

Walton-on-Thames **St Mary's and St John's**

Prayer, Services and Events: February 2018

Taking our next steps.....

It's a new day, a new season for St Mary's and St John's: our new church vision is here. God has spoken, the people have spoken, and we now know where we are going. We have noticed a considerable continuity with what God has been doing in the past. It has been very exciting to be part of the process of prayer, listening, gathering thoughts and dreams together and now sharing the vision. This vision is for everyone: children and adults, young, married, single, divorced, bereaved; those who first stepped into the church today, or a month ago, more than ten years ago, or even more than thirty years ago. It is for all of us! Bookmarks with the whole vision on can be collected at the back of both churches.

Taking our next steps towards deeper faith in Christ, welcome and belonging and shining God's light.

This is a dynamic, living vision. It is about taking our next steps. As each of us takes our next step, however faltering, that becomes the next step of the church as we become more the church God wants us to be and we want to be. We are here to support each other in those next steps. This is not a vision that's going to sit in a drawer or even on a beautiful poster, we can all start to make it happen today. For those who like music, the hymn 'O Jesus I have Promised' helps express this intention it says "O let me see thy footsteps and in them plant my own." There is also a worship song that says: "Jesus be the Centre, be the reason that I live."

This vision is expressed in words, songs and pictures. The colours are a reflection of the different people that make up our church, worshipping in congregations of different styles and we want to celebrate the richness and vibrancy of that diversity. We don't want to be monochrome, we want to let all our colours shine through.



There are three parts of this vision for us to explore:

Firstly, Deeper faith in Christ. This means putting God as number one in our lives. We are all at different places on our faith journey, and we may all want to draw closer to God in different ways. The areas we have identified are: accessible spirit-filled worship; everyday discipleship and confidence in personal faith. These are the areas in which we will take our next steps as a church. What could your next step be?

Secondly, Welcome and belonging. We want to be a loving church where people want to belong. This came out very strongly in all the questionnaires and contributions. But real welcome is more than just a smile at the door; it's a place where we can make friends and become part of an authentic community. There are some specifics to this: welcome unreservedly; care compassionately; forgive wholeheartedly; serve joyfully and give generously. We have some steps to take in this area and it depends on all of us to check our attitudes alongside the example of Jesus, our servant-hearted master who washed his disciples' feet. Relationships are not always easy.

Thirdly, Shining God's Light. God has filled us with his love and his light and he wants to reveal more of his love and light to other people through us. Our vision is to promote the church in Walton on Thames; to serve local people with practical and spiritual help; to share the good news of Jesus wherever we are and to engage in overseas Christian mission. We can all consider what our opportunities will be tomorrow, next week, and so on. What is our next step?

You can see this is a thought-provoking, challenging vision which encourages us as individuals and as a church to take our journey of faith seriously. We have only got one life, let's live it to the full. Our key verse is taken from the words of Jesus: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself." We are praying for each of us as we take our next steps towards deeper faith, welcome and belonging and shining God's light.

If you missed the Vision launch on 14th January and sermons in January, you can go to the website and listen. Don't miss the lunch on 4th February tickets £3 from the office.

Yours, Revs Jonny and Cathy

Key Information

Clergy:

Vicars: Rev Cathy & Rev Jonny Blair (off duty Friday) 01932 917736

Curate: Rev Caroline Merrick (available Tue, Thu & Fri) 07419 827739

Church Wardens:

Berenice Page

Dawn May

Sally Eckes

Youth Minister: Mandy Watts (off duty Thursday)

Licensed Lay Ministers:

John Muggleton

Tessa & John Badcock

Pastoral Assistants:

Winnie Evans

Roger Hunt

Margaret Valentine

Wendy Fitch

Linda Muggleton

Alan White

For enquiries of a pastoral nature, please contact via the Vicars.

A full list of Parish Officers and organisations is on our website.

Information about Weddings and Baptisms can also be found on our website.

Parish Office (open Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 09:30-12:30)

St Mary's Church Hall, Church Street, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 2QS

Telephone 01932 224238 Email office@waltonparish.org.uk

St John's Church, 1 The Furrows, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 3JQ



This month... February

3rd	2.00 pm	St John's	Marriage Prep
4th	12.30 pm	St Mary's	BIG CELEBRATION LUNCH
12th – 16th	-----		Half Term Holidays
14th	7.30 pm	St Mary's	Ash Wednesday Service
28th	8.00 pm	St John's	PCC

Regular fixtures... * monthly

Mondays	9.15 am	St Mary's	Morning Prayer
Tuesdays	8.30 am	St John's	Morning Prayer
	9.30 am	St John's	Alpha Course
	2.30 pm	St John's *1st Tues	Walton Connections
	8.00 pm	St John's *1st & 2nd Tues	Baptism Matters
Wednesdays	8.00 pm	St Mary's	Choir Practice
Thursdays	9.15 am	St Mary's	Morning Prayer
	7.30 pm	St John's	Alpha Course
	6.45 pm	St Mary's	Junior Choir
	7.30 pm	St Mary's	Band Practice
Fridays	10.30 am	St John's	Toddlers' Praise
	2.00 pm	St Mary's Hall	Toddlers' Praise
	6.00 pm	St Mary's Hall	Youth Groups (Yr 3-6)
	7.45 pm	St Mary's	Bellringing Practice
Saturdays	9.15 am	St John's	Breakfast Prayer Meeting
Sunday	7.00 pm	St Mary's *3rd Sun	Evening Praise
	6.30 pm	St John's **monthly	Solid Ground** (Yr7+)

**check website calendar

(NB: some of these activities only take place during term time.)

Services

FEBRUARY 2018 St Mary's and St John's		DETHRONING MAMMON: Making money serve grace
<i>Wed 31 Jan</i>	<i>St John's</i> <i>10am Said Communion</i>	
Sun 4 Feb Big Celebration lunch	St Mary's 8am Said Communion 9.15am Lively Service All Age 11am Reflective Service with Communion	Jesus is supreme <i>Col 1:15-20</i> <i>John 1:1-14</i>
	St John's 9am Said Communion 10.30am Morning Praise	
<i>Thurs 8 Feb</i>	St Mary's <i>10am Said Communion</i>	
Sun 11 Feb	St Mary's 8am BCP Communion 9.15am Lively Service with Communion 11am Reflective Service with Communion	What we see we value <i>John 11:17-44</i>
	St John's 10.30am Morning Praise for All	
<i>Wed 14 Feb</i> Ash Wednesday	St John's <i>10am Said Communion</i> St Mary's 7.30pm Holy Communion for Ash Wednesday	
<i>Thurs 15 Feb</i>	Walton Community Centre <i>11am Communion</i>	
Sun 18 Feb	St Mary's 8am Said Communion 9.15am Lively Service 11am Reflective Service with Communion <i>7pm Evening praise</i>	What we measure controls us <i>Luke 19:1-10</i>
	St John's 10.30am Holy Communion	
<i>Thurs 22 Feb</i>	St Mary's <i>10am Morning Prayer</i>	
Sun 25 Feb	St Mary's 8am Said Communion 9.15am Lively Service with Baptism 11am Reflective Service with Communion	What we have we hold <i>John 12:1-11</i>
	St John's 10.30am Morning Praise	
<i>Wed 28 Feb</i>	St John's <i>10am Said Communion</i>	

A note for your diary – Communion of Thursday 22 March will be at 12.00 pm.

Prayer

'To pray is to make our hearts ready to experience the love of God in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Praying regularly will help us to develop a spiritual rhythm. A discipline of prayer changes the way that we think about our lives, because it creates new habits of heart and mind. Prayer opens us more deeply to the transforming grace of God. We enter into God's presence, allowing the Holy Spirit to pray in us.'

(www.churchofengland.org/journeying-with-god/learning-pray)

Building prayer into our everyday.

Every week I used to meet with my small group and listen to them talking about reading their Bibles and praying every day and every week I used to think to myself what do they say? How did they even remember never mind find the time? They all seemed to just 'know' but I was too afraid to ask more because I thought they would just think I was stupid. However, I have since come to learn that there really is no right or wrong way to pray, to listen and to enjoy spending time with God. I wish someone had of given me a few ideas all those years ago and so here are a few suggestions I hope might be useful.

Find a short prayer that speaks to you or create your own and give thought to each word. Keep it short and simple, you may wish to choose a different prayer each week or each month. Something as simple as; Lord, help me not to lean on my own understanding but in everything acknowledge You.

Read a Psalm or find a short Bible passage to use as a focus for your prayer. Some people like to have a small collection of Bible verses which they find inspiring and encouraging which they can use as inspiration for their prayer time. I have 3 or 4 verses which I come back to regularly.

Use a prayer book. There are some lovely books around which contain short prayers you can follow daily. Or download an app! The Church of England has a selection of apps available or why not look at something like Bible in One Year (BiOY) you can follow online or through an app on your phone or tablet. You don't even have to do the reading, you can simply listen along!

Are you a more visual person? How about writing your prayers in a prayer journal? It need not be anything fancy just by simply writing down your prayers it can be a great way of keeping track. Bible journaling is something that's become popular. You'll find all sorts of ideas if you Google it! Keep a record of verses and prayers that you've come across, notes or doodles from a good sermon or simply just a note of something you heard that resonated. Be as creative as you like!

Or maybe music is your thing. Listen to hymns and worship music, be inspired by the words, let your imagination run with the music. Keep a note of song lyrics. Allow the music to guide your prayers. A favourite I often come back too, again and again is Cornerstone.

Or, how about using the words of our new Vision? Allow yourself to be taken into the vision, think about what it means to you. What are those next steps we've been hearing about, what are your next steps? You might like to use the words and incorporate them into your prayer time and just see where it leads you.

Remember that God hears every prayer regardless of whether it was spoken out loud, silent in our heads, written as a list or turned into something more creative but not all prayers are answered in the way we might expect or desire: we don't always pray for his will to be done! Prayer is a discipline - it can be difficult at times, just like keeping fit, being on a diet, or staying on top of the washing pile! Little and often is best, but don't give up! No prayer, however inadequate you may feel it to be, is ever wasted or of no value. A valuable bit of advice one of the wise (they were all very knowledgeable and wise...) members of my small group gave me was that when I was on my own I should pray out loud. Even on my own I still felt like a wally, but it really was a good tip. And like I said at the beginning, there's no right or wrong way to pray, the only way to get it wrong is by not doing it!

You can read more on the Church of England website about prayer and ways to pray.

Sally Eckes

Prayer Groups

Morning Prayer at St Mary's - Mondays & Thursdays, 9.15 to 9.45 am, open to all. Mondays, we pray for church events; Thursdays we pray for church members; Always we pray for Walton.

Morning Prayer at St John's - In addition to the current Morning Prayer at St Mary's, every Tuesday there is now a short service of Morning Prayer at 8.30 am at St John's.

Saturday morning Prayer at St John's - There's also a very sociable group who meet for breakfast at 9.15 am also at St John's.

Everyone is welcome to any and all prayer meetings. Please come and join us regularly or occasionally. If you'd like to learn more about joining a small group talk to Cathy or Jonny.

Under Fives and Families' Outreach Minister Update

Thank you to all who contributed to this, it makes a huge difference to us going forward. This is a key part of our new vision especially encouraging children in faith and shining God's light among families in Walton on Thames. The amount raised is sufficient to employ a Minister for 25 hours per week. Having taken advice, we are planning to re-advertise in March as a part time post for 25 hours per week, to supplement the candidates we already have short-listed, and interview after Easter. We are looking forward to the right person joining the church Staff team. We do need the money from now, to ensure we can afford the hours we are advertising. Please be assured that all money given will be used exclusively for children under 5 and families outreach ministry.

www.waltonparish.org.uk

Daily Prayer Pointers

Some ideas for prayer for our church & community

Sunday

Sunday Services, midweek Communion, for all who make our Church feel welcoming. For our Singers and Musicians.

Monday

One another in our daily lives at work, in our neighbourhood, wherever we are, to show God's love.

Tuesday

Seniors – Mothers' Union, St John's Wives, Walton Connections.

Wednesday

Discipleship and Leadership – Small Groups, the Servant Course, PCC, worship leaders, preachers and Pastoral Assistants.

Thursday

Outreach & community links – the Alpha Course, Messy Church, assemblies in Walton schools, baptisms and funerals.

Friday

Children and Youth – Friday cell groups, Sunday School and Sunday youth groups, toddler group and Toddlers' Praise. For all helpers and leaders and for more leaders.

Saturday

Missionaries we support – Tear Fund, Compassion, Foodbank, Bible Society, Hannah Satterthwaite, Samaritan's Purse Christmas boxes.

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