

MAY

NEWSLETTER

this month's church family thanks and prayers

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



WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?



Key Information

Clergy:

Vicars: Rev Cathy & Rev Jonny Blair (off duty Friday) 01932 917 736

Assistant Minister: Rev Caroline Merrick (avail Tue, Thu & Fri) 07419 827 739

Curate: Rev Vlada Rakin contact via Office (off duty Saturday)

Church Warden: David Henderson, Janet Todd (St John's) and Scott Hay

Youth Minister: Sarah Dunn (off duty – Friday & Saturday)

Licensed Lay Ministers: Tessa & John Badcock

Pastoral Assistants: For enquiries of a pastoral nature email vicar@waltonparish.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Katharine Scott (volunteer)
safeguarding@waltonparish.org.uk

Safeguarding Administrator: Julia Gorrie (part time flexi hours)
safeguardingadmin@waltonparish.org.uk

A full list of Parish Officers can be found on our website.

Information about weddings, funerals and baptisms can also be found on our website www.waltonparish.org.uk

Church Office

Administrator: Sam Harrison

St Mary's Church Hall,

Church Street, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 2QS

The office contact hours are –

Closed Monday.

Open Tuesday - Friday 10.00 am – 12 noon

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

Operations & Communications:

Sally Eckes (off duty Mon & Fri) 07779 623377

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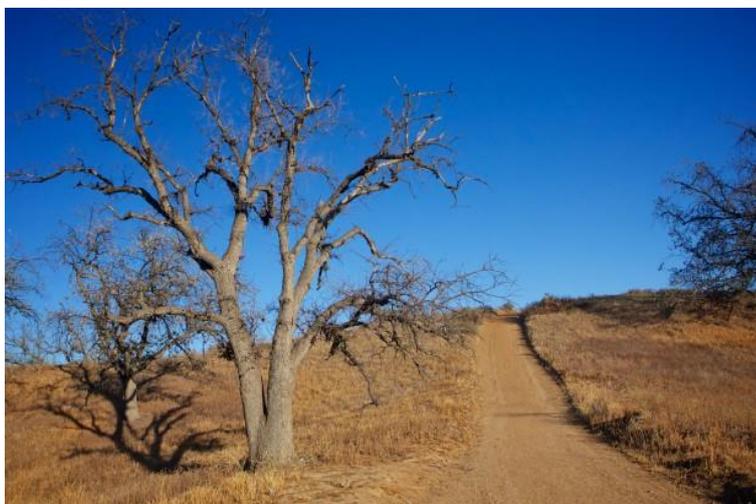
VICARS' BLOG: Where are we now and where are we going?

Our Church Development Plan for 2022

The Annual meeting which took place on Monday 25th April, gave us a good opportunity to hear what has been going on in the church in 2021 as we can read in Parish Matters. As vicars, we also give an additional report thanking people for their participation in the church and looking ahead to the future. Congratulations to our newly elected church warden Scott Hay who joins David Henderson and Janet Todd (Warden for St John's). Thank you to all the PCC members who continue to serve us as Trustees.

As a church we should congratulate ourselves that we have done really well in spite of the difficulties of the last year. We still have families in our church. We have pulled together and cared for each other and given money to the church to provide for ministry.

The picture here shows a road through the wilderness. This represents the way forward after a tough couple of years for us all. Like the Israelites were told, we are not to look back, but look forward in faith to where God is leading and what he wants to show us. When God had led his people out of slavery in Egypt, they were prone to complaining to Moses and looking back to Egypt, forgetting the bitterness of slavery. They had to look forward towards the Promised land and trust God.



The song Cornerstone reminds us that we can trust in nothing less than Jesus Christ, who is our firm foundation through the storms and calm seasons of life. We read in Colossians 1: 9-14: "We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light." We agree that we want to please God and that we want to bear fruit, living lives worthy of our calling as individuals and as a church which is only possible by the power of the Spirit. What a challenge to put before ourselves for the year ahead!

Where are we now?

We recently had visits from Archdeacon Martin and from Richard Lloyd as part of the Visitation and 'Diocesan Parish Needs Process'. The PCC has also been doing some work on our short term and long-term goals which helped us to consolidate where we are now and where we are going.

It was helpful to hear what Martin and Richard see from their experienced and outside perspective. They were genuinely encouraged by our ministry and pointed out the following highlights we should be celebrating and encouraged by:

- the quality and consistency of our services on-line during the pandemic and now back in the building as well as our continued care for one another during Covid.
- the authentic Traditional service at St Mary's and community feel at St John's
- the move to weekly inter-generational worship at St Mary's hall – a new model of discipleship reaching many families through the All Age service and the role of church members in leading this and Toddlers Praise
- the intentional discipleship process we have - from Alpha to Bible Course to Prayer Course and into Life groups
- the way the Youth group has hung in there in face of such a few paid hours of Youth Minister time
- the Community outreach that is growing at St John's - the Tuesday Play and Chat hub
- the potential plans for social action with our own Walton CAN (Community Action Network)
- the cautious optimism we feel with our finances beginning to look a little healthier

Where are we going?

Richard facilitated a discussion on our goals for 2030, and we articulated 4 main goals that we would like to work on in the 5–10-year frame:

Goal 1. Large numbers in worshipping in church, living out their calling, enthused, praising God, and equipped. Prayer integrated into everything we do, deeper faith and commitment

Goal 2. Families staying beyond getting into school, self-sustaining through youth and into adulthood. The challenge here is can we fund specific ministers for Youth and Children and Families ministry?

Goal 3. Buildings and community social action - St Mary's being used 7 days per week as a hub for the community. The challenges here is to discern if there is a will to re-order St Mary's Church. With St John's focusing on being a mission hub with Walton CAN. The challenge here is to find and fund a community worker to champion the community social action.

Goal 4. Develop eco church and zero carbon targets, as climate change daily becomes a more pressing and urgent issue.

The PCC have also adopted an annual “Church Development Plan” with shorter term goals for the year ahead. These are linked to the Vision and so are in three sections:

- 1 Building our discipleship and worship:
 - a. Review the suitability of the pews in St Mary’s church for our current worship/ social/ outreach needs
 - b. Support Midweek groups, youth, and children’s discipleship
 - c. Encourage “Everyday faith”

- 2 Building our church community:
 - a. Focus on prayer
 - b. Focus on social times including around services
 - c. Support Connections
 - d. Encourage giving – money and serving

- 3 Building our links with the local community:
 - a. Make CAN (Walton Community Action Network) operational in order to serve local people e.g. Play and Chat toddler group. Get funding for a community link role
 - b. Redevelop kitchens at St John’s and St Mary’s with grant funding
 - c. Define the mission of/from St John’s church
 - d. Develop our Eco Church strategy - embedded in all we do

We should congratulate ourselves that for the first time in years, and certainly since we have been in Walton, we have broken even financially. This is because of the drastic cuts we made in 2020, making the Children and Youth minister post redundant, by renting out the house and the Curate’s house and by a concerted effort from all of us to give more to the church. From this position of greater financial stability, we can now consider how, if we have more money, we would like to start investing in our children and youth again.

We hope this gives a picture of what that road out of the wilderness might look like. Towards a thriving, sustainable and younger church which will grow and strengthen as time goes on. We can all immediately contribute to this by making prayer central to all we do, living out our faith every day on our front lines and serving in whichever congregation we are a part of. We are encouraged about the future and want to thank you for all you are and do.

Cathy and Jonny

Mission Update

It is a wonderful privilege to be able to actively contribute to what God is doing in the world and to share in the joy of what the people and organisations we support are achieving in Christ's name.

It's also great to share these updates with you along with the messages of thanks from our mission partners as well as their prayer requests. We would encourage you to keep coming back to read this over the coming weeks and months and to keep all our Mission Partners in your prayers.

As a church we support through our mission giving, Olli & Jo Davies who have spent this last 6 months travelling around Spain visiting all the university cities, meeting people, praying, and discerning their next steps towards setting up Fusion Spain.

Fusion is committed to championing a worldwide student movement through:

- Equipping students: preparing and inspiring students for a life of mission and discipleship at university.
- Serving churches: connecting students to the heart of local church and encouraging churches to be at the heart of student mission.
- Developing student workers: training, resourcing, and strengthening all those in church-based student ministry.

A message from Olli & Jo

The journey just finished...

We finished the Road Trip with a prayer gathering for students in Madrid. Tricky to organise from the road, but a brilliant first Fusion gathering in Spain - such a joy to pray with a bunch of students from different churches in Madrid and hear more of what God's doing on their campuses!

Thank you so much for being with us on this journey. After the road trip, we are more aware than ever of the need for a move of God both in his church and on the campuses in Spain. We long to tell the story of students finding hope in Jesus and home in local church here, but we know there is a long way to go. We could not go it alone, and so we hope you know how significant your prayers and partnership are to us in all of this.

The journey just beginning...

We've had some time out in Portugal to reflect and retreat and rest before getting going again with starting a new life. This was also a key time to listen to God and decide where to put down roots more long term in Spain - setting out from Portugal last Sunday we needed somewhere to head to!

And so, we are now writing to you from our new city for the foreseeable future - GRANADA!

Over a quarter of the population here are students, we felt very welcomed by the churches we met here, there's an excellent charismatic catholic community and a hunger to do more for students.



So, it should be a fun place to start! It's also a very cool city, with so much history and beauty, has some great coffee shops and is an hour from the beach and right by the mountains. So, there's lots to love!



We have had a good start, as we found a great little flat right between the two main campuses (and with a garage for Victoria the van!) within a few days - an amazing encouragement that God is with us here! So last week was moving week (this is us moving all our stuff out of an Airbnb for hopefully the last time in a very long time!)

However, we are only just beginning. It is still a one-day-at-a-time journey for us. There's lots ahead that is daunting, and we still feel we are only just starting to recover from the exhaustion and vulnerability and instability of this last season. We would love if you could be praying for us as we start over again and officially start to build Fusion Spain as an organisation, brick by brick.

We are praying for community here, for friends, for the right church, for grace for the journey and continued rest and recovery in the weeks and months ahead.

Love and blessings,
Olli and Jo x

Highlights from the final few cities!

Seville: Talking student mission with the youth and young adults' team at a church in Seville, who also happened to be students themselves! They were so encouraged that someone actually cared about their campuses and course-mates and were excited to chat ideas about what they could do to reach out.

Huelva: Meeting an ex-pro-footballer turned church-planter in Huelva, who also happens to be on the GBU board (the equivalent of Christian Union in Spain) and passionate about student mission - a person of peace with influence who wants to help us see more student mission happen in the churches in his City.

Madrid: Meeting a group of young people (mostly all new Christians!) in a catholic parish in the outskirts of Madrid. They're right next to a campus and want to start reaching out to the students there - so fun to hear their stories and chat student mission with them!



Road Trip Summary

- 📅 6 months and 1 week
- 🚗 13,500k driven
- 🏙️ 38 Cities
- 📍 17 Regions of Spain
- 👥 131 meetings with churches/ministries/communities/youth and young adult groups
- 🏕️ 37 different camping spots
- 🛏️ 40 different beds
- 🙏 41 campuses prayer walked
- 🏰 38 cathedrals prayed in
- 🏃 545k run

Thy Kingdom Come

Thursday 26th May Ascension Day - Sunday 5th June Pentecost Sunday

Join the global wave of prayer calling all Christians to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know the love and peace of Jesus Christ. We will have personal prayer in St Mary's Church with prayer stations, daily reflections which will be available on our YouTube plus other resources on the website and social media.



Jubilee Picnic

Sunday 5th June

St Mary's - 11.30 am after the morning services (hopefully) outside in the Hall garden

St John's - 11.30 after the service in the garden

Bring your picnics and your deck chairs as we come together to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen as she becomes the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee after 70 years of service.

Holiday Club

SAVE THE DATE! 15th – 19th AUGUST

This year Holiday Club are going backpacking... (not literally - obv!) so get the date in your diary. Keep an eye out for more information next month and on the website. As is always the way, Holiday Club is only possible if we have enough lovely helpers – if this is something you think you might like to get involved with, please get in touch with Amy who will be delighted to hear from you!

Contact – amy@waltonparish.org.uk



Eco Church

Our approach to environmental issues is something we are taking very seriously. We have taken great strides in the last couple of years towards becoming more environmentally responsible, and we are committed to making progress in all areas of church life. Part of our strategy is to establish our Eco Church Ministry which will address issues including environmental damage and climate change.



Eco Church is integral to who we are and how we 'be' church. It's not a one-off project, it's our future. Please do take a look at the ideas, resources and links that we have on the website. Most importantly though we request your prayerful consideration in how you might play your part in caring for creation.

Blind Club

The Blind Club meet at St John's every month, and they are looking for a new treasurer. If this is something you think you might be able to help with or you know someone else who might please contact Carol Collings - ccollings@yahoo.com

How Did They Start?

Sylvia Green has written a series looking into the history of several charities that will be well known to many of us. It's fascinating to see how many of these charities were originally set up by Christians, though many no longer have faith connections today, the work they set about doing clearly demonstrates how faith has the power to transform lives and to transform communities.

Preaching the good news in word and action demonstrates that faith is real, and that faith is more than something confined to a church building.

The Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB)

The founder of the RNIB was Dr Thomas Rhodes Armitage. He was born in 1824 in Sussex and, although he started having trouble with his sight while studying, he eventually qualified as a surgeon.

After completing service in the Crimean War, Dr Armitage returned to London to work as a general practitioner and a consultant, but in 1860 his sight started to give him serious trouble. It became obvious that he would lose it altogether if he didn't give up his medical practice.

Dr Armitage was a wealthy man and money was not a problem, but he had seen medicine as his life's work, so its loss must have come very hard to him. However, he was a deeply religious man and he soon saw a way that his experience as a doctor, his wealth and even his blindness could help others. He is reported to have said, 'I cannot conceive any occupation so congenial to a blind man of education and leisure as the attempt to advance the education and improve the condition of his fellow sufferers.'

Having visited many blind people, Dr Armitage came to the conclusion that what they needed above all else was education. There were several different systems designed to help blind people to read and write at around that time (including Braille in France), but what was needed was a system of embossed writing that could be used throughout the whole country.

Dr Armitage was adamant that the best people to decide which system best fitted their needs were blind people themselves. In 1868 he enlisted the help of three blind men and they formed themselves into a committee. This new society took the name British and Foreign Blind Association for promoting the Education of the Blind (later known as the Royal National Institute of the Blind, or RNIB).

The committee studied the different systems and interviewed many blind men and women to find out their views. Over many years, it was Braille that gradually came to the forefront, and in 1870 the first publication in Braille was printed in the UK. The system was then slowly adopted into schools for blind people.

To learn more and to find out how the RNIB are helping people today visit www.rnib.org.uk

In Memorium

Please pray for the families and friends of those who have died in times past whose anniversary falls at this time:

Brenda Cairns
Brian Rofe

Jenny Cooper
Nick Saint

Jill Comley
Jack Price

Elizabeth Lancaster
Terry Crivelli

Sunrise Service - Interview with Lyuba

On Easter Sunday it was a great privilege to welcome and introduce someone who has become a friend and a friend of this town. I was joined by Lyuba who is one of the owners of the Two Fat Cats Bakery on Bridge Street. Lyuba grew up in Ukraine but has lived in England for a number of years. Lyuba and Oxanna, also from Ukraine opened the bakery in February, the day before the war in Ukraine broke out. The following is the conversation that I was able to have with her during the Sunrise Service that we held down at Cowey Sale on Easter morning. **Jonny**

Jonny: *So, you had just opened the bakery the day before the war in Ukraine broke out, that must have been very difficult. How much have you been thinking about your new business, or have you been thinking more about what is happening in Ukraine?*

Lyuba: It has been very difficult to develop the café and bakery as we planned, because we have had to focus so much time and energy on what has been happening in Ukraine and the safety of our families and friends and the people of Ukraine. We have cried and cried, and we are physically and emotionally exhausted, but we want to do all that we can to help.

Jonny: *How have you found the response of people who come in to Two Fat Cats Bakery?*

Lyuba: We very grateful to the people of Walton who not only come to our cafe to have tea or coffee, but also offer help with big and open hearts by donating money or necessary items that are so needed in Ukraine and its inhabitants. Everyone has contributed and we appreciate it and are very grateful. You are always supporting by words that come out of you with a big heart full of goodness.



This trouble and endless pain has united not only Ukrainians but the whole world.

I would also like to thank the sponsors who are helping to bring in women and children who have had to leave and flee their country because they have remained unsafe there.

My heartfelt thanks from myself and all Ukrainians to you all and to each one individually. Thank you for inviting me and I'm very glad to see you all here. Happy Easter to you all! Slava Ukraine!

Jonny: *Lyuba thank you very much. Slava Ukraine means Glory to Ukraine and, I have learnt, is a common greeting used by Ukrainians to one another. Two Fat Cats has great coffee and fantastic pastries, both sweet and savoury and Lyuba and Oxanna will always be very pleased to see any of us there. They are open from 8.00 am every morning.*

If you would like to help the people of Ukraine further, we have information on the church website including details of how you can help through Lyuba and Oxanna and Two Fat Cats Bakery.

All donations through the bakery are directly benefiting the people of Ukraine and are greatly appreciated.



MAY 2022	St Mary's and St John's Services and events	Seven Miraculous signs in John's Gospel	
Online Service can be viewed via YouTube – search Walton Parish			
<i>Thurs 28th April</i>	<i>10.30 am Midweek Communion</i>	<i>St John's</i>	
Sunday 1st May <i>Easter 3</i>	9.00 am Service with Communion	<i>St Mary's</i>	The Best Is Yet To Come – The Cana Wedding <i>Isaiah 25:6-9 John 2:1-11</i>
	10.15 am All Age Service	<i>St Mary's Hall</i>	
	10.30 am Morning Praise	<i>St John's</i>	
<i>Thurs 5th May</i>	<i>10.30 am Midweek Communion</i>	<i>St Mary's</i>	
Sun 8th May <i>Easter 4</i>	9.00 am Service with Communion	<i>St Mary's</i>	God's Perfect Timing – Official's Son <i>Romans 5:6-11 John 4:43-54</i>
	10.15 am All Age Service	<i>St Mary's Hall</i>	
	10.30 am Morning Praise with Holy Communion	<i>St John's</i>	
	6.30 pm Evening Praise	<i>St Mary's</i>	
<i>Thurs 12th May</i>	<i>10.30 am Midweek Communion</i>	<i>St John's</i>	
<i>Sat 14th May</i>	<i>11.30 am – 1.00 pm Connections</i>	<i>St Mary's</i>	
Sun 15th May <i>Easter 5</i>	9.00 am Service with Communion	<i>St Mary's</i>	Healing & Wholeness – The Bethesda Pool <i>Acts 3:1-10 John 5:1-18</i>
	10.15 am All Age Service	<i>St Mary's Hall</i>	
	10.30 am Morning Praise	<i>St John's</i>	
	6.30 pm Evening Praise	<i>St Mary's</i>	
<i>Thurs 19th May</i>	<i>10.30 am Midweek Communion</i>	<i>St Mary's</i>	
Sun 22nd May <i>Easter 6</i>	9.00 am Service with Communion - Admission to Communion for children	<i>St Mary's</i>	Jesus And The Unexpected – The 5000 <i>Exodus 16:11-18 John 6:1-15</i>
	10.15 am All Age Service	<i>St Mary's Hall</i>	
	10.30 am Morning Praise	<i>St John's</i>	Mountains and Mustard Seeds
	6.30 pm Evening Praise with the Youth	<i>St Mary's</i>	
<i>Thurs 26th May</i> <i>Ascension Day</i>	<i>10.30 am Midweek Communion</i>	<i>St John's</i>	
Sun 29th May <i>Easter 7</i>	9.00 am Service with BCP Communion	<i>St Mary's</i>	Living Bread – Jesus The Bread Of Life <i>Deuteronomy 8:1-10 John 6:25-35, 41-43, 47-51</i>
	10.15 am All Age Service	<i>St Mary's Hall</i>	
	10.30 am Morning Praise	<i>St John's</i>	
	6.30 pm Evening Praise	<i>St Mary's</i>	
<i>Thurs 2nd June</i>	NO Midweek Communion		
Sun 5th June <i>Pentecost</i> 11.30am Diamond Jubilee Picnic	9.00 am Service with Communion	<i>St Mary's</i>	God's Spirit Poured Out <i>Acts 2:1-21 John 14:8-17</i>
	10.15 am All Age Service	<i>St Mary's Hall</i>	
	10.30 am Morning Praise	<i>St John's</i>	
	6.30 pm Evening Praise	<i>St Mary's</i>	

