church, Claremont Road
Wed, Thu & Fri, 9:30-11:30am

Watch and Pray Lent Course from the Church of England

If you are unable to make Jeremy Hurst's course at All Saints' Church on Thursday mornings, this might be of interest especially as there are a number of ways to access it.

"Watch and Pray challenges us to seek God in both familiar and unfamiliar places: in darkness and in quiet; in movement and migration; in the healing and transforming work of the Spirit; in the weeping of Holy Week and in the joy of Easter morning."

Archbishops Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell

This Lent we are encouraged to wait expectantly for God to meet us and sustain us through the storms and trials we all face.

The Church of England's Lent theme for 2024 is Watch and Pray: Wisdom and hope for Lent and life.

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus kneels in darkness in the Garden of Gethsemane. Though he pleads with his disciples, "Stay here with me ... Watch and pray," they all fall asleep, leaving him alone in his hour of deepest suffering.

This Lent all of us are encouraged to draw on the wisdom of Black Spirituality, particularly the practice of "tarrying" (waiting) as a community to draw closer to Jesus and to each other. Combining exuberant singing, fervent

prayer and quiet lament, such services typically take place at night and last somewhat longer than the "one hour" Jesus asked of those first followers.

This year's resources have been inspired and informed by the 2024 Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book, [Tarry Awhile: Wisdom from Black Spirituality for people of faith by Selina Stone \(SPCK\)](#). The [daily reflections booklet for adults \(CHP\)](#) exploring the same themes has been written by Carlton Turner, and there is also a [daily challenge booklet for children and families \(CHP\)](#).

Watch and Pray invites us to seek God in both familiar and unfamiliar places this Lent: in darkness and in quiet; in movement and migration; in the healing and transforming work of the Spirit; in the weeping of Holy Week and in the joy of Easter morning.

To take part you can:

- [Sign up](#) and get free daily Lent reflection emails (except Sundays) delivered straight to your inbox from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day. Our daily emails will offer Bible readings, short reflections and a practical challenge, as well as prayers linked to weekly themes.
- Daily reflections will also be available as booklets for both adults and children and are available to [\(pre-\)order from Church House Publishing](#).
- The free Watch and Pray app for both iOS and Android will be released in early February. [Sign up](#) to make sure you get an email as soon as it becomes available.
- Audio versions of the Lent reflections will also be available for free on Alexa-enabled smart devices from Ash Wednesday (14 February).



The Nunc Dimittis

St Luke tells us in his Gospel that the angels sang praises to God at the birth of Jesus, and he has given us three poems that have become part of Christian song: the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and the *Nunc Dimittis*.

The first two are full of praise and rejoicing. The last comes as Mary and Joseph fulfil the Law of Moses and bring the child Jesus to Jerusalem. In the temple they meet Simeon and Anna. Simeon represents each of us who can look back over life with gratitude in the face of death as he says, 'Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace.' It is a story that has inspired preachers and artists, and also composers.

In the Christian Church these words of the *Nunc Dimittis* have become part of worship at the end of each day, not just the end of life. Cathedral and parish church choirs have sung settings of these words in that great tradition of Anglican choral music at Evensong – settings that have captured the sense of quiet resignation, but also conveyed the glory of the light that is Jesus shining for all people. Rachmaninov's setting is part of his Vespers, the night-long vigil sung in the Russian Orthodox Church on the eve of great feasts.

Rachmaninov composed the work (and it comprises 15 pieces) at great speed, but even so, the Vespers are now seen as one of the great masterpieces of religious music.

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This was no more so than in his beautiful setting of the 5th canticle, the *Nunc Dimittis*. Just 36 bars long, it begins with a rocking, undulating figure in the upper voices. A solo tenor enters as the voice of Simeon, and it ends with the basses moving down to a low B flat: 'a sigh of wonder and resignation on the threshold of eternal rest and peace,' one critic has called it.

Rachmaninov later recalled, "After I played the passage at the end of the 5th canticle where the basses slowly descend to that low note, the conductor shook his head, saying, 'Now where on earth will we find such basses? They are as rare as asparagus at Christmas!' Nevertheless, he did find them." It was one of the composer's favourite pieces, and he asked for it to be sung at his funeral in the hope that it

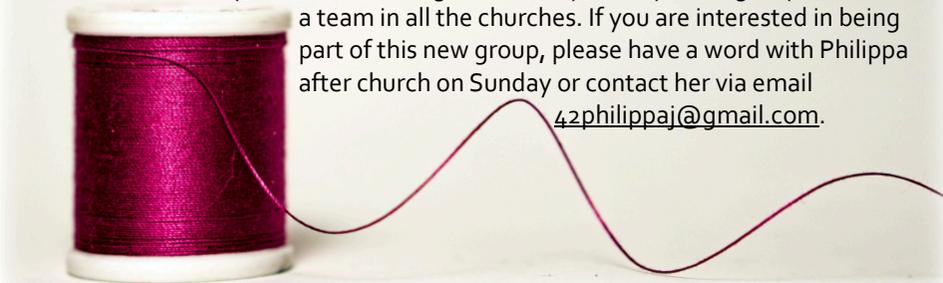
would send his 'ship of death gently towards the unknown region.'"

On 2nd February we shall hear these words as part of the Gospel on the feast of Candlemas. Simeon prays them because his cup is now overflowing. He has looked on the salvation of God. Music allows us to look on that glory and salvation also, and Rachmaninov, in his moving setting, has captured the calm trust of that moment, which shines out like the brightness of the light of Jesus.

*The Revd Michael Burgess
Parish Pump*

Church Textiles Group

We are hoping to start a sewing group to work on repairs to the textiles (eg altar frontals, kneelers and vestments) across our four churches, carried out under the supervision of Philippa Johnson. Philippa has 40yrs experience of this kind of work in Canterbury & Bristol Cathedrals as well as St George's Chapel so, in her own words, knows what not to do! The work will mean regular inspections of the textiles, working on them as necessary, as well as looking at how they are kept. The group will work as a team in all the churches. If you are interested in being part of this new group, please have a word with Philippa after church on Sunday or contact her via email 42philippaj@gmail.com.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2024
FRIDAY 1 MARCH
A SERVICE FOR EVERYONE!
I beg you, bear with one another in love

All are welcome at **St Mark's Church**, Dedworth Road, Windsor, SL4 4JS at **7pm on Friday 1 March** for this year's World Day of Prayer service, followed by refreshments.

World Day of Prayer is an international, inter-church organisation led by women which enables us to hear the thoughts of those women from all parts of the world: their hopes, concerns, and prayers.

This year's service has been prepared by the Christian women of Palestine, who are calling us to connect with the land where Jesus was born, ministered, and died. The theme of the service 'bear with one another in love' seems very appropriate for these women who will not give up witnessing the love of Jesus Christ.

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G&S Services

All aspects of garden and property maintenance including

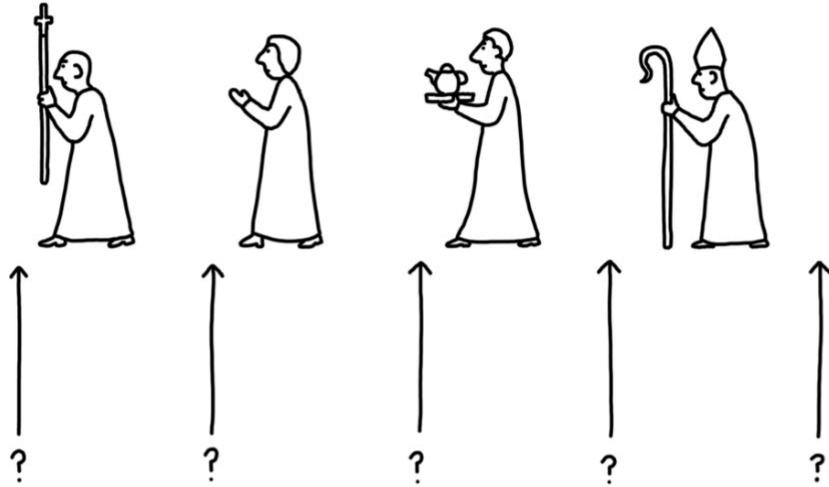
- Painting and decorating (internal & external)
- Plastering, kitchen and bathroom refurbishment
- Patios and decking
- Garden maintenance (regular or 1 off clearance)

☎ 01753 859691 or 07795 417717

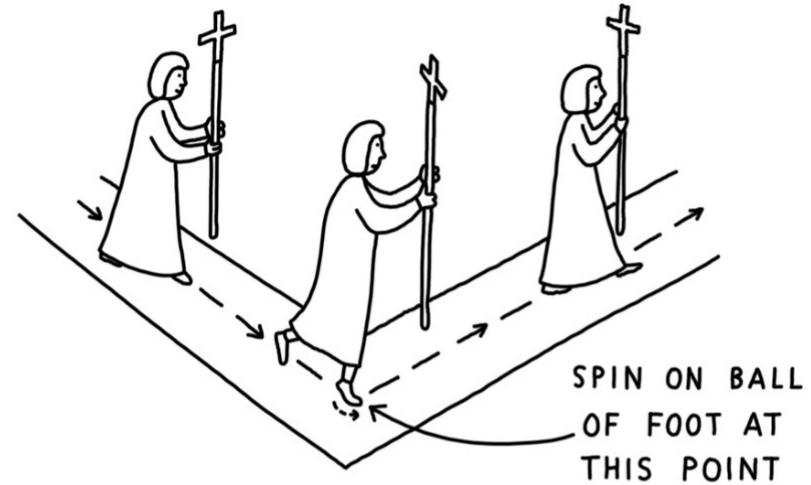
✉ sean@gands-services.co.uk

PROCESSION SCHOOL

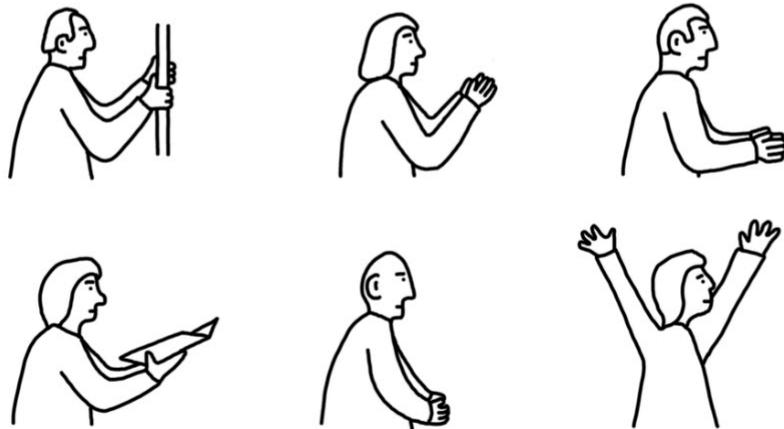
THE THINGS YOU WILL LEARN



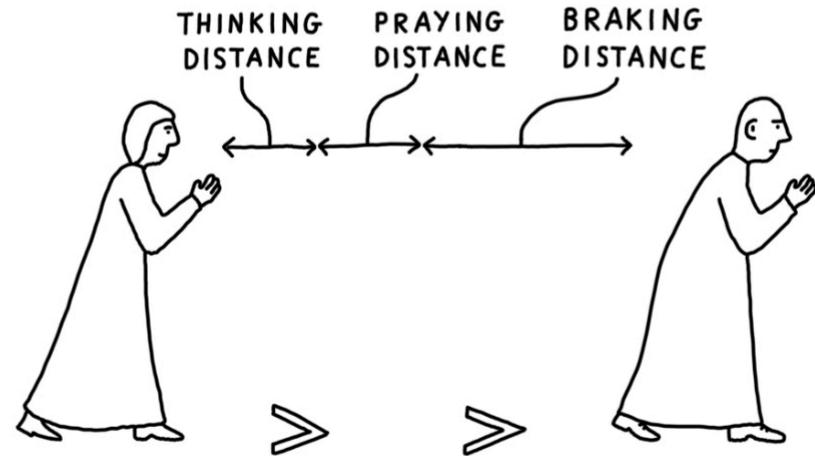
KNOWING YOUR PLACE



HOW TO TURN A CORNER



WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR HANDS



SAFE STOPPING DISTANCES

From the December & January registers...



Funerals

Christine Jacobsen (Holy Trinity Church)
 David Dixon (Holy Trinity Church)
 Rita Peel (Windsor Parish Church)
 Jill Dawson (St Stephen & St Agnes Church)
 Barbara Bridges (St Stephen & St Agnes Church)
 Leon Samuel (St Stephen & St Agnes Church)
 Ann Cinch
 baby Hope
 June Williamson
 baby Chester

Regular midweek services

Mondays

9am Morning Prayer - All Saints' Church

Wednesdays

9am Morning Prayer - St Stephen & St Agnes Church
 11am Holy Communion (BCP) - Holy Trinity Church

Fridays

9am Morning Prayer - Holy Trinity Church

Morning Prayer

A small group of us meet to say Morning Prayer at 9am on weekdays on Zoom and some days also in a church. Please contact [Revd Sally](#) if you'd like a Zoom invitation. You can download the Daily Prayer app with the order of service [here](#) (there are also books available in churches).



Evening Prayer on Sundays



During Lent, there will be a short service of Evening Prayer held in All Saints' Church on Sundays at 5pm. All are welcome.

The service will also be accessible via zoom. Please contact Steve Smith if you would like the link. windsor.churchoffice@gmail.com

New Pathways



An informal bereavement group for anyone who has lost a loved one

We meet for tea, cake and conversation on the last Thursday of each month 2.30pm—3.30pm in the Mountbatten Room at Holy Trinity Church Claremont Road, Windsor Everyone welcome

Puzzle Solutions



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February

Alma Beacon Warm Hub

Tuesdays, Thursdays & Sundays

7-9pm

From 7th January 2024

Alma Beacon
73a Alma Road
Windsor
SL43HD

All welcome

Warm food, Tea/Coffee
Warm comfortable surroundings
Friendly atmosphere



- 1 *Brigid, Abbess of Kildare, c.525*
- 2 **The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)**
- 3 Anskar, Archbishop of Hamburg, Missionary in Denmark and Sweden, 865
- 4 **Candlemas** transferred from 2 February
10am Sung Eucharist – St Stephen & Agnes Church
- 6 *The Martyrs of Japan, 1597*
- 8 3.30pm Mothers' Union Meeting - All Saints' Church
- 10 *Scholastica, sister of Benedict, Abbess of Plombariola, c.543*
2-4pm Friends of WPC Organ Recital – Windsor Parish Church
- 11 The Sunday next before Lent
10am Sung Eucharist – Holy Trinity Church
- 14 **Ash Wednesday (Principal Holy Day)**
11am Said Communion (BCP) – Holy Trinity Church
7.30pm Sung Eucharist – St Stephen & Agnes Church
- 15 *Sigfrid, Bishop, Apostle of Sweden, 1045*
Thomas Bray, Priest, Founder of the SPCK and the SPG, 1730
- 17 Janani Luwum, Archbishop of Uganda, Martyr, 1977
- 18 The First Sunday of Lent
10am Sung Eucharist – All Saints' Church
- 19 7pm Stations of the Cross – St Stephen & St Agnes Church
- 21 Ember Day
- 23 Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, Martyr, c.155
Ember Day
- 24 Ember Day
- 25 The Second Sunday of Lent
10am Sung Eucharist – Windsor Parish Church
- 26 7pm Stations of the Cross – St Stephen & St Agnes Church
- 27 George Herbert, Priest, Poet, 1633