

GRAPEVINE

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Thank you

¹²Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For we were all baptised by one Spirit so as to form one body.' (1 Corinthians 12:12-13)

Dear Friends,
When the family and I arrived at St John's three years ago we were greeted with love and affection. What struck us the most is that arriving felt like coming home, we were welcomed as family. Family brings comfort and love, it is a place to be yourself and know that you are loved and cherished.

What is so amazing about family is that each member has their own role to play to continue growing and thriving. In our house, we all have our own jobs to perform, some larger than others, but each evening, someone will cook the dinner, another will lay the table, and yet another will clear away. It could be suggested that the cook is the most important role but in fact if the table had

not been laid where would we eat and if it had not been cleared and washed afterwards there would be no clean plates, pots and pans to cook and eat from. As a Church we are family, each of us with our own role to play, it is not just



about leading and preaching from the front. As a person enters the church building they need to feel welcome, the church needs to be clean with flowers arranged. Music, reading scripture and leading prayers, are a huge part of worship and there are many more roles- too many to list! Our children and young

people being led and supported, fellowship over tea and coffee after the service are also other huge parts of being Church. Each role is equal in the eyes of God and is vital for the continuation of building Christ's Kingdom here in Welling. If you come to St John's regularly but do not feel you have a role within the church family, then why not consider one of those listed above and have a chat to Adam, or one of the Church Wardens. I have had an amazing time serving you in the role that I have played within the Church family. I have been able to walk alongside so many of you, in the good times we have celebrated and in the harder times you have allowed me to hold your hand. It has been a great privilege to baptise and reaffirm a few of you and as a family we have had great conversations, fun and adventures with everyone. Thank you St John's for welcoming and serving us in the amazing way that you do. As we leave Welling we go as extended family taking a little bit of you with us in our thoughts and prayers. Love and blessings Danielle xx

Danielle Pearson-Smith

St John's News

What a difference a month, let alone two can bring into our lives! Little did we think that early June would see Danielle and family settling into a new life and ministry in Snodland leaving us with many happy memories of their time with which they blessed us so very much.

As ever St John's life has been very full. On the 1st Saturday of April the Singing group once again took part in the choirs competition, which this year we hosted. Having won the cup for our class two years running, we graciously allowed another choir to win this year!

At the April Evening Transform service Laura Gibbs and Jim Golding were Baptised and Tamsin Nother reaffirmed her Baptism promises, a very special evening.

Early April saw over twenty of us down at Spring Harvest in Minehead where the theme was Unlimited Prayer. We all appreciated Pete Greig's daily Bible Readings based on the Lord's Prayer but there was much more to learn, celebrate and enjoy. Do question anyone who went, and consider joining next year's Group. I'm sure there will be one!

We got back from Spring Harvest just in time for Children's Holiday Club, "The greatest Showman". Around thirty children attended regularly and it was so good to grow friendships started in other arenas, including our weekly visitors Assemblies to Danson and Fosters Primary schools. Holy week and Easter enabled us to focus once again on the key facts of our Faith as we remembered the last week of Jesus' earthly life from Palm Sunday through to the glorious celebration on Easter Day. If you were there you will have your own high

light. Mine was Sarah Coates' lovely testimony at the Sunrise service where she shared how Jesus not only saved her when she became a Christian, but keeps on saving her in different situations. In preparation for our two Summer Alpha courses, most Sundays in April different people shared how they had come to Faith in Jesus when they had set aside the time to attend an Alpha Course. The summer courses are now well under way. Please pray that every guest attending will have a personal, life changing encounter with Jesus. It's the most important thing that can ever happen to any of us (and no, it doesn't have to be whilst on the Alpha course, but so often is!) On the early May Bank Holiday Doug Snow and Kate Foot treated us to a lovely concert of musical favourites, on organ and piano.

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Good Friday Walk of Witness

19th April 2019

To God be the glory for this year's Good Friday Walk of Witness on 19th March 2019.

Compared to last year being wet and windy this year was blessed in warmth and sunshine.

Over the years, our faith has been demonstrated by the Walk of Witness, setting out from the 18 Churches Together starting points, across the borough. The walk finished this year at St John's, Danson Lane.

Nearly 200 people took part, setting out from St. Mary's, Shoulder of Mutton Green, and our thanks go to their church family for providing the hunger lunch after the walk which raised money for

Christian Aid! Thanks to all involved in the organisation of this journey, ministers, musicians and marshals and of course you the walkers.

How marvellous to know and to experience this blessing of unity as church family on this day. It is not just to socialise but to be

and show the body of Christ in action. We were all working together, sharing the Love of Christ, sharing our God moments on this journey. We act as witnesses for the Gospel by reaching out to all around us, delivering the message of Hope into the shops, cafes and to passers by.

As the body of Christ and in the power of his Holy Spirit we trust that our Lord will

celebrate for those who by the Holy spirit meet with Jesus.

For many this is a time of remembrance, of Jesus Christ's ultimate sacrifice, a moment to reflect, pray, worship and praise in recognising his promise of unconditional love and eternal life. John 3:16.

This time brings together family and friends to celebrate our relationship with Jesus. A time where we, as one body, stand and walk in faith for all to see.

Let us continue to reach out in our community, work places, wherever we may be and share the Gospel as this is our great proclamation.

Loretta Gill



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St John's News

Despite a low attendance the Annual Church meeting was very positive with no significant changes. Val Gompers and Billy Jo O'Leary are back on the PCC.

Church family wise we have been saddened to lose Edd Upson and most recently Norma Penny. Continuing love and prayers go to Twink and family and Julia Stevens and family, as they have to adjust to a new normal, never easy.

So Summer is just beginning with many opportunities to worship, serve, share our hospitality (Open House Group BBQs maybe?) including Spark in the Park!! Till August.

Estelle Woodcock

School of Theology – 'SOT'

I am not new to Christianity and the teachings of the Bible, particularly the New Testament, having been brought up a Catholic. However, my knowledge is very disjointed as over the years I have been introduced to different parts of it at different times. Therefore I didn't have a great understanding of how all the books fitted together and a good enough overall view of it. So I was very pleased to have been given the opportunity to attend the Theology course at St John's. It was the first time as an adult I've been able to listen to lectures from academics who have obviously studied the Bible in great depth. I found it to be both challenging and rewarding as I grappled with issues and tried to understand what I was being taught. Happily for me, as I really enjoyed the course, my learning is not over as I want to read all the books in the Bible that were referred to on the course to help me have a greater understanding of God and give me more confidence to be able to talk to other people about my faith.

Wendy Perfect



When I heard that St. John's would be running School of Theology courses, I was immediately interested. I signed up for Friday morning sessions and attended with around 20 people, from St. John's and other Welling churches, meeting in the Prayer Room. My hope was that I would gain a deeper understanding of the theology, context and history of the Bible. The sessions not only fully delivered on all these expectations but surpassed them. The School of Theology is delivered by Holy Trinity Brompton, through whom a number of 8 week courses are available to be streamed in the areas of FaithTrack, BibleTrack and LifeTrack. It is not

necessary to be a theologian or an academic. The course is very accessible and would be of value to someone starting out on their faith journey or to a more mature Christian.

Sessions started with a social time with drinks and cakes and then moved on to a few worship songs and prayer before streaming the talk. The typical format would be a talk of roughly an hour with short breaks for consideration of questions posed by the speaker. This was informal, fun and extremely interesting.

At the end of 8 sessions, starting with an overview of the Bible and moving from Genesis to Revelation, I felt informed, enriched and inspired. Each participant received audio versions of the talk, complete with the question and answer sessions that followed the original delivery of the talk at Holy Trinity Brompton.

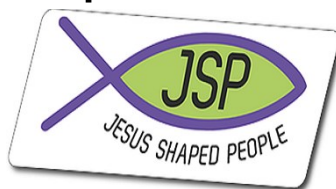
I shall certainly be signing up for further courses and I would recommend it to everyone.

Many thanks are due to Sarah Coates for organising this for us. When can we start the next one?!

Liz Harris

Jesus Shaped People

* It was felt that the child adult link at the end of our services should continue.
* The parish breakfasts were a hit and we plan to continue



friends- it was a wonderful evening with many people attending.
* JSP encouraged many of us to step out of our comfort zones
-some within our congregation joined the night shelter team
-I know of others who gave duvets to the homeless
-Others have joined in and been part of other areas of church, which they have not been involved with before.

On the first week of JSP we were encouraged to ask others about God, the Church and Jesus. Some of us found this a real challenge, but we persevered. It was wonderful and very encouraging to see and hear stories of who people had spoken to and the answers they had received.

JSP has had a really positive impact on St John's and the evidence of this will continue to reveal itself in the weeks and months to come. It is really important that as a church we continue to strive towards becoming more Jesus Shaped, building on what we already knew, what we gained through the JSP adventure and all we will discover in the future. I believe that JSP is slowing becoming part of the St John's DNA and as we continue to grow together as Church family in the community of Welling we will continue to grow more like Jesus.

Danielle Pearson-Smith

On Sunday 2nd September we embarked on a discipleship adventure called JSP, looking at the five areas of Jesus' ministry. People, teaching, teamwork, prayer and prophecy.

We were challenged each Sunday by our sermon, leaving us with lots of things to reflect on in our house groups.

Our children and young people also looked at these same areas within their weekly Sunday groups, re-joining the rest of the congregation at the end of the service and sharing what they had been learning with us. The other weekly children and young people's groups also joined in with the JSP adventure. The adventure lasted 15 weeks culminating on 16th December.

During our adventure we enjoyed several social gatherings together, having parish breakfasts and bring and share lunches.

On the 8th Week Gordon Dey the creator of JSP joined us and preached at our service, which was appreciated by all.

At the same time as JSP our prayer room was being built- as we journeyed through JSP, so our prayer room grew, both ending within a week of each other.

We had a fantastic review day on 2nd February, with fun and fellowship being had by all those who came.

with them regularly in the future.

* Having tables and chairs out in the hall for coffee after the services has been appreciated and will continue in the future.

* Many found it a real blessing to be learning and growing together throughout the JSP adventure. With Sermons, house group and young people's material working on the same passages and themes.

This is being worked through in the hope that in future as much as possible we will be able to replicate this format.

As a congregation JSP enabled us to engage with each other more as a church family, with many visible inter generational conversations over those 15 weeks.

* It made us all look at what as a church we were already doing, spotting any gaps and looking at what more we could do or perhaps do more of.

* Through JSP Lamplighters decided to put on their first nativity play for family and

Hello there!

Some of you might already have seen me in church, but if not I am the current volunteer from Germany. My gap year in England started in September and so far I've had an amazing time.

In my time here (staying at the crazy but also lovely Foot family) I am not only working for church but also for

CRiBS that is one of the organisations that St. John's supports. I really love CRiBS where I go into primary schools and teach children about Christianity and do after schools clubs like B:You helping girls to grow emotional stability and learn how to control and understand their feelings. Working with children is not always easy but I like to help them learn how they can thrive in our world. After I finished school last year I wanted to do a gap year in England to learn more about the country, practise my English and just reflect on what I want for my future. The work in schools helps me to develop these things and I have learnt a lot about

myself. Also my English has improved a lot and I have got to know more about this beautiful country.

In my work at church I am involved in children's Sunday groups and in Messy Church, 3Dub and God's Girls. I have the opportunity to work with so many different awesome people and learn how I can lead something or make a session more interesting.

To come here this year I had to say goodbye to my family, my friends and to all the things I've been used to. But I'm glad that I did it and I will never forget my time here.

Thank you and God bless,

Anna Dangelat

PS: If you want to know more about my work and myself then don't be afraid of talking to me. Don't worry I don't bite.



Religion and Politics

Well it's often said you should never discuss religion and politics because they're too contentious. However, they were both very prevalent during my childhood and adolescence. In the main this was because my family were both practising Catholics and avid readers of newspapers and listening to the news. My mother was very tolerant and as a result my sister and I not only went to mass every week and attended Catholic primary and secondary schools we were also regular attendees at Sunday school at the local Evangelical church. Church going was part of my upbringing but strangely enough we didn't speak much about religion at home as it was just something we did. However, politics was very much on the agenda and there always seemed to be a great deal to talk about. There were



Food Bank

Food Bank Trust is an anti poverty charity founded on Christian principles, working with people of all faiths and none, and founded by Jesus' words

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." Matthew 25 v 35 & 36

Please continue to give generously when you can to Food Bank.

Jenny Cosser



battles with the unions and industrial strife during the Heath and Callaghan years, divisiveness during the Thatcher years and Europe during the Major years. Unsurprisingly my Christian beliefs influenced my political beliefs and I decided as soon as I was old enough to think that I was firmly to the left of the political spectrum, much to the annoyance of my father, who was much more to the right.

The gospels in the New Testament, which I am reasonably familiar with, have had a big influence on the way I think about the world, especially my responsibility to other people, particularly those who are less fortunate than me. This is probably not surprising as Jesus placed himself firmly amongst the poor. Furthermore, teachings like Jesus's response to the scribes and Pharisees to the challenge of how to deal with Mary Magdalene, the lesson of the widow's offering, the parable of the sower etc. provided me with my moral compass.

I believe that being a Christian involves trying to live by the word of God and in my role as a Local Councillor I am guided by my Christian beliefs. My aim is to always be kind, respectful, empathetic and do my best to try and sort out problems that are brought to my attention, like homelessness, dealing with fly tipping and rubbish, anti-social behaviour, worries over adult social care, education issues etc.

There is great need locally, nationally and throughout the world and I believe that we should try and make a positive difference in whatever way we can. Clearly the church community at St John's feels the same way as I'm always hearing of people doing great work in the community like working in foodbanks, night shelters, becoming street pastors, working with young people, mission work etc. As a Local Councillor I'm just helping people in a different way.

Wendy Perfect

The Bible

I love to read and have a book on the go always, but the Bible is completely different to any other book ever written; it is God's word.

Reading Scripture each day in bite-sized chunks helps each of us walk with God on an exciting journey drawing us closer to God in our Christian Life.

Thank you to Sarah for organising the School of Theology course which was so helpful – we learnt a great deal and it gave some of us a desire to read more of the Bible.

Jenny Cosser

