

# MAY 2021

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## Welcome

*Welcome to St John's, Locks Heath. There's always lots going on, and we'd love to help you **CONNECT** with others, **DECIDE** to deepen your faith **GROW** in your walk with God and **Go out** and share your joy with others.*

## Church Services

We are very happy to have our church open for in-person services and children's groups. (See back page)

We have resumed our booking system for Test & Trace and because places are still limited for now. (See inside for details)

Join us at 9am (for a more structured, liturgical service), or 11am (for a more contemporary service).

You can still watch either service on our YouTube channel (details inside).

We have also resumed our midweek Holy Communion Service. Details on back page

## Keeping in touch

There are still lots of ways to keep in touch if you're not able to come back in person, or if you can't book in for a service due to numbers.

We are pleased to be welcoming groups back to church, although we do continue to stream and use ZOOM for other groups for now. Sunday services and Children's Groups, Connect, Mid-week Communion, Toddlers, and some of our external groups are all able to meet back in person (more details inside).

Please feel free to contact the office by phone 01489 578082 if you'd like to speak to someone about what's happening in church.

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## GET IN TOUCH



## Generosity

Recently I heard a great sermon about how big a giver God is! His extravagant generosity is seen throughout the bible, nature and through the lives of his people.

Perhaps we don't really think about how generous God is, but it is important, because if we understand how generous God is and how he promises that he will give us MORE than we need, then we in turn can live out that generous lifestyle to mirror his nature in our own situations and churches.

We don't like to talk about money in church sometimes, but Jesus wasn't afraid to talk about money and did so quite a lot if you read the gospels. He even said if don't grasp the principal of giving, you'll struggle to grasp the more complex spiritual truths - he said giving was a foundational principle, not because of the giving, but because giving should require you to trust God!

SJLH is a generous church as demonstrated by the response to things like the Christmas gift cards and Easter Egg requests, as well as in viewing the money we have received through giving, even during a pandemic, but it's good to challenge ourselves regarding our giving. So here are a few things to think about when planning your giving.

### 1) Do we give regularly or do we give 'as and when'?

All giving is good, but regular giving helps the church to budget and plan.

### 2) Why do we give?

Jesus was most concerned about why people gave, their heart attitude, more than he was about the amount.

### 3) Do you know how to give at SJLH?

There are lots of ways to give to St John's - check out the next page for some of them.



## How can I give at SJLH

✔ Arranging a monthly direct debit via the **Parish Giving Scheme** is the most helpful way for us as a church, as this enables the leaders to plan for ministry development in the knowledge of a regular income. Please fill in a direct debit form using the PGS pack available from the Church Office or sign up at <http://bit.ly/SJLH-PGS>.

✔ **By Card:** You are able to make an immediate payment to St John's Church by a credit or debit card by visiting <http://bit.ly/SJLHGIVE>. If you are a UK Tax payer, you can give your details when asked so that we can claim Gift Aid on your donation.

✔ Of course cash, although with current restrictions it's easier if you can give another way.

✔ **Give As You Earn:** This is when payments are deducted by your employer from gross salary before tax and paid to the church via CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) using our Registered Charity Number of 1135824. Our church bank account is called "St John's Church PCC" and our church treasurer is Mr Alex Thompson, St John's Church, 7 Church Rd, Locks Heath, Southampton SO31 6LW.

✔ **By a Legacy:** We are grateful to others who have gone before us leaving the church a legacy in their wills. You can make a real difference with the money you can't take with you. Ask the church office about leaving a legacy to St John's Church.

✔ **By Cheque** - made payable to "St John's Church PCC". Don't forget to fill in a Gift Aid envelope if you are UK taxpayer. You can drop it into the church mailbox anytime.

## Grow for Africa

The produce, plants and cakes that have been donated this year will go on sale outside 19 Locks Road **2nd/3rd May**.

For more information contact the office

## Christian Aid Week

**16th- 19th May** For more information or to donate visit <http://bit.ly/ChAid>



## Local Elections take place on May 6th - here's 10 reasons why it's good to vote:

1. Each vote makes a difference and as Christians, we are to influence our society for good, as salt and light in the darkness of godless deeds. (Proverbs 12:26)
2. Voting recognizes the equality of all citizens and their right to express their values through their votes. (Proverbs 29:2) (Psalms 34:14)
3. Voting is a privilege of our free nation, and one not shared by many other countries of the world and should not be taken for granted. Those who reap the benefits of living in a democratic nation should play a part in upholding the constitution that defines it. (Isaiah 1:26)
4. Voting promotes the application of biblical standards in the selection of elected officials in our country, and to whose authority we are to submit, as is established by God. (Rom 13:1)
5. Not voting is a form of voting, as it affects the outcome. "All that is required for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing." Edmund Burke. (James 1:22-25)
6. Voting is one way to obey God's command to seek good for those around us by electing those who will run and protect our communities and nation. (Proverbs 11:3)
7. Voting shows that we care about who our leaders are, as we are told in Scripture to offer prayer on their behalf. (1 Tim 2:2)=
8. Voting is a simple, yet significant way to do something about public policy in our country. As people of faith, we will be held accountable for our actions, as well as our lack of action. (Luke 12: 48)
9. Voting has biblical precedence. For example, Acts 14:23 describes how the early Christians elected elders by voting.
10. Voting is a part of stewardship to use all the resources we have been given in ways that honour God. To waste a vote is to squander a gift. (Mat 5:13)



## Thy Kingdom Come...

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. What started in 2016 as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, (**13th-23rd May**) it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ
- Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus
- Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness

We will have resources available to help with this.

## Oberammergau

The Oberammergau Passion Play is performed in an open-air stage in Oberammergau, Germany. The play is only performed every 10 years but had to be postponed due to COVID. So now, the 42nd production of this world renowned play will go ahead in 2022.

It seems a long way off, but we're hoping that folk from St John's will plan to join us on this breath-taking trip (7 days including travel), which we expect to run from 30th May 2022. Prices start from £1359 per person.

More details at <https://bit.ly/SJLHOber>

# Personal Announcements

There are always people in need of prayer.  
To receive notifications of prayer requests so  
you can join together and pray, or to send out  
a request, email: [prayerchain@sjlh.org.uk](mailto:prayerchain@sjlh.org.uk)

Do you have a testimony of  
something God has done for  
your during lockdown? We'd  
love to be able to share it here.

Contact Abi by the 20th of the  
month so we can include it.

[office@sjlh.org.uk](mailto:office@sjlh.org.uk)

## Quote of the month

“You are the only Bible some unbelievers will ever read.” – John MacArthur

# Wardens' Words

*'Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.'* (Prov 16:3)

This season in St John's is a little frustrating, but we are learning to live by the words above, and trust that the Lord is building his church in his way.

We don't have much news to report on our ongoing vacancy: Our Bishop, Christopher, has now retired and until his successor has been appointed, the Area Bishop of Edmonton, Right Rev Rob Wickham, will help to lead our Diocese (what is called a 'Commissary Bishop', meaning a deputy or delegate) and we continue to work with our interim Archdeacon, Rev Will Hughes, who is the vicar of St Peter's, Petersfield.

We are still being held back from proceeding with advertising for our next vicar, until such time as the future size, shape and structure of the 'Western Wards' cluster of parishes has been agreed. (This 'cluster' comprises us, Sarisbury Green, Titchfield (also in vacancy), Warsash and Whiteley.) The reason for the diocese not allowing us to proceed, is their desire to define more clearly what wider role our next vicar will have to fulfil.

The diocese has laid out its plan for a future structure which comprises 'Teams', each of which need to reflect their respective context. In this model, our next vicar would have a leadership role that is not limited to Locks Heath, but which would extend to our neighbouring parishes. However, there is not yet an agreed definition of exactly what this could look like.



In the meantime, we are working closely with our Western Wards neighbours, to be more collaborative in our parish ministries. We shall be working towards making best use of our respective church gifts and resources and share as much as possible. This new way of parishes working together closely will become more and more important for all C of E churches.

For this future structure, we already recognise the urgent need to identify, grow and empower much greater lay leadership. This is essential, whatever the future structure of the Western Wards looks like. We are all a part of the Body of Christ. So, whilst we are all frustrated by this delay in our process to appoint our next vicar, there is much we can still do to prepare for our future, in terms of strengthening our resources, both financial and our pool of future lay leaders.

We and the PCC are grateful for your prayerful love and support during this challenging time and ask that we each consider how we can offer our gifts and talents to help build God's Kingdom here.

Trevor & Linda,  
Churchwardens



## Sunday Services

Each week you can attend in person or view the service live on our YouTube channel at **9am or 11am**

<https://bit.ly/SJLHYouTube>

9am is a more formal, liturgical service with our choir, while the 11am is more informal with contemporary worship from our band.

Children's groups now run in person alongside the 11am service

Booking is required to attend the services or children's groups. Just go to [www.sjlh.org.uk/book](http://www.sjlh.org.uk/book)

## Wednesday Services

We're happy to see our Wednesday Holy Communion Services back in the plan! Starting Wednesday 5th May at the slightly later time of **10am**.

Booking is NOT required to attend this service.

Our **Ascension Service** will be held at **7.30am on Thursday 13th May**, outside if weather permits

**Pentecost Service (23rd May)** will be a combined service at **10am**

## Not techy? Don't worry

We know that there are a few people in our church family that don't have the internet, or prefer not to use tech gadgets,

We still have the dial in service where you call from any phone and listen to the reading and Sunday talk from the comfort of your home. We update this every Monday by lunchtime at the latest.

Simply dial 01489 665885; the cost is whatever you would normally pay for a local call.