

Thursday Lunchtime Music
at St John's
welcomes on

9th May: Philip Dyson (piano)
23rd May: Dominika Rosiek
(violin) and Miho Sanou (piano)
6th June: Quoc Nguyen (piano)
20th June: Nigel Blomiley
(cello) & Richard Shaw (piano)

All are welcome and our
concerts begin at **12:30pm**,
with tea/coffee and
sandwiches available from
11:45am.
Admittance is free, although
there is a retiring collection
at the end.

www.stjohnsharrow.org

Open Church

A group of volunteers opens
St John's every
Friday 12pm-2pm for the
local community. If you are
passing, please pop in for
quiet reflection and prayer



**Christ give you grace to grow
in holiness, to deny
yourselves, take up your
cross, and follow him;
and the blessing of God
almighty, the Father, the
Son, and the Holy Spirit, be
among you, and remain with
you always.**



Our next Messy Church sessions takes
place on

Sunday 26th May
Sunday 30th June
3:30pm-5pm

Join us for fun activities, worship and
food for all ages but in particular for
children and parents. Messy Church is a
monthly group and is a free event;
donations are welcome.

SUNDAYS AT ST JOHN'S



10am Sung Eucharist with

Young Learners activities

Live streaming service
(see news sheet for Zoom Code)

Gospel Choir lead our worship on
the first Sunday of the month

Refreshments and fellowship after
each service

6pm Evensong

A reflective evening service
following the Book of Common
Prayer

WEEKDAY SERVICE

Wednesdays 10:30am
On-line Holy Communion

The Messenger

Bi-Monthly Newsletter of St John the Baptist Church, Harrow
MAY/JUNE 2024



**Our purpose is to worship God and grow disciples of Jesus
who share God's love in the world.**

Welcome to the May edition of the
Messenger! Now that Barry has left,
there will be a series of "guest
editors" for our newsletter, and it
seems appropriate to begin with the
churchwardens.

"To everything there is a season - a
time to be born and a time to die, a
time to plant and a time to uproot
... a time to tear down and a time to
build..."

As a church we are celebrating the
season of Eastertide and, at the time
of writing, we are looking forward to
Ascension Day and Pentecost, the
promise and arrival of the Holy Spirit.
This year at St John's, we have also
entered another new season - that of
interregnum or vacancy, as Barry
moves on and we look ahead to what
God is going to do next in our church.

Interregnum does not mean standing
still; the vicarage may be vacant but
the church is not! St John's is still at
work, and so is God. Sunday and
weekday services will continue as
before; we are so grateful that God
has given us Ajay to provide continuity,
and we ask you to support him in
your prayers as he takes on an in-
creased preaching load. Over the
coming months, we will also have
visiting preachers and celebrants, as

well as lay preachers from within our
own church family.

The weekly life of the church -
concerts, visiting groups, events for St
Jerome's school etc - will also contin-
ue, and we are very grateful to those
church members who have volun-
teered to make sure the church is
accessible and/or secure so that these
important activities can go ahead.

So what will be different about being in
interregnum? The visible difference is
that there is more to do to keep things
going!

Ajay, the churchwardens, Simon and
Tina in particular are going to be very
busy (see next paragraph to find out
more) and we will need your prayers
and your practical help too. This is a
fantastic time to offer to join the coffee
rota, to learn how to help with the AV
or to help out with the children's work,
and to join in with many other tasks
(opportunities!) which will spread the
load a bit.

What about what you don't see? What
will be happening behind the scenes?
Well, the process for finding a new
Vicar has already begun! We (Peter
and Cath) have already met with
Bishop Lusa, who is very enthusiastic
about helping us find the right person
for the next chapter in the story of St
John's.

On May 9th the whole PCC will meet with Catherine Pickford, the Archdeacon, to discuss where we are as a church, where we want to be, and who we need to help us make that journey. We are preparing a parish profile (a bit like an ecclesiastical dating agency!) which, when completed, will be published and circulated to prospective candidates. From this the selection process begins; interested clergy will be invited to visit; there will be interviews and a lot of prayer, and with God's guidance and blessing we will find our new vicar, and they will find us. This is not a speedy process; the Bishop thinks we should expect at least a year of interregnum. But that is a good thing! It gives us time and space to think and pray about our church family life, so that our new Vicar joins a church that is already on the move.

God makes this promise in the book of Joel: *"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions."* That's us; we are God's sons and daughters in this place (we don't need to be too picky about who is young or old, and "men" is non-gender-specific here!) As a church we need to bring our dreams and visions to this time of interregnum. Dreams are the memories of God's goodness to us here in the past – not that we hanker for the good old days, or to return to how things were back in the day, but that we are confident that God has always had us in his hand and that he has done amazing things here. Visions are the hopes and ideas for what could be – what God wants to do in us and through us. These are things that have never been, but that does not mean that they can't happen.

One very practical and visible opportunity is the building work, which is beginning as we write. Soon we will have a dedicated café, meeting space and accessible toilets - yes, more than one! The possibilities that the annexe offers are enormous, not just for us as a worshipping community but for others coming into the building to use our spaces and our facilities. We are surrounded by new buildings and new families, and we have the real opportunity to become a hub for them and a place where community can happen. Once this building work has progressed to a certain point, we will be able to return to developing our existing kitchen space with improved catering facilities and all the potential that this will bring.

We ask for your prayers that the work will go smoothly, and also for your patience with any changes to the usual routines or arrangements of the church during the building work; we do not anticipate major or extended disruption to Sunday services, but we may all need to be a bit flexible at times.

St Jerome's sits squarely in our parish and we have a good relationship with them; the school is now "all grown up" with pupils from Reception to Year 6, and they are already making good use of our church for school events and special services. Many of our Messy Church families discovered us through St Jerome's, and it is exciting to think about ways to develop the relationship between the church and the school.

Bishop Lusa has asked us to think about where we want to be as a church in 10 years' time, and for those dreams/visions to shape our search for the person to help us make that journey.

We would love to know your dreams and visions for St John's; they could be small scale or huge, instant or long term, small steps or giant leaps, subtle or radical or downright revolutionary! Please write down or tell us your thoughts so that we can bring them prayerfully to the process of finding our new Vicar and also to the process of allowing God to reshape St John's as he sees fit. *"To everything there is a season - a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot ... a time to tear down and a time to build..."*

This is the place where we invite people to meet Jesus – the man who healed and who taught, the man who drew children to him and who tipped over tables, the man who welcomed the unwelcome and introduced them to their Father in Heaven. We have to invite him to do those things here, with us and through us.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)

Amen! **Cath and Peter**

Prayers for May and June

Pray against unforgiveness, that it might not be used against you in your Christian walk.

"Now I also forgive whomever you forgive anything. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes." 2 Corinthians 2:10-11

Pray that the people of Harrow and the UK will be heavenly-minded.

"Let your Kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10

Ask God to keep you faithful in prayer for our leaders.

"I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and givings of thanks be made for all men: for kings and all who are in high places, that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and reverence." 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Pray for a love for God's Word, to help you grow in your Christian walk.

"Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that each person who belongs to God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Ask God to strengthen young people to live godly lives.

"Let no man despise your youth; but be an example to those who believe, in word, in your way of life, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

Also pray for:

People new to Greenhill; that they may find friendship.

Support for people who are experiencing trials in their life.

Compassion for those with mental health issues.

Father's Day: 16th June -

Thankfulness for all dads and father-type figures in your life.

Those who do not have family support, that God would raise up people who fill the void in their lives.