

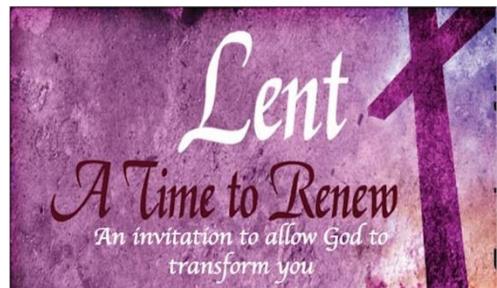


February 2026

From our Minister – Revd David Jebb

Dear Friends,

As I write to you on this cold, wet January day, Lent is almost upon us; a sacred season inviting us to pause, reflect, and turn our hearts more fully toward God. It is a time to step away from the busyness of life and consider our spiritual journey, asking the question, *“How will I repent and return to God with all my heart?”*



Lent is not merely about giving things up; it is a season of honest self-examination, prayerful reflection, and spiritual renewal. It calls us to open ourselves to God's transforming presence, to examine our lives with humility, and to deepen our faith in ways that shape how we live and love in the world.

The season begins on **18 February** with the **Ash Wednesday Service**. We will join other churches for a service at **7:30pm at Our Lady and St Vincent Church**, where we will receive the sign of ashes on our foreheads—a powerful reminder that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. What a call to humility, reflection, and renewed devotion.

This year, we invite you to participate in our **Lenten Study on Who is The Christ? by Anne Calver**. This study guide encourages participants to explore the identity of Jesus Christ through six focused sessions. It examines six aspects of Christ's character, helping us reflect on who Jesus is and what His life means for the world and for our faith.

Each session includes opening and closing prayers, Bible readings, contextual background, reflections on Christ's character, and discussion questions. The aim is not only to learn about Jesus intellectually but to encounter Him personally, allowing that encounter to shape how we live and follow Him.

Please sign up early to secure your place. Further details are included elsewhere in this newsletter.

In addition, we will hold a **Lenten Preparation Quiet Day from 9:30am to 1pm on Saturday 14 February** at Birchwood Methodist Centre, led by Revd Dr Sheryl Anderson. This will be a time for prayerful reflection, stillness, and spiritual renewal—an opportunity to step away from the busyness of life and draw nearer to God.

Even in times of difficulty, you are not alone. God walks with you, and your church family holds you in prayer. Each Lenten practice draws us nearer to the One who redeems, restores, and transforms us from the inside out.

May this Lent be a time of renewal, honest reflection, and intimate encounter with the living God. May His peace, guidance, and love fill every moment of this holy season.

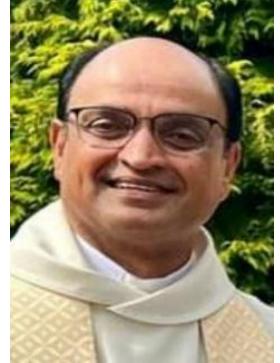
In His grace

David Jebb – Revd David Jebb, Minister of St John's Methodist Church

You can also see David's monthly blog on our website at www.stjohnspb.org.uk/ministers-blog

Copy deadline for next issue is Friday 13 February 2026

Articles in 'St John's News' contain personal opinions of contributors and may not reflect the opinions of the Editors, Minister or Members



Services

SERVICES			
Date	Time	Service	Preacher
Sunday 1 February	10.30am	Morning Worship	Revd Nick Young
Sunday 8 February	10.30am	Morning Worship	Jenet Jebb
Sunday 8 February	7pm	Café Worship	Revd Alan Combes
Sunday 15 February	10.30am	Creative Church	Revd David Jebb
Sunday 22 February	10.30am	Holy Communion	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 of the church. Other children are invited to Junior Johns in the Garden Room. More information from a Steward or Jackie Hart 07825 211657.

About Our Preachers ...

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 band here at St John's.

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 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.

Care Homes Services

Cuffley Manor Care Home Service –Wednesday 18 February at 3:00pm

We lead a service at Cuffley Manor Care Home on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. If anyone is able to join us to sing along with the residents, it would be a wonderful ministry. Most of the residents are over 90, and they really appreciate our 30-minute service.

Thank you very much for your help.



Themed Preaching Series

Sunday, 1 February: Hope in God's Promises - Preacher Revd Nick Young



- **Key Texts:** Hebrews 10:23; Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 1:20
- **Big Idea:** God's promises are sure; anchoring our hope in them steadies us in uncertain seasons.
- **This Week:** We will learn what it means to 'hold fast' to God's promises and how they shape our decisions and courage.

Sunday, 8 February: Hope in Prayer - Worship Leader: Mrs Jenet Jebb

- **Key Texts:** Philippians 4:6–7; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18; Matthew 7:7–11
- **Big Idea:** Prayer connects weary hearts to God's peace and power; it is both our refuge and our calling.
- **This Week:** We will explore prayer as a place of refuge, a relationship of persistent asking, and a life-giving spiritual practice.

Sunday, 15 February: Hope that Leads to Action – Preacher: Revd Dr David Jebb

- **Key Texts:** James 2:14–26; Matthew 25:31–46; Galatians 5:13–14
- **Big Idea:** Genuine hope is active faith that transforms hearts and also transforms the world through practical love.
- **This Week:** We will see how faith and works together are the proof of a living hope and how we can mobilise as a church for service.

Hope of Resurrection

- **Key Texts:** 1 Peter 1:3–4; Revelation 21:1–4; Romans 6:4
- **Big Idea:** The ultimate hope is resurrection—God's promise of final renewal changes how we live now.
- **This Week:** We will celebrate the present hope of the resurrection and how its power fuels our mission and holiness today.

St John's Family News



Congratulations to Renée from the Welcome Space Group who celebrated her 97th birthday on New Year's Eve.

Comiserations to Sally who is nursing a broken arm and Margaret Jackson who has a fractured ankle. Pray that they both will soon be free of pain, and the healing progresses well.

Give thanks for the organisers and helpers of Welcome Space in providing older members of our community companionship and a tasty lunch in a warm room to escape from the winter weather.

The Book of Remembrance records the following members and friends who died in February in past years; Gladys Weller, Kathleen Male, Pat Merrill, Connie Strand and Ted Lence.

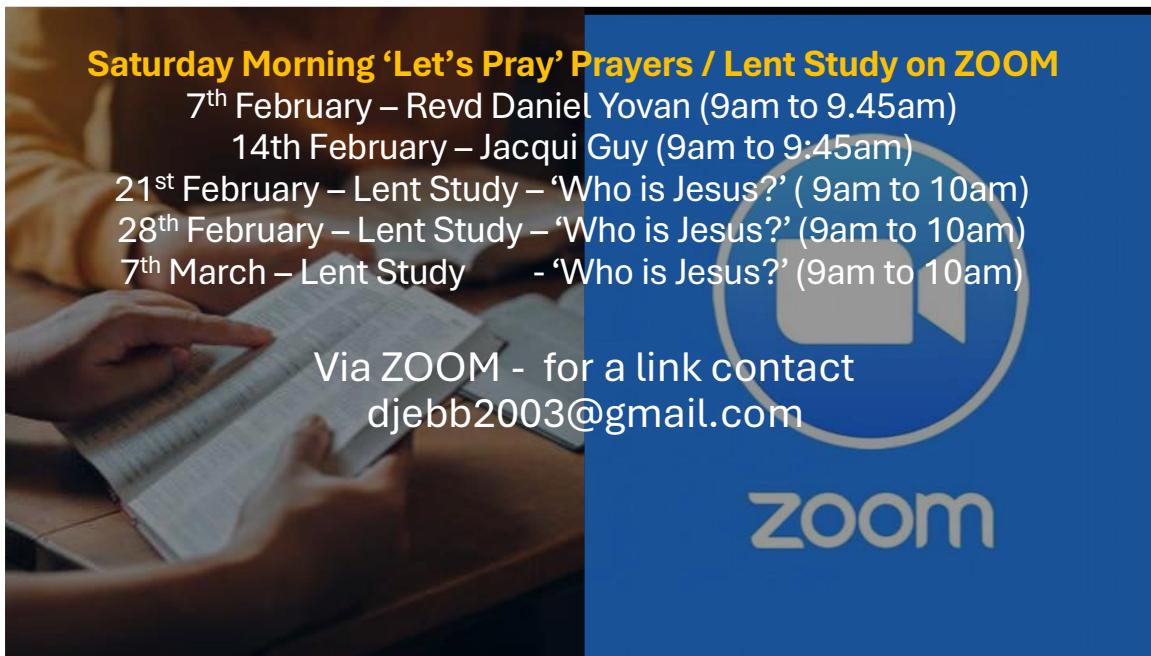
If you knew these people, spend a few moments thinking of them and the times you shared together.

Jackie and Don Hart would like to thank their church friends for their prayers, whilst Don was in hospital last month. Don is making a steady recovery and will be back to normal soon ❤

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

Helen Strand - Pastoral Coordinator (email hstrand@aol.com phone 07821 786170)

Saturday Morning Prayers



Saturday Morning 'Let's Pray' Prayers / Lent Study on ZOOM

7th February – Revd Daniel Yovan (9am to 9.45am)
14th February – Jacqui Guy (9am to 9:45am)
21st February – Lent Study – 'Who is Jesus?' (9am to 10am)
28th February – Lent Study – 'Who is Jesus?' (9am to 10am)
7th March – Lent Study – 'Who is Jesus?' (9am to 10am)

Via ZOOM - for a link contact djebb2003@gmail.com

zoom

You are warmly invited to join our weekly prayer group for a time of reflection and prayers every Saturday morning at 9am.

These 45-minute gatherings are lovingly led by a dedicated team of ministers, lay preachers, and other friends.

What began as a local gathering has

blossomed into a beautiful, global community. We are truly blessed to be joined regularly by brothers and sisters in Christ from our church, across our circuit, throughout the country, and even from as far away as **South Africa and New Zealand**.

We look forward to praying with you!

Please note:

During February, we are slightly adjusting our Saturday morning *Let's Pray* sessions in recognition of the season of Lent. We will be introducing a 1-hour Lent Study, which will include time for prayer together.

- The first two Saturdays (7th & 14th February) will follow the usual 45-minute prayer schedule (9:00 am – 9:45 am).
- From 21st February onwards, sessions will be 1 hour (9:00 am – 10:00 am) to allow for Lent Study and shared prayer.
- After Lent, we will return to our regular 45-minute prayer sessions.

Join via ZOOM:

For a link, please contact djebb2003@gmail.com

Churches Together in Potters Bar (CTPB)



Prayer Breakfasts: Churches together in Potters Bar invite you to join them at 8.30am on the 1st Saturday of each month as they pray for the Churches and Community of Potters Bar. Meetings last for approximately 45 minutes followed by breakfast. The next Prayer Breakfast will take place on Saturday 7 February at Potters Bar United Reformed Church, Darkes Lane EN6 1BZ

4th POTTERS BAR SCOUT GROUP QUIZ EVENING

**Saturday 7 February 2026
at
St John's 7pm for a prompt 7.30pm
start.**

**Tables of 8, but we can
accommodate smaller numbers.
£10 per person including hot meal.
Bring your own drinks –
no alcohol please.**

Contact Liz Bekooy (Tel 659597)

4th POTTERS BAR SCOUT GROUP JUMBLE SALE

**Saturday 7 March
St John's Methodist Church**

**Entry (from Heather Way)
£2 at 10am or 50p at 10.30am.**

Finishes about noon.

SAVE THE DATE!

**4th POTTERS BAR SCOUTS
JUMBO JUMBLE SALE
Saturday 23 May**

4th Potters Bar Scout Group Quiz 2026

Congratulations to this year's winners and very many thanks to everybody who took part. After a little postal delay, from the 45 entries the winners are:-

First place	Ms Nelms of Letchworth Garden City
Second place	Mrs Bagley of Potters Bar
Third place	Mr Evans of Welham Green Hatfield

Your very generous donations helped us raise over £800, which will be shared with the Noah's Ark children's hospice in Barnet, North London.

We look forward to your participation in our next quiz at the end of this year, the subject of which is already under discussion. If you have any suggestions for its topic, please let me know.

Our heartfelt thanks to you all.

Derek Smith - Fund raising team member

World Day of Prayer

A service is to be held at Our Lady and St. Vincent on Friday 6 March at 11am. The theme this year is "I will give you rest, come", prepared by Christian women from Nigeria.



Thank you from Helen and Peter Barlow

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Harvest Appeal for the homeless and rootless in London via the Whitechapel Mission. Rob Ward (Treasurer) tells me that over £2,100 is now to hand and is about to be transferred to them. In addition, there were five large boxes of breakfast provisions and toiletries plus a whole trailer full of clothing which has been accrued over the past 9 months -which was collected by Tony Miller on 3 November. Thank you so much for this gargantuan effort yet again – and I hope you realise just how much it is appreciated in these difficult times as the numbers of homeless on the East London streets continue to soar.



The Mission remains open for breakfast on just weekdays only for the moment due to the amount of staffing that it is taking to keep the guests safe, although it is hoped that employment costs will soon drop and income will return once more to make 7 days-a-week opening possible once again.

I have now given up my role as a Trustee there due to our move, and it is also now necessary for someone else to take up the liaison role for St John's with Tony and the Whitechapel Team. I do hope that someone is able to take this on and continue the St. John's contribution to this (sadly) necessary but very valuable mission in the coming years.

Peter Barlow

A short note to thank everybody for the card, gift, the prayers and the good wishes for our send-off at the end of October. The photographic tribute was amazing – so special thanks to all who contributed! We first came to St John's in 1986 and the last 39 years seem to have flown by as St Johns has been such a large part of our lives as our family grew up.

As we move to a new phase of our life in Cornwall - back to Helen's roots in St Ives - we will long remember our association with St Johns and will continue to pray for you all and for the many deep friendships that we have made over the years. Thank you everyone for the send-off and for your part in our lives. We will be back in Hertfordshire from time to time as both Rachael and Jonathan are now living in the north of the county.

We wish you every blessing for your ongoing witness.

Helen & Peter Barlow

Carol Singing

A band of singers and musicians went out on December 22 singing carols and raising money for Action for Children. After 2 hours of singing, we returned to Church for soup and cakes. We managed to raise a magnificent £472.22. *Thanks to everyone who supported the event.*



Sally Gunning

Talk by Andrew Ward – HMS Prince of Wales

March 10 at 7.30pm – Clifton Room

Robert & Freda's son, Andrew, will give a talk on his voyages and deployment to Japan.

There will be lots of photographs, and an opportunity to ask questions. Refreshments will be provided.



Thinking Lunch



Marlborough Road Methodist Church

Thursday 5th February 2026

Paul Kelly-Moore

Finding Peace in Poetry and Prisons

Thursday 5th March 2026

Reverend Emmanuel Onabanjo

Nigeria past and present: Hoping for A Better Tomorrow

Thursday 7th May 2026

Reverend Hendry Ponniah

Tribal Mission in Borneo

Thursday 4th June 2026

Neil Kieran, SADC Principal Emergency Planning and Community Safety Officer

How do we respond to a local emergency?

From 12.30pm to 1.30pm. Please bring your own lunch and drinks. Half an hour talk and then discussion. Donations will be gratefully received to cover expenses, any profits will be given to the speaker for a charity of their choice.

SERVICE RECORDINGS

Are you aware that we generally record all 10:30 services on a Sunday morning and these are available to listen to if you have not made it to church or if you want to re-listen to a service that has inspired you? If you contact me or ask one of the stewards, then we can email you an audio copy of the relevant service.

Guy Fenner – 07866 624549

PASTORAL CONTACTS

By the time you read this we will probably have had our Pastoral Contact dedication at the Service on Sunday 25th January. We have a small team of members who offer to keep in contact with other members and adherents to ensure they are integrated into Church life, and to keep in touch if they are unable to come regularly to church. Following the departure of Helen and Peter Barlow, we have a number of people no longer covered by a Pastoral Contact, so if you are a member of St John's and you feel you could offer some time to being a Pastoral Contact then please speak to **David Jebb, Helen Strand or Guy Fenner**.

Lent 2026 Themed Preaching - Moving Stories

The repentant reflection of Lent helps us prepare for the true meaning and depth of God's love for all, expressed in Holy Week and on the cross.



Christ was born a refugee, his parents forced to move by factors beyond their control. Christ's response in his ministry was always to stop, see and accept people as they are and then to engage with them in their context, bringing to bear the wisdom, justice, compassion and grace of God. Indeed, we pray to this day, guided by him saying; 'thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven'.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) reports 120M refugees in the world at the moment and 49M of these are children! How we see, treat, speak of and ultimately journey with those who are different from us and those who are forced to 'move' as result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or climate change is one of the central characteristics of this generation.

Moving Stories calls us to change the negative attitudes, perceptions and stereotypes towards migrants in our cities / country, by giving them a voice and platform to share their stories. Together we will look at the many examples of the challenges faced and lessons learnt from migration stories from the Bible.

We are called by Christ to see each human being as a precious creation of God, to see Christ **within** those we meet and those for whom we pray... SO it is that we get 'moving stories' – stories of people forced to move and in hearing those stories may we be open to be moved.

Lent 1 22/2/26	Hagar & Ishmael / Joseph	Banished / Trafficked	Genesis 21:8-21 Genesis 37	Author: Michaela Youngson / David Musgrave
-------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------------	---

Big Idea: In common with many women throughout history and today, Hagar has no power to decide her own future. Meanwhile Joseph is captured and sold by his jealous brothers – his life is no longer in his own control.

This Week: We will introduce the theme of Moving Stories and focus on how human jealousy, greed and power today lead to slavery, sexual powerlessness and the exploitation of the vulnerable and the poor - especially women and children. Where is God in these stories?

Lent 2 1/3/26			PARADE	
------------------	--	--	--------	--

The themed preaching series will pause for this week.

Lent 3 8/3/26	Phoebe	Commended	Romans 16:1-16	Author: Cameron Kirkwood
------------------	--------	------------------	----------------	--------------------------

Big Idea: Moving from one place to another can be a difficult process, especially for a refugee. Built into Methodism is the idea that no matter where in the world we may move to, some form of commendation, either by way of a letter or transfer of membership takes place.

This Week: Paul's letter of commendation includes an indication of the kind of service Phoebe had been giving as part of her Christian discipleship. This week we consider How might we get to know those who visit us, such that we might be able to commend them to others? Imagine the impact this could have on someone's life?

Lent 4 15/3/26	Abram and Sarai	Obedient	Genesis 12:1-9	Author: Wendy Beard
-------------------	-----------------	-----------------	----------------	---------------------

Big Idea: This chapter in Genesis comes after a long list of ways that the people had disobeyed God causing much destruction and harsh consequences for themselves. God now tries a different tactic. Instead of working with people in large numbers, God chooses to come alongside and build a relationship with one person.

This Week: Abram and Sarai chose to give up everything to be obedient to God. This week we explore how we can live our lives today in faith and trust?

Lent 5 22/3/26	Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch	Included	Acts 8:26-40 Matthew	Author: Vicci Davidson
-------------------	------------------------------------	-----------------	-------------------------	------------------------

Big Idea: This traveller – a foreigner from afar (Ethiopia was considered the ends of the earth in those days), worked for a Queen in a time where patriarchal systems were more usual. He would also have been looked down upon because he was a eunuch. And yet Philip responds to God's prompting and the Eunuch comes to faith.

This Week: How do we respond to people of other countries, cultures and faiths when they enquire about our faith? Some folk think our Methodist Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a fad – this Sunday we unpack how God makes everyone feel included.

Palm Sunday 29/4/26	Jesus	Accepted?	Luke 19:29-40	Author: David Hardman
------------------------	-------	-----------	---------------	-----------------------

Big Idea: Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is a 'snapshot' of the journey of Christ at this particular point. We do not see the poverty of his birth, the scared flight from genocide of his childhood or him being chased out of his hometown synagogue.

This Week: Too often we are presented with a 'snapshot' of migration that informs public opinion but fails to tell the whole truth. In our final service on this Lent journey we focus on the importance of looking at the reasons why people migrate, and more importantly we begin the process of focusing on the individual person with compassion and understanding.

Lent Quiet Day



P R E P A R I N G F O R L E N T

Lent Quiet Day
14th February 2026
9:30 for 10am and finish at 1pm
at Birchwood Methodist Centre
Birchwood Ave, Birchwood, Hatfield AL10 0PN
(bring your own packed lunch)

Led by Revd Dr Sheryl Anderson, former chair of the Liverpool Methodist District.
Book your place via Circuit Administrator's email: circuitastaandw@gmail.com on or before 7th February!



Take time to pause, reflect, and prepare your heart for the season of Lent at our **Lent Preparation Quiet Day on Saturday 14 February**, from **9:30am for 10:00am until 1:00pm**, at **Birchwood Methodist Centre**. Bring your packed lunch—coffee and tea will be provided.

The day will be led by the **Revd Dr Sheryl Anderson**, former Chair of the Liverpool Methodist District and now Supernumerary Minister in the West Hertfordshire and Borders Circuit. Sheryl is a highly experienced minister and a skilled leader of retreats and quiet days. She has led many such events and continues to be actively involved in guiding conferences, retreats, and study days across the Methodist Connexion.

Lent is more than “giving up chocolate” or small sacrifices. It is a sacred season to prepare our hearts, minds, and spirits to journey with Christ through reflection, repentance, and renewal. A Quiet Day provides a space to step away from the busyness of life, to pause, and to enter into prayerful reflection—helping us approach Lent with clarity, focus, and spiritual refreshment.

This Lent Preparation Quiet Day is an opportunity to explore what it truly means to prepare—through silence, guided reflection, and the gentle guidance of an experienced retreat leader. Come and allow this day to renew your soul and deepen your journey with God.

To reserve your place, please email our Circuit Administrator at circuitastaandw@gmail.com

Christmas at St John's Church

The World Premier of 'An Advent Christmas'



The Potters Bar Churches were delighted to present 'An Advent Story' at St Johns on Saturday 20 December, written by Bridget R Edwards. Several members of St John's took part, with an audience of around 120 people, raising money for our chosen charities. The play was well received, and thanks goes to everyone who supported this venture. *Watch this space for future projects!*



Chocolate Christmas

This year we re-introduced the 4pm All Age Carol Service, which was held on Sunday 21st December. Many presents adorned two Christmas Trees and with the promise of Chocolate, the congregation waited to see how this would unfold.



Children were asked to find presents in a numbered order, identify who could open the present (*one example was: a member of the Fix it team*), and take the present to a volunteer. The present contained a short reading, forming part of the Christmas story, and a chocolate bar. The clever bit was that a name of a chocolate bar was incorporated into the reading as a pun. The first reading was:

Once upon a time, some 2000 years ago, a young girl called Mary heard a **WISPA** from the angel Gabriel that she was to be the mother of God's son.



30 presents later we had heard the Story, sung Carols, listened to the Message and laughed and groaned at the chocolate bar puns. All that remained was to eat some chocolate! Thank you to Michele for recommending the script and organising the event. Thank you also to Don and Les for providing the special lighting effects.

David Rhodes

Lent Study 2026



Lent Study 2026 – Who is The Christ?

This Lent, take a fresh look at **Jesus' life and character** and discover the eternal impact He left on the world.

We are exploring six fascinating aspects of Christ:

- ★ The Builder
- ★ The Humble King
- ★ The Holy King
- ★ The Harvester
- ★ The Risen King
- ★ The Commissioner – sending us out with His love

Sessions include:

- Prayers
- Bible readings and context
- Thought-provoking discussion starters
- Reflection points

Join us:

- **In person:** Thursdays, 10–11 am, in the Clifton Room
19 Feb | 26 Feb | 5 Mar | 12 Mar | 19 Mar | 26 Mar
- **Online via Zoom:** Saturdays, 9–10 am
21 Feb | 28 Feb | 7 Mar | 14 Mar | 21 Mar | 28 Mar

 **Zoom Link:** Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97669187794?pwd=Oa89G4HgTSJKkwMZuUMTjldK8B6Eum.1>

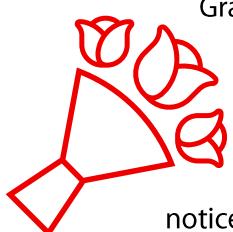
Meeting ID: 976 6918 7794 | Passcode: 418313

 **Sign up at the back of the church or email:** djebb2003@gmail.com

Reconnect with Jesus this Lent – and let His story inspire your life!

Church Decorations and Flowers

Grateful thanks to everyone who has donated towards the flowers and other decorations in the church during 2025. The flower group decorate the pedestal at the front of the church for Sundays throughout the year and include other decorations at Festival times. We hope you enjoy the displays.



If anyone would like to contribute towards the flowers in 2026, please indicate on the form on the notice board at the far end of the vestibule, and pass your donation to me, Barbara or one of the Stewards as the date approaches. Thank you.

Margaret Bland (07887 532128)

Regular Activities

Day	Time	Activity	Contact
Mondays	10am – 11.45am	Jumping Johns Toddlers	Margaret Bland 07887 532128
	10am – 12pm	Can We Fix It Group	Roger Croughton 01707 650438
	10.30am – 11.30am	Vestry Hour	Revd David Jebb 01707 652978
	8pm – 10pm	Badminton	Margaret Bland 07887 532128
Tuesdays	11am – 3pm	Welcome Space	Barbara Thompson 01707 665621
Wednesdays	2.30pm – 4.30pm	Strafford Gate House Group (Usually 3 rd Wednesday in the month)	David Carter 07709 284852
	6.30pm - 8pm	Cubs	www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk
	7.45pm – 9pm	Bible Study in Clifton Room (Fortnightly)	Lesley Humphreys 07961 347152
Thursdays	7pm – 8.30pm	Scouts	www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk
Fridays	10.30am – 12pm	Morning Coffee in Clifton Room (1 st and 3 rd Fridays in the month)	
	10.30am	Byng Drive House Group (Fortnightly)	Dawn Fenner 07969 924346
	6.15pm – 7.15pm	Beavers	www.4thpottersbar.scoutsonline.co.uk
Saturdays	9am– 9.45am	Let's Pray Together (by Zoom)	Revd David Jebb 01707 652978

*But those who trust in the LORD for help
will find their strength renewed.
They will rise on wings like eagles;
they will run and not get weary;
they will walk and not grow weak.*

Isaiah 40:31

Copies of next month's SJ News will be available in Church on Sunday 22 February 2026!