

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

this month's church family thanks and prayers

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



Exodus - Journey to the LORD

Key Information

Clergy:

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

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

Curate: Rev Alex Oehring (off duty Saturday) 07920 098867

Church Warden: David Henderson & Janet Todd (St John's)

Children & Youth Minister: Mandy Watts (off duty Thursday)

Licensed Lay Ministers: John Muggleton, Tessa & John Badcock

Pastoral Assistants: Wendy Fitch, Alan White, Roger Hunt, Linda Muggleton, Margaret Valentine, Sue Green and Louise Turner.

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 www.waltonparish.org.uk

Parish Office (open Monday - Friday 10:00-12:30)

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

Administrator: Becky Warner

Telephone - 01932 224238 Email - office@waltonparish.org.uk

Communications Manager & Strategic Co-Ordinator:

Sally Eckes (day off Fri) 07779 623377

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

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



VICARS' BLOG:

In the Footsteps of Jesus....



We have recently returned from Pilgrimage in Israel and have so many sights and experiences to share with you. It was a moving experience to walk in the footsteps of our Lord, Jesus. Seeing Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, with the dominating city walls, and walking the route he would have taken at the Triumphal entry on the donkey, it felt like time had stood still. Seeing the garden of Gethsemane and walking the way of suffering, the “Via Dolorosa”, was so moving and yet so different from how we imagined. No dusty hillsides, it is now and would have been, the narrow streets of the busy city crowded with people and stalls. A new dimension to imagining Jesus on the way to crucifixion with the full



weight of the cross on his back. Golgotha itself is now the site of the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It was a real privilege to see Orthodox, Ethiopian, Armenian and other Christian denominations worshipping there early on Sunday morning.

And what about Bethlehem, is it still a sleepy village? Now very built up and subject to the current political separation, it has a large wall dividing this Palestinian area from Israeli areas. We were surprised to see a huge Christmas tree in Manger Square next to the church of the Nativity. But of course, our Orthodox brothers and sisters celebrate Christmas on 6th January and Armenians after that, so Christmas was still in full swing and our rendition of 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' at "Shepherd Fields" felt curiously in keeping.



There is so much more to tell of the River Jordan and Lake Galilee, of St Peter fish and the Mount of Beatitudes and so much pondering while walking in the footsteps of

Jesus. We have come back changed. We sense the weight of evidence and history of our faith which we share with unnumbered Christian brothers and sisters



across the years and across the world. While churches on holy sites have been destroyed, rebuilt and destroyed many times, and our brothers and sisters have suffered and died for our faith, we Christians are still here, and God is Lord. We have felt the heartbeat of God's Son, the Prince of Peace, in a land which is so far from peaceful.

We hope to take a group of people to the Holy Land with McCabe tours maybe in February 2021. Do ask us if you are interested. In the meantime, be ready for lots of sermon illustrations from the Holy Land!

Jonny and Cathy



Over the last couple of weeks, we have been inviting you all to join My ChurchSuite. We really hope you will engage with us as we get everybody up and running. ChurchSuite is an amazing tool which not only allows us to simply and effectively communicate with all of you, but it will also allow you to engage with each other and the church.

If you have not received an email already you can easily request an invitation by going to the website and following the ChurchSuite link at the top of the page.

Exodus – Journey to the LORD

The rescue of the People of God from slavery in Egypt is probably one of the best known stories in the Old Testament. But why was it so important that they chose to remember this event through the Passover every year and



Jewish people still celebrate Passover today? And what is the significance of this whole episode in the life of God's people from slavery to freedom in the Promised land, for us as Christians today?

Such a key book to the Old Testament, the Exodus narrative is one of six “acts” of the drama of history of which we are all a part: 1 Creation, 2 the Fall, 3 the Exodus, 4 Exile and restoration, 5 Incarnation, crucifixion and redemption, 6 Final return and judgement. Thus, it is part of the big story of the world, of God and his people and it is our story. But more than this, it is central to understanding the character and nature of God in his compassion and justice, glory and power. In Evening Praise 7.00 pm services on 2nd and 16th February and 1st March, Echoes of Exodus, we will explore the True freedom, True bread and True Shepherd fulfilled in Jesus. The story of God's people is both compelling and frustrating and strangely familiar as we come face to face with God's dealings with real humanity in dramas such as, grumbling in the desert, manna from heaven and water from the rock, to name but a few.

As we cannot preach on every word of the 40 chapters of Exodus, here is a guide to where we are going. Do pick up a Bible and have a read, it's a gripping adventure!

The scene is set in chapters 1 and 2, as we feel compassion for God's people who are in slavery to a cruel Pharaoh in Egypt. In chapters 3-4, we meet Moses in a basket in the bulrushes, educated at the Pharaoh of Egypt's Palace and then as a shepherd in Midian where he encounters God in a bush that refuses to burn up. When God says he wants Moses to be his man to lead his people out of slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land, Moses makes all kinds of objections, finally challenging God to give him his name. "I AM WHO I AM" is the resounding answer. This name becomes the never-to-be-spoken-aloud name of God, YHWH, which often appears in our Bibles as LORD in capital letters. Not answerable to anyone, this is the God who is almighty, incomparable, who was and is and is to come, the God of the forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who will take his people on the journey of their lives.

But Pharaoh will not give up his slaves without a fight. Chapters 5-11 tell of plagues of blood, frogs, locusts..., and finally, death of the firstborn sons all because of his stubbornness. Imagine



frogs everywhere! The people of God finally escape, and the ancient festival of Passover is instigated. The story continues in chapters 12-15 when the Sea miraculously parts allowing the Israelites to cross and drowning Pharaoh's army. In chapters 15-17, wandering in the

desert, it's not long before the people are grumbling at Moses and God. He sends them manna to eat and water from the rock to drink. Chapters 17-19 tell of the power of prayer in battle and leadership tips from Moses Father-in-law. In chapters 19-20 God gives Moses the Ten Commandments at the top of Mount Sinai, but when he returns in Chapter 32, the people have made a golden statue of a calf and are worshipping it. Disaster! Moses is angry, God is disappointed with his people. Will he still let them enter the land flowing with milk and honey? Chapters 21-31 and 35-40 are God's instructions for the tabernacle and details of all the sacred objects to be used for worship. The priests also have particular clothes to wear and duties to perform. In Chapters 33-34, God reveals himself to Moses as the gracious and compassionate LORD. In chapter 40 we end with the glory of the LORD filling the Tabernacle and travelling on every day and night with the people. But, will Moses enter the Promised Land? That's a question for book of Deuteronomy.

Looking for something different?
Missed morning Church?
Join us at our Evening Service.

evening praise

1ST & 3RD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH @ 7PM

worship



teaching



ministry



FAMILY NEWS, THANKS & PRAYER



Many congratulations to Erica, Rupert and Elizabeth on the safe arrival of new baby Charlotte and to Steve, Caroline and Thomas who have been blessed with two new arrivals, baby boy twins Alexander and Jacob. We give thanks for their safe arrivals and pray every blessing over each and every one of them.

This month we are praying for **our CHILDREN AND YOUTH**. On Wednesday 5th February at 8.00 pm there will be a prayer meeting in St Mary's Hall. Everybody is welcome regardless of whether you have children.

Our young people are our future and we have much to be thankful for with our ever-growing youth program, but we also have big plans. So please do join us as we thank God for all the amazing young people and ask for his help for the children and young people in our churches. An hour of prayer, ideas and activities provided plus refreshments. For further details contact mandy@waltonparish.org.uk

Prayer is vital to our life as a church, it's at the heart of all that we do. It's the main way in which we express our dependence on God, seek His guidance, and ask for His blessing on all that we do in His name. Prayer is prominent in our services and is an important part of all our small groups. On the website you can find a variety of links and suggested resources that might be helpful when thinking about ways to encourage and support your daily prayer life. It can be a challenge when we are all so very busy but it is possible to be busy and still enjoy time with God.

HALL BOOKING MANAGER

We are currently looking for a volunteer to manage the hall bookings for both churches. For more information please contact sally@waltonparish.org.uk



Servant Course

Fri 6th – Sat 7th March
Friday 7.00 - 9.30 pm &
Saturday 9.00 am - 3.30 pm

The Servant Course sets out to explore something about the way God has made you – we look at what interests you, how God has gifted you, how you prefer to work, your personality and your passions. It will help you to identify how best you can be in tune with the way God made you in order that you be fulfilled and effective in all areas of your life.

For more information please contact
cathy@waltonparish.org.uk or
sally@waltonparish.org.uk

or even better, find someone who has done the course and find out from them!

Registration is via ChurchSuite or on the website.

FEBRUARY 2020		Exodus – Journey to the LORD
Sun 2 Feb <i>4 before Lent</i>	St Mary's 8.00 am Said Communion 9.15 am Lively Service All Age 11.00 am Reflective Service with Communion <i>7.00 pm Evening Praise – Echoes of Exodus</i>	Let my people go! No! <i>Exodus 5:1-9, 7:1-7</i> <i>Matthew 10:16-20</i>
	St John's 9.00 am Said Communion 10.30 am Morning Praise with Baptism	
<i>Wed 5 Feb</i>	St John's <i>10.00 am Said Communion</i>	
Sun 9 Feb <i>3 before Lent</i>	St Mary's 8.00 am BCP Communion 9.15 am Lively Service with Communion 11.00 am Reflective Service with Communion	Freedom and remembering <i>Exodus 12:21-32</i> <i>Matt 26:17-30</i>
	St John's 10.30 am Morning Praise for All	
<i>Thurs 13 Feb</i>	St Mary's <i>10.00 am Said Communion</i>	
Sun 16 Feb <i>2 before Lent</i>	St Mary's 8.00 am Said Communion 9.15 am Lively Service 11.00 am Reflective Service with Communion <i>7.00 pm Evening Praise – Echoes of Exodus</i>	The wet path to freedom <i>Exodus 14:1-6, 19-28</i> <i>Matt 8:23-27</i>
	St John's 10.30 am Holy Communion	
<i>Wed 19 Feb</i>	St Mary's 7.30 pm Ash Wednesday Service	
	St John's <i>10.00 am Morning Prayer</i>	
Sun 23 Feb <i>Sun before Lent</i>	St Mary's 8.00 am Said Communion 9.15 am Lively Service with Baptism 11.00 am Reflective Service with Communion 3.00 pm Baptism	Grumbling or Gratitude <i>Exodus 15:22-25, 16:2-5, 13-18</i> <i>Matt 14:13-21</i>
	St John's 10.30 am Morning Praise	
<i>Thurs 27 Feb</i>	St Mary's <i>10.00 am Said Communion</i>	
Sun 1st March <i>Lent 1</i>	St Mary's 8.00 am Said Communion 9.15 am Lively Service All Age 11.00 am Reflective Service with Communion <i>7.00 pm Evening Praise – Echoes of Exodus</i>	A Good leader prays and empowers <i>Exodus 17:8-13, 18:5-8, 13-14, 24-27</i> <i>Matt 10:1-8</i>
	St John's 9.00 am Said Communion 10.30 am Morning Praise with Baptism	

DAILY PRAYER

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. On our frontlines.

Tuesday

Seniors – Walton Connections. **Other groups** - Mothers' Union and St John's Wives.

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, the Open the Book team, baptisms and funerals.

Friday

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

Saturday

Missionaries we support – Tear Fund, Compassion, Foodbank, Hannah Satterthwaite, Jo Davis & Fusion, Home Leone.

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www.waltonparish.org.uk