



March 2026

From our Minister...



Lent, a time to renew and reshape

Lent is a gentle gift from God. In the midst of busy days and many responsibilities, it offers us space to pause, to breathe, and to listen again for the voice of Christ. It invites us not into gloom, but into grace, an opportunity to draw closer to the One who first drew near to us. Through prayer, fasting, generosity, worship, and time with Scripture, we are invited to place our lives afresh in God's loving hands and to allow the Holy Spirit to renew and reshape us.

In recent weeks, our themed preaching series, Hope for a Weary World, has reminded us that Christian hope is not wishful thinking, but a deep confidence rooted in God's promises. We reflected together on hope in grief, hope in times of change, hope in community, hope in prayer, and hope in action. I am deeply grateful to all who contributed to this preaching ministry with such prayerful preparation and faithful leadership. As we move further into March, we look forward to our new series, Moving Stories, trusting that God will continue to speak to us through the stories that shape our faith.

As Holy Week approaches, our journey becomes more focused and more profound, joining the crowds who welcomed Jesus with hope and expectation. On Maundy Thursday, we remember love expressed in humility and

service in the Upper Room. On Good Friday, alongside our Churches together Walk of Witness, we will offer an hour of meditation and music on Zoom at 7pm, creating space to stand quietly at the foot of the cross and reflect on Christ's sacrificial love.

Holy Week assures us that God does not remain distant from human suffering but enters fully into it. In the cross we see both the seriousness of sin and the immeasurable depth of God's mercy. We are reminded that even in our darkest moments, we are not alone.

And then comes Easter...

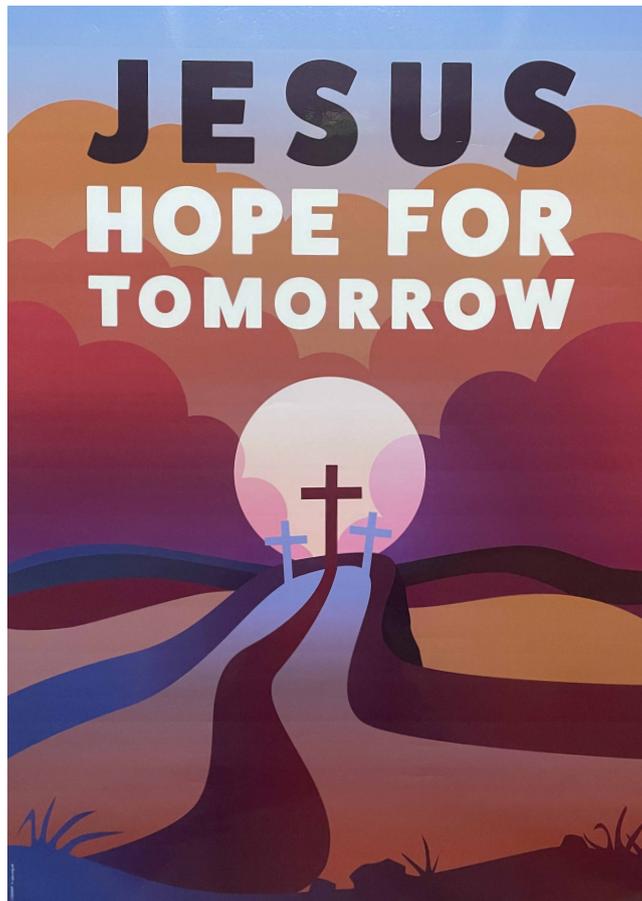
Easter proclaims that suffering and death do not have the final word. The stone is rolled away. The tomb is empty. Christ is risen. Hope lives. The resurrection is not simply an event we remember; it is a living reality that renews our courage, restores our joy, and reminds us that with God, new life is always possible.

My prayer for each of us is that we may walk honestly through Lent, reverently through Holy Week, and joyfully into Easter. May we open our hearts afresh to Christ's transforming love. May we encourage and support one another along

the way. And may our church be place where the hope of the risen Christ is not only spoken of, but truly experienced and lived.

Let's continue this journey together. With every blessing.

David Jebb



Copy deadline for next issue is Friday 20 March 2026

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SUNDAY SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S

more details on website - www.stjohnspb.org.uk

DATE	TIME	SERVICE	PREACHER
Sunday 1 March	10.30	Scout Parade for all ages	Revd David Jebb
Sunday 8 March	10.30	Church Anniversary Service - 85 years	Revd Ali Facey
Sunday 8 March	19.00	Informal Café Worship with coffee, tea and cake	Claire Debnam
Sunday 15 March	10.30	Mothering Sunday plus Creative Church	Revd David Jebb
Sunday 22 March	10.30	Passion Sunday - Holy Communion	Revd Alan Combes
Sunday 29 March	10.30	Palm Sunday - Morning Service <i>more info page 7</i>	Jenet Jebb
Sunday 29 March	19.00	Palm Praise - music, singing and readings <i>more info page 7</i>	Revd Alan Combes

All ages are welcome to our 10.30am services. Under 3s are welcome in church and in the adjoining crèche area at the back. Other children are invited to Junior Johns in the Garden Room. More information from a Steward or Jackie Hart 07825 211657

Revd David Jebb is our Minister at St John's Methodist Church and Superintendent Minister of the St Albans & Welwyn Circuit, overseeing the work of nine churches and one Mission Project and one Methodist Centre. He has ministered in several Circuits across England and brings a strong missional focus, valuing contemporary and formal worship styles and flexible approaches that help people encounter Christ and grow as disciples.

Revd Ali Facey was the previous minister here at St John's and still lives locally with her husband Chris Esdaile. Ali has been chaplain at Milton Keynes University Hospital for the last four years. The job includes visiting patients at the local hospice one afternoon a week and two afternoons in the Mental Health Unit. In her spare time she plays flute in a local music school with termly concerts.

Claire Debnam has been training to be a local preacher for two years and has visited St John's before. She has been a practising Christian for over forty years, but is a relative newcomer to Methodism as she joined the Methodist Church in 2022. She and her husband Rob became Methodists because they were impressed by how inclusive and affirming the Methodist Church had become. Claire originally trained as a language teacher, but in recent years she felt called to study Theology, and in 2023 she completed her Masters Degree.

Revd Alan Combes is a former member of St John's who, after training as a minister, was appointed to the Enfield Circuit in 2013 and then to be Superintendent in the Vale of Stour in the West Midlands in 2019. Alan has recently 'sat down' and become a supernumerary minister in our circuit, so we are pleased to welcome him and his wife Michele as they return to live in Potters Bar.

Jenet Jebb is married to our minister, David, and with their two daughters moved from Sri Lanka to the UK 33 years ago. Before joining us Jenet attended Methodist Churches in Romford and Amersham and has been a worship leader for 14 years. Jenet has built her career in the finance field. When not leading worship, Jenet enjoys singing with our worship group here at St John's.

Themed preaching - Moving Stories

We are called by Christ to see each human being as a precious creation of God and to see Christ within those we meet. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees reports there are 120 million refugees (49 million being children) in the world at the moment. In this sermon series we hear moving stories from the bible of people forced to move. 'Moving Stories' calls us to change negative attitudes and perceptions towards refugees in our cities and country.

Lent 1 February 22 - Hagar and Ishmael are **Banished** whilst Joseph is **Trafficked** *Genesis 21: 8-21 and Genesis 37*

Lent 2 March 1 - Scout parade service so themed preaching paused this week

Lent 3 March 8 - Phoebe is **Commended** *Romans 16: 1-16*

Lent 4 March 15 - Abram & Sarai are **Obedient** *Genesis 12: 1-9*

Lent 5 March 22 - Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch are **Included** *Acts 8: 26-40 and Matthew*

Lent 6 March 29 - Palm Sunday: Jesus is **Accepted?** *Luke 19: 29-40*

Lent reflections and prayers for all

As you know, the season of Lent began on 18 February - Ash Wednesday. Lent is a sacred time for reflection, prayer, fasting, and meditation, a season in which we are invited to draw closer to God, study the Scriptures together, and deepen our spiritual journey.

This year, we have chosen the Lent Study Guide Cover to Cover: 'Who is the Christ?', which will be available both in person on Thursday mornings and online on Saturday mornings (see more information below). If you would like to join us, please contact our Circuit Administrator, Autumn Leung, via email at: circuitastaandw@gmail.com.

I have always believed that prayer, reading the Bible, and listening to God are vital in any situation, and for the growth of the Church in God's Kingdom. As I was reflecting recently, I came to think of Lent as a School of Prayer.

The forty days of Lent provide a unique opportunity to deepen our practice of unceasing prayer. The desert whether literal or metaphorical strips away distractions and creates space for God. The disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are not ends in themselves, but tools to clear away what prevents us from abiding in God's presence.

Each Sunday of Lent offers a guide to this way of living

First Sunday - 22 February 2026

In the wilderness with Jesus, we learn that prayer is our bread sustaining us daily. "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Second Sunday - 1 March 2026

On the mountain of Transfiguration, we hear, "Listen to him." Prayer begins with listening not filling the silence, but attending to God who speaks.

Third Sunday - 8 March 2026

At the well with the Samaritan woman, Jesus offers living water, "a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." Prayer is that spring within us, meeting our deepest thirst.

Fourth Sunday - 15 March 2026

The man born blind gains sight and insight. Praying without ceasing means seeing with new eyes recognising Christ in every moment.

Fifth Sunday - 22 March 2026

At the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus weeps and cries out. Our unceasing prayer joins His, trusting God is at work even in darkness.

Palm Sunday - 29 March 2026

Jesus enters Jerusalem amid shouts of "Hosanna!" and later "Crucify him!" Prayer keeps us present with Him through joy, betrayal, and sorrow.

Easter Sunday - 5 April 2026

The tomb is empty! Death is defeated. Unceasing prayer becomes unceasing praise as we rejoice that Christ is risen.

May this season of Lent be a time of blessing, reflection, and renewal for all our congregations.

Revd David Jebb

Journey Through Lent Together

Weekly Study on Zoom
Saturdays | 9:00–10:00 am

Leaders

- 21st Feb – Deacon Nigel Perrott
- 28th Feb – Dr George Woods
- 7th March – Revd Alan Combes
- 14th March – Revd Daniel Yovan
- 21st March – Jacqi Guy
- 28th March – Revd Rosemary Mutopo



Saturday morning Lent studies

Do join us as we Journey Through Lent via zoom, weekly on Saturdays, 9.00-10.00am. This will be a time for reflection and deepening of our faith as we prepare our hearts for Easter. To maintain a secure and uninterrupted space for prayer, we'll be using the zoom link below.

Lent Study in person on
Thursdays
10am to 11 am
in the Clifton Room

Study Facilitator Schedule

- 19th Feb – Revd Dr David Jebb
 - 26th Feb – Revd Rosemary Mutopo
 - 5th March – Revd Alan Combes
 - 12th March – Revd Daniel Yovan
 - 19th March – Revd Dr Sheryl Anderson
 - 26th March – Revd Alan Combes
- ALL WELCOME!



<https://zoom.us/j/97669187794?pwd=Oa89G4HgTsjKkwMZuUMTjldK8B6Eum.1>

Creative Church - February

Theme - Hope that leads to action

As the farmer separates the sheep and the goats so God looks on people who help others or help themselves. Matthew 25: 32

A farmer may decide to put his sheep in one field, and the goats in another. Volunteers come forward and put on sheep and goat masks!

Sheep and goats are often separated because their feeds are different as this is because sheep are highly sensitive to copper, which is present in so some goat feeds so this cannot be consumed by sheep.

Bible Story

Jesus used the example of separating the sheep and goats as a picture of how God looks at us:

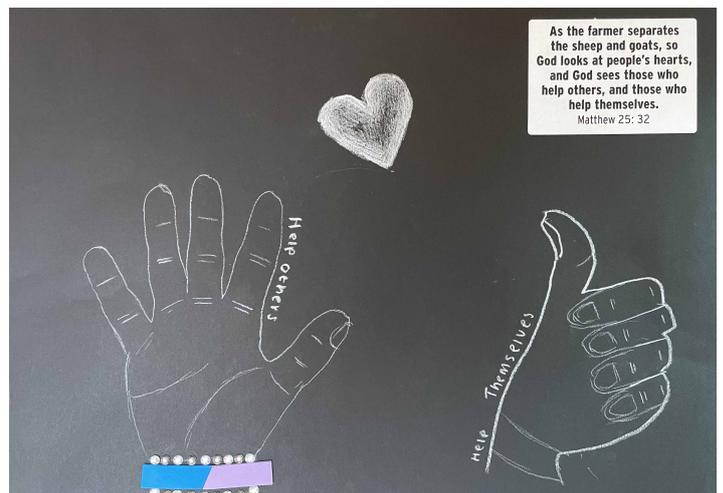
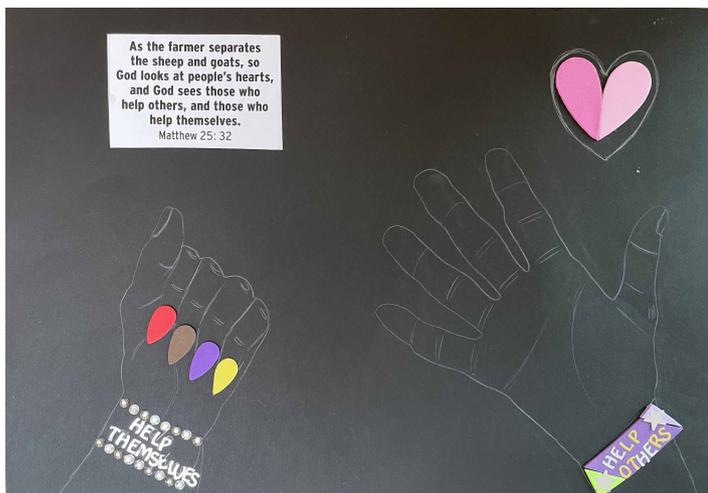
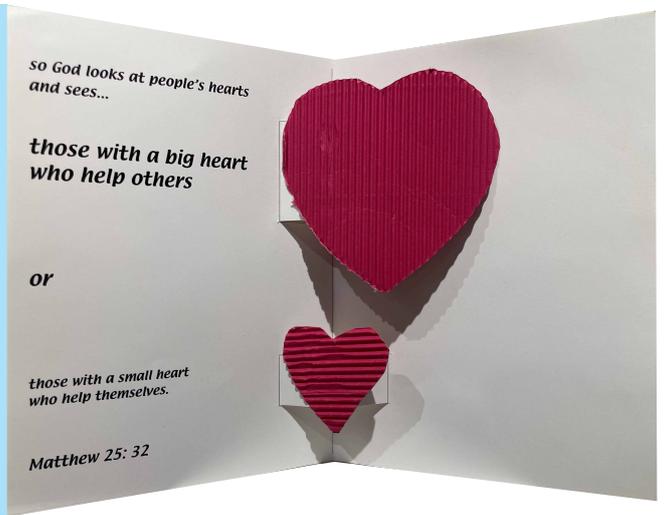
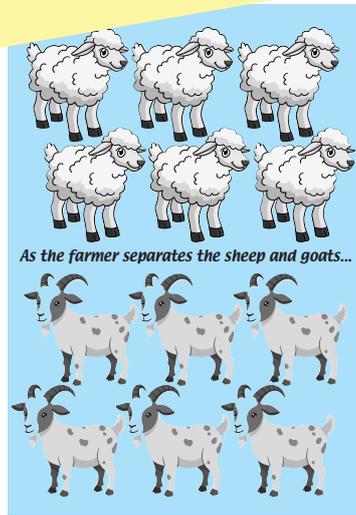
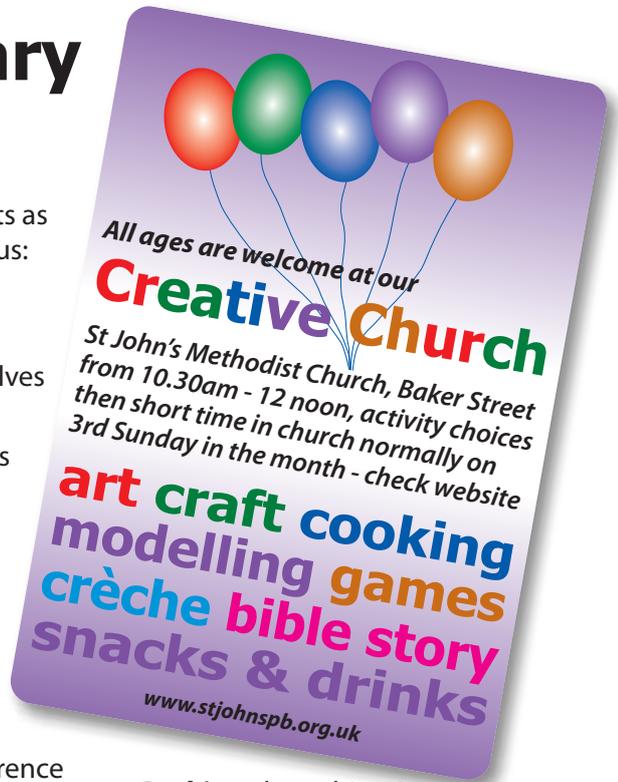
- Those who help others (open hands)
- Those who look after themselves (closed hands)

We know from the bible stories about Jesus that he went out of his way to help others. Jesus encouraged us to follow his example. Jesus is saying

that our faith in God and our hope in God's promises has to make a difference in the way we live and how we go out of our way to help others.

Our crafts were

- **Cooking** sheep biscuits
- **Modelling** sheep and goat pen
- **Decorating** sheep and goat collage
- **Making** pop up cards with hearts
- **Drawing** open and closed hands



Congratulations to **Richard Gillett** who celebrates his 90th birthday this March. Richard is housebound, but remains positive as he recovers from a fall. **Lorna, Miranda** and **Barbara T** also have birthdays in March.

We were sorry to hear that **Brenda Smale** had died. Brenda was a member of St John's for many years, before moving to Suffolk to be nearer her family. We pray for Brenda's family, and brother-in-law Colin at this difficult time.

We also pray for **Jilly Dennell** and her family following the death of her mother-in-law **Eileen**.

It was a shock to learn of the sudden death of **Andy Borrows**. Andy used to be a member of the Worship Group and also a sound desk technician before he moved to Sawbridgeworth. Please remember in your prayers his wife Sylvia, their 3 children and extended family as they adjust to their loss. Andy's funeral takes place on Monday 16 March, 11am at Old Park Meadow Natural Burial Ground, Coppice Lane, North End, Dunmow CM6 3PL. The service will be led by Revd Alan Combes.

We remember those who are housebound and in need of care and support: **Marilyn Kirtan, Pam Taylor, Trissie Wooten, Beth Wickens and Barbara Wright**.

David and Sandra Bowler's 9 month old granddaughter **Violet** has been in hospital suffering a severe ear infection followed by other complications. She is now out of hospital, but continues to receive treatment at home. Keep her parents **Sophie and Patrick**, big sister Tilly and other members of the family in your prayers at this worrying time.

Long-standing members may remember **Revd Colin Smith** who was our superintendent minister when we were in the Barnet Circuit. Unfortunately Colin is now suffering from advanced dementia and in residential care. Pray he will receive the care he needs to make his life comfortable.

The Book of Remembrance records the following members and friends who died in March in past years...

Alan and Barbara Bowler, Mary and Rita Hayes, Gill Gillett, Stephanie Hancock, Archie Male, Alf Sleep, Avril Pye, and Barbara Biaggini

If you knew these people, spend a few moments thinking of them and the times you shared together.

If you have news to share in future editions of St John's News, please contact Helen Strand whose details are above



Scout Quiz Evening - Saturday 7 February

The Scout Quiz Evening was a very relaxed and enjoyable evening, with 10 tables (72 people) participating. Thank you to everyone who came along to support us.

Sally Gunning and Giles Andre compiled and acted as Question Masters for, an excellent quiz. The rounds covered a wide range of topics, and the questions were challenging but still accessible. A huge thank you to them both for all their work in preparing and running the quiz.

Dick Waterhouse produced an amazing meal which was served part way through the evening - delicious home-made soup, baked potatoes with a



variety of toppings, and a choice of cakes to follow. Jess Waterhouse organised a team of Scouts, Executive Committee members and other volunteers to serve and deliver the meal to the tables. A big thank you to Dick, Jess and everyone else who worked so hard to make the evening

such a success.

The total raised by the Quiz Evening (including the raffle) was £888, before deduction of the cost of the hall and the meal. We hope to achieve a net amount of around £500 to add to Scout funds and enable us to continue giving our young people a positive experience of Scouting.

With many thanks - Liz Bekooy

Coming up...Coming up...Coming up...Coming up...Coming up...Coming up...

JUMBLE SALE

Saturday 7 March

at St John's - entry from Heather Way

£2 at 10am OR 50p at 10.30am

Finishes about noon

'JUMBO' JUMBLE SALE

(instead of the Spring Market)

on Saturday 23 May.

at St John's in the main hall

Further details in SJNews next month!



at Our Lady and St Vincent's, 243 Mutton Lane, EN6 2AT.
 The 2026 World Day of Prayer is prepared by Christian women from Nigeria with the theme:
'I will give you rest, come' - Matthew 11: 28-30.
 The service focuses on finding peace amid addressing challenges like poverty, violence, and injustice.

Churches Together in Potters Bar

CTPB would like to invite you to join them at 8.30am on the first Saturday of each month as they pray for the Churches and community of Potters Bar. Meetings last approx 45 minutes followed by breakfast.
www.ctpb.org.uk



Saturday 7 March -

St Mary the Virgin and All Saints, The Walk, EN6 1QQ

Saturday 4 April - Potters Bar Baptist Church, Barnet Road, EN6 2RB

Cuffley Manor Care Home Service - Wednesday 18 March, 3pm

Once a month we lead a short service of worship followed by an opportunity to chat to the residents over tea and coffee afterwards. We do need 3 or 4 people to help with the singing and take a small part in the service. Please speak to David Jebb (01707 440863) if you can come along and help in this way.



Looking back in time - Church on 'the box'

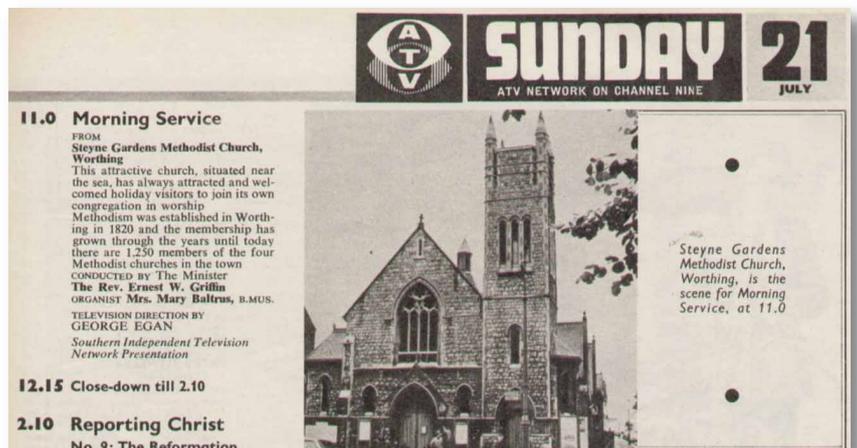
When health or bad weather prevents us meeting for worship the technology in our homes can bring the worship to us. The weekly morning service on BBC Radio and, if you have access to the internet, streamed services from local and distant fellowships via Facebook and YouTube. In our circuit two of our sister churches stream their worship. We live in an age where any fellowship can share their worship outside the walls if they want to.

The first BBC Radio broadcast of a service was January 1924. Before this the National Telephone Company through their Gerrard Street Exchange offered subscribers a central London church service down the telephone. Televising of Anglican services was introduced by ITV in 1955 and was continued into the 90's when competition for advertising revenue from C4, C5 deemed church services unviable as they could not be interrupted by adverts.

Other than during Covid, the BBC did not see the need to televise a live weekly morning service. Preferring to put the budget into 'Songs of Praise', and a live morning meditation 'This is the day' broadcast from a suburban front room. Finally, we must not forget 'Stars on Sunday' devised and presented by Jess Yates with popular TV faces which always attracted a larger audience than 'Songs of Praise'. Perhaps a lesson that the unchurched in our community prefer an easy access to faith. A challenge for outreach teams.

From the TV Times listing Sunday 21 July 1968, the Morning Service came from Steyne Gardens Methodist Church, Worthing, using a Southampton based unit. The minister leading this worship was Rev Ernest Griffin who would move to Potters Bar in 1970. On the other side BBC 1 was showing 'The Singing Bible' musical versions of Old and New Testament passages. BBC 2 Trade Test Transmission. Perhaps the 'Potters Wheel'.

When ITV launched 70 years ago in September 1955 many feared Commercial Television programming would lower standards to get the largest audiences. Associated Rediffusion promised to 'Be the BBC with adverts'. As we can see from the programme listings ITV had a strong commitment to religious broadcasting and the Channel Nine transmitter switched off at 12.15 so that the telly would not intrude on Sunday lunch. Those were the days!



Don Hart

Easter services and events in April



'PALM PRAISE'

Sunday 29th March at 7:00 pm

Come and join the praise and worship together.

All are warmly welcome! Let us gather in joyful song and thanksgiving as we prepare our hearts for Holy Week.



"This is my body ...
this is my blood ...
... given for YOU."
(Luk 22:19-20)

Maundy Thursday Service with Holy Communion

Thursday 2nd April at 7:00 pm

Join us for a reflective and meaningful service. Together we will share in Holy Communion and enter into this sacred moment of humility, love, and service as we prepare for Good Friday.

All are warmly welcome.

**1 CROSS
+ 3 NAILS**

4 GIVEN

**Good Friday Meditation
on 3rd April 2026 | 7:00 pm**

(45 minutes - via Zoom)

Join us for a quiet and reflective time as we meditate on the Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross.

All are warmly invited to share in this sacred time of reflection.

**THE 7
LAST
WORDS
OF
JESUS
ON THE
CROSS**

*** Good Friday * Easter Saturday * Easter Sunday ***

Easter 2026

**Be part of the story
as it unfolds**

**ADMITTANCE
FREE!**

**7:30pm
3/4/5 April**

**ON THE GREEN NEXT TO
Queen's Theatre Hornchurch RM11 1QT**

hornchurchpp.co.uk

Passion Play - 3, 4, 5 April

This play happens once every 5 years in Hornchurch - David Jebb's former church community. It attracts around 6,000 people and is a major production, taking place on Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. The play is free to attend and has a clear Gospel message. Any visitors would be most welcome as organisers are keen to promote it beyond Hornchurch.

Good Friday - 4 April

Walk of Witness / Pilgrimage to War Memorial, Oakmere Park, High Street for a short outdoor service with other Churches in Potters Bar.

More details to follow in next months SJNews and on our website:

www.stjohnspb.org.uk

Easter Sunrise Service

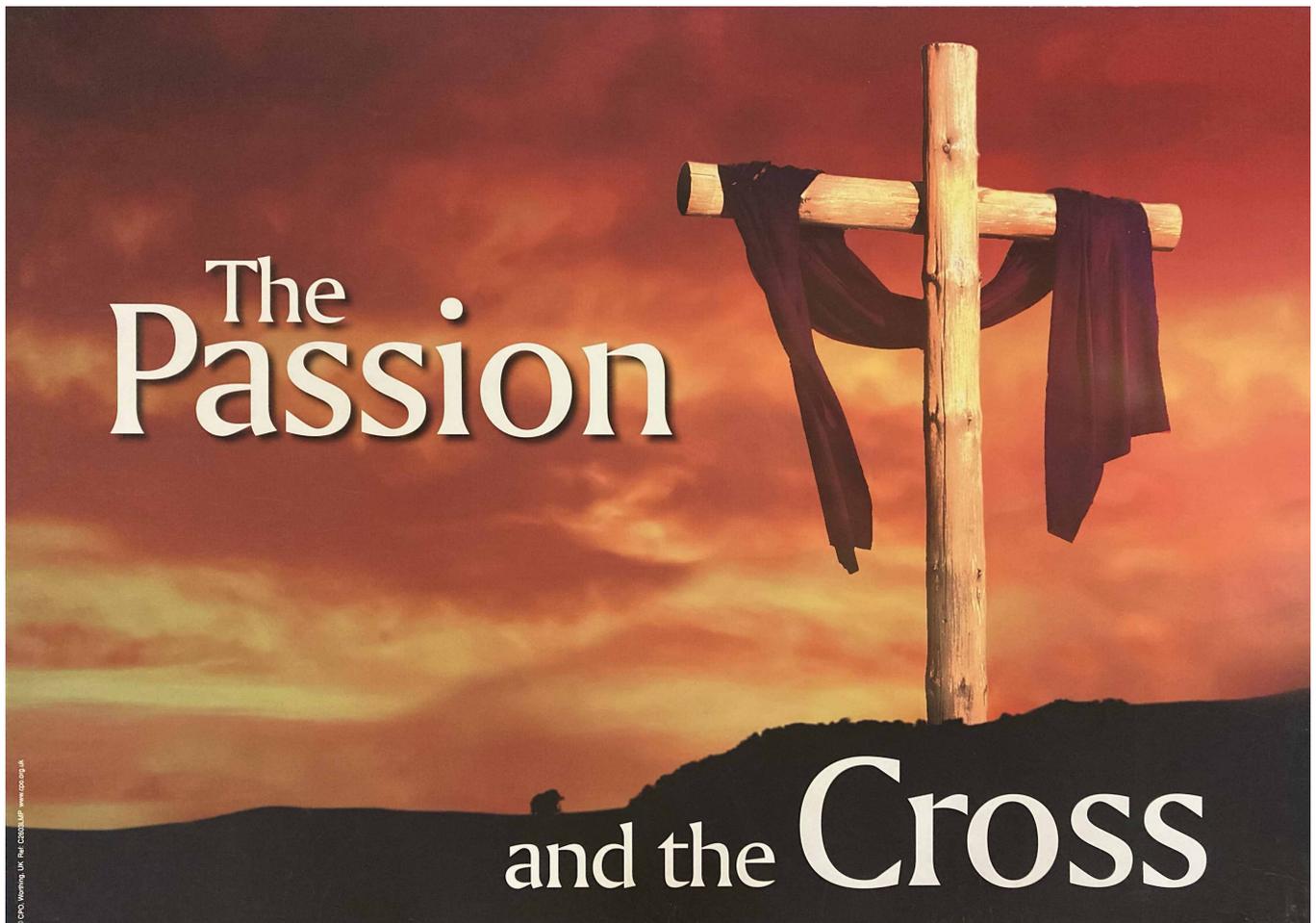
Sunday, 5th April 2026

Sunrise Gathering & Breakfast

**6:00 am - Service begins in the
Walled Garden, Shenley Park**

**6:30 am - Hot cooked breakfast available
at the on-site restaurant!**

(Orders will be taken directly after the service.)



REGULAR ACTIVITIES AT ST JOHN'S

more details on website - www.stjohnspb.org.uk

Mondays	10.00 - 11.45am	Jumping Johns - Main Hall	Margaret Bland 07887 532128
	10.00am - 12.00pm	Can We Fix It Group	Roger Croughton 01707 650438
	10.30 - 11.30am	Vestry Hour	Rev David Jebb 01707 440863
Tuesdays	8.00 - 10.00pm	Badminton - Main Hall	Margaret Bland 07887 532128
	11.00am - 3.00pm	Welcome Space	Barbara Thompson 01707 665621
Wednesdays	2.30 - 4.30pm	Strafford Gate House Group - 3rd Wednesday	David Carter 07709 284852
	6.30 - 8.00pm	Cubs - Main Hall	www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk
	7.45 - 9.00pm	Bible Study in Clifton Room - fortnightly	Lesley Humphreys 07961 347152
Thursdays	7.00 - 8.30pm	Scouts - Main Hall	www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk
Fridays	10.30am - 12.00pm	Morning Coffee, Clifton Room - 1st and 3rd Fridays in month	
	10.30am	Byng Drive House Group - fortnightly	Dawn Fenner 07969 924346
	6.15 - 7.15pm	Beavers - Rainbow Room	www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk
Saturdays	9.00 - 9.45am	Let's Pray Together (zoom)	Rev David Jebb 01707 440863