

*Remembrance
Services
inside*

st JOHN'S
Living God's Love

Parish Magazine

AUTUMN 2023

*What's going on in the lead-up
to Harvest, and beyond*

above the altar
through gothic arches
wind-tossed foliage

Haiku by Susan Lee Kerr, 2023. Haiku in English are based on a Japanese form of poetry, briefly conveying a moment of awareness of nature or human life.

Thoughtful, quietly spiritual, this page in the magazine is intended as a space for reflection. St John's Church and its Remembrance Garden is open every day from 10.00am to 5.00pm for anyone who wants a quiet place for personal reflection.

st JOHN'S

Living God's Love

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ADDRESS

St John's Church
5 St John's Road, Harpenden
Herts AL5 1DJ
www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Our magazine is published four times a year and is delivered free to all homes and businesses in the parish.

We are very grateful to those who write contributions and the many volunteers who distribute and deliver the magazines, come rain or shine, to everyone in the parish.

We welcome advertisements and are delighted to be able to provide full colour.

EDITOR

Susan Kerr

magazine@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

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St John's PCC takes no responsibility for statements made in advertisements or other content in this magazine nor linked websites, nor for any matter arising therefrom.

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Copy deadline for the Winter issue:
Friday 13th October 2023



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Vicar's Welcome

Autumn is one of my favourite seasons, and even more so with the wonderful views St John's affords of the ever-changing Harpenden Common. The term also marks many new starts – either to school, or a return to work after the summer holidays. Our main focus is our Harvest Festival (1st October) when we will be supporting the Bishop of St Albans Harvest Appeal aiming to 'Crack Food Poverty Together' through providing chickens to poor families in Kumi, Uganda (see details page 13). November is a time of remembering, and we hold our All Souls' service on Saturday 4th November at 3pm – anyone is welcome to attend (see page 21 for ways to have a loved one's name remembered) and Remembrance Sunday is 12th November where we remember those in Southdown who gave their lives in conflict (see page 7).

As always, as your local Vicar, this magazine comes with many blessings and prayers for you all.

Tim

Rev'd Tim Vickers
Vicar of St John's Harpenden

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A Warm Welcome Awaits



A warm welcome awaits you at St John's Harpenden, a friendly Anglican church. This photo was taken at Pentecost (Whitsunday) on 28th May 2023.

Remembrance Services Special Services of Remembrance

All Souls' Remembrance Service

Saturday 4th November 2023 3.00pm

Everyone is welcome.

For names to be remembered, email the Parish Office.

parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 12th November 2023 9.30am

Parish Eucharist



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Bike 'n Hike 9 September 2023

All ages can have a great day out visiting beautiful churches in our area and raise funds for the Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust. Join by bike, hiking or walking, or sponsor those who do! Money raised is divided equally between St John's and the Trust to give grants to repair churches and chapels in Beds and Herts. And St John's is in need of repair! Anyone can take part - you don't have to be a church goer.

Andrew Harbord is the contact for running the day at St John's parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

To sponsor go to <https://www.justgiving.com/page/stjohns-bike-n-hike-2023>

Further information <https://bedshertshct.org.uk/bike-n-hike/>



Like this magazine? Can you help deliver it?

Just once every season, might you help deliver St John's Parish Magazine to homes near you? There are some 4,000 to be distributed! Personal hand delivery keeps the magazine free – and contributes to the Southdown community spirit. Your chosen quantity and location would be bundled to be picked up at St John's or dropped off to you.

PS Walking is good for your health!

Contact Amanda Knights at parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk or 01582 712776

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Welcome to Ritah Namakula, our new curate



Rev. Ritah Namakula, on her first Sunday as St John's new curate, flanked by her son Kisakye and daughter Kirabo.

My name is Ritah. I am the new curate at St John's in Southdown. I was ordained on 1st July 2023. I have two children, my son Kisakye (Grace of God) and my daughter Kirabo (Gift of God). I was born in Uganda, East Africa. I went to faith schools there and it was while I was in secondary school that I gave my life to Christ. I have lived in the UK for more than thirty years.

We have been in Southdown for a month now and everyone has been very kind and welcoming to all of us. I have struggled to learn everyone's name, but in time I will. I am looking forward to getting to know everyone.

We worshipped at Christ Church and St John's Church, Radlett, for more than 16 years. It was while at Christ Church that I started my journey of discernment. Unlike most people I did not have the road to Damascus moment. It was my vicar at Christ Church, ten years ago, who approached me and talked to me about considering serving God in ordained ministry. I had never considered this and at the time I felt that I was serving God where I was and helping when help was needed. My vicar encouraged me to pray about this and to go on the St Albans Diocese 'Seeking the Way' course to find out if this was what God was asking me to do. I did and here I am now serving God.

Flower Guild

An oasis of flowers?

In 1954 Oasis was invented which revolutionised the art of flower arranging. Before that chicken wire was used which gave limited scope for accuracy of design. Now we realise that Oasis, because of its plastic composition, is harmful to the environment so we are trying various ways to do without it. To this end St John's Flower Guild invited Julie Amor of the Abbey Flower Guild to show us how they do things. This she did - using chicken wire - so we have come full circle!



Now Harvest is upon us when most of the 23 St John's Flower Guild members will roll up their sleeves to fill the church with colour incorporating food bank items into their designs. If you love and appreciate the beauty of flowers, why not come and join us. Members take turns on a rota and work together, sharing our enjoyment of flowers in the peace and tranquillity of the church.

Contact Elizabeth Curran parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk



Harvest Festival

Let's get cracking!

Harvest Festival
 Sunday 1st October 2023 9.30am
 All-Age Eucharist

Rainbows and Brownies lead the prayers in a special service of thanksgiving, including a collection for the [Bishop's Harvest Appeal](#) and donations for St Albans and District Foodbank.

For the foodbank, please bring tinned and packaged food, not fresh foods. From instant coffee to tinned tomatoes, see the shopping list of current needs at <https://stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk> And see the list of eight district foodbanks and how to get vouchers to access them; or phone 01727 811 118.

This year's Harvest Appeal supports Mission Direct's work in Kumi, Uganda, by providing materially poor families with chickens. These give them a sustainable and low-cost food source, and provide an income stream because they can sell some of their eggs and new chicks that hatch. Their first hatchlings are returned to the project so that another family can benefit.



Mission Direct is a small Hertfordshire-based Christian charity that takes volunteers overseas to work short term in partnership with local communities, building hope and bringing change through practical and sustainable development.

<https://missiondirect.org/>



Bishop Alan and friends, introducing the Bishop's Harvest Appeal.

First Communion

My brother and I were invited to do our first Holy Communion at St John's with my friend Jem from school. It was so much fun! We went to church for two lessons before and did a treasure hunt for Bibles and I read some verses out loud from Mark to my friends. We talked about what the bread and the wine means and why we take it and I tried the wine but I didn't really like it.

When it was the day of the Holy Communion I had a pretty, white dress to wear which I had to be careful in, and we met some friends and my Grandad in church. I was a bit nervous but not too nervous and I think I did it all right. We had cake at home afterwards which was yummy and had lots left over for days. I enjoyed the Holy Communion lots, especially the bread.

— Alice Violet May Balfour, age 7



First Communion, 9th July 2023. With Revd Tim, left to right: Alice, Jem, Sophie, Jamie, Laurence. On 3rd September three more St John's children — Grace, James and Millie — join in their first Holy Communion.

Blessings on beginnings...

Sunday 3rd September 2023 9.30am
All-Age Eucharist
and First Holy Communion

For the start of academic year and return to work after the holidays, bring your back packs, book bags, briefcases, laptops for a blessing at the altar the first Sunday in September. And join the celebration of First Communion too, a step forward for three children of St John's.



Big changes: how does it feel?

Hi, my name is Clemency, and it's a year of change for me. This autumn, I will be at Sir John Lawes School. I had a transition day there and met my Head of Year and my new Form Tutor. I am excited to go to secondary school because there are going to be so many new people to meet (and make friends with!), but also so many new things to learn and subjects to explore. Although there are many things to look forward to, I still have a few worries. One of them is all the new people who will be around me in September, and the fact that our school site is SO big!

Another big thing was leaving my current school, Harpenden Academy. In our school, we had lots of fun things at the end of the year to do with leaving, for example: cooking a three-course meal for our families as part of the Young Chef of the Year Award; and having a Leavers' Assembly. I know that I will really miss my primary school, but I am also really looking forward to a new beginning at secondary.

— Clemency Venner, age 10

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Lively learning

If you are interested in the world, keen to keep your brain active and want to participate in an activity with like-minded people, then a Harpenden Learning for Leisure course may just be what you are looking for. HLfL is a not-for-profit organisation run by local people.

Courses this autumn include creative writing, history, art, music, literature and current affairs. Led by experienced professionals, each course comprises 10 weekly daytime sessions. No qualifications are required to attend. There is no homework and no exams. So look us up, read about the courses on offer, and get learning for leisure!

Classes run from The Harpenden Trust Halls in Southdown, Harpenden and the Function Room of the Plough and Harrow pub. Free parking at the Co-op car park nearby.

For information see www.harpendenlearningforleisure.org.uk and for further queries contact Elaine O'Brien: info@harpendenlearningforleisure.org.uk



'Making Sense of Modern Art', HLfL course led by local artist Liz Sergeant.

Hall Hire

Did you know our halls are available for hire at the weekend?

If you are looking for a space for a party or function get in touch!

We have a large hall that holds 140 people with a kitchen, tables, chairs and crockery.

A lovely garden perfect for children.

A committee room for smaller groups

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for rates and availability

Little Acorns

Tuesday 12th September 2023 – Term begins!

Little Acorns is a friendly toddler group for babies, pre-school children and their carers. We meet in St. John's Hall every Tuesday 10.00 – 11.30am. You are assured of a warm welcome, a cup of delicious coffee and home-made cakes. The children get a healthy snack around 11.00 followed by a story and singing.



This term our activities will include

- Celebrating Harvest
- Celebrating our 2nd birthday
- Christmas activities including following the stars into church to find the stable

Due to half-term there's no meeting 24th October. Then we resume 31st October – 19th December 2023.

Just turn up! No booking necessary. A voluntary donation is all that is asked. For more information, please contact parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk
Telephone 01582 712776

**Christening
at St John's**

Are you interested in having
your child christened?

If you live in Southdown you can have
your child christened at St John's (even
if you're not a regular church goer)

If you'd like to have a chat about what's
involved please email
parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

FUSION PRE SCHOOL SOUTHDOWN – 1 YEAR ON

WOW! What an incredible first year we have had at St John's Church Hall, welcoming and supporting numerous local children and families. We have well and truly settled in.

We have restored the hall garden creating an enriching outdoor space benefitting all hall users, particularly our children who use it daily. A huge thank you for the continued support of St John's Church, our amazing staff team and the Harpenden Trust.

Fusion Pre School continues to grow day by day. Since September 2022 we have introduced an early drop off for parents, Forest School on a Tuesday and successfully trialled opening on a Wednesday.

We love being out and about in the Southdown community, so if you spot us come and say hello!



Tracy Wilkins, Director



Rebecca Wilkins, Manager

Please contact Miss Rebecca Wilkins our Manager, if you want to get in touch. 07908 121891 – preschoolsouthdown@fusionchildcareservices.co.uk

DID YOU KNOW?

Whilst there is no churchyard at St John's there is a Garden of Remembrance. It's a place of quiet and reflection (and the odd passing train) to remember our loved ones.



Ways to Remember

As well as the Garden of Remembrance there are many ways to remember your loved ones in name and spirit at St John's.

- Inside the church in the south aisle is a Remembrance Book for those whose funerals are held at St John's.
- On the anniversary of a funeral held at St John's we remember loved ones by name on the anniversary of their death. We say this during the daily prayers and on Sunday.
- Even if you don't attend St John's or the funeral was not at St John's, if you live within the Southdown parish you can still have a loved one's name remembered in prayer on All Souls' Day, Saturday 4th November 2023. Email or write us. No details are needed, just the name, ideally by 1st November, to the Parish Office.
parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Waste Not Clothes Swap

A social evening for teenagers and adults.

The evening begins at 6.30pm as we look through the available clothes over a glass of wine and good company. We then draw lots to take it in turns to pick out our favourites.

Saturday October 7th, 6.30-8.30pm

**Tickets include a free drink
£2 adults
£1 under 18s**

Eventbrite for tickets: <https://shorturl.at/btvU2>

All Saints' Church Hall, 129 Station Road, AL5 4UU

Good quality donations needed. Please bring from 23 September to drop off points (All Saints', St John's, St Mary's, St Nic's churches)

Any profits donated to charity. For more details, contact ClothesSwapHarpenden@gmail.com

YOU'RE INVITED



A Church for All Ages

Junior Church – meets on the second Sunday of the month during the service. It is for primary school ages, reception and up. A chance for children to learn and explore about God through games, activities and teaching.

Mini Church – meets on the second Sunday of the month during the service. It is for preschool children under 5 years old. A chance for young children to explore, play and hear the story the Junior Church will be discussing.

Junior Music – open to all ages up to 18. They meet a few times a month to rehearse a piece that we perform within the All-Age Sunday services. All musical offerings are welcome from singing to instruments, any and all abilities!

T@3 – aimed at those of wiser years, held on the last Friday of each month at 3.00pm in the church hall. It provides enjoyable companionship over a cup of tea, homemade cakes and sandwiches. Everyone is welcome to come and meet up with old friends or indeed make new ones. Do let us know if you might require a lift.

Faith and Light – a non-denominational worship and fellowship group for adults with learning difficulties, their families and carers. It meets on the first Sunday of most months at 4.00pm in the church hall. Most meetings include some craft, occasionally drama and a time of worship followed by tea.

For more information or to register your interest contact lauryn.awbrey@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk or call Lauryn on 01582 624823

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CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2023



Many thanks to all church members who delivered envelopes and to everyone who donated so generously to this year's Christian Aid (CA) Appeal.

Harpenden raised the grand total of £6,666 including Gift Aid and many more will have given directly online.

Our efforts have never been more vital, as poor farmers in **Malawi** struggle to cope with inflation and the climate crisis, for which they are not at all responsible. CA are helping them survive and prosper, by switching to drought-resistant pigeon peas, which can feed their families and create sustainable incomes.

Otherwise, CA is actively involved in **Ukraine**. The catastrophic dam disaster on 6th June 2023 has flooded at least 37 towns and villages with thousands forced to leave their homes. CA's local partner immediately responded with emergency supplies of food, water and shelter and will continue to support longer term.

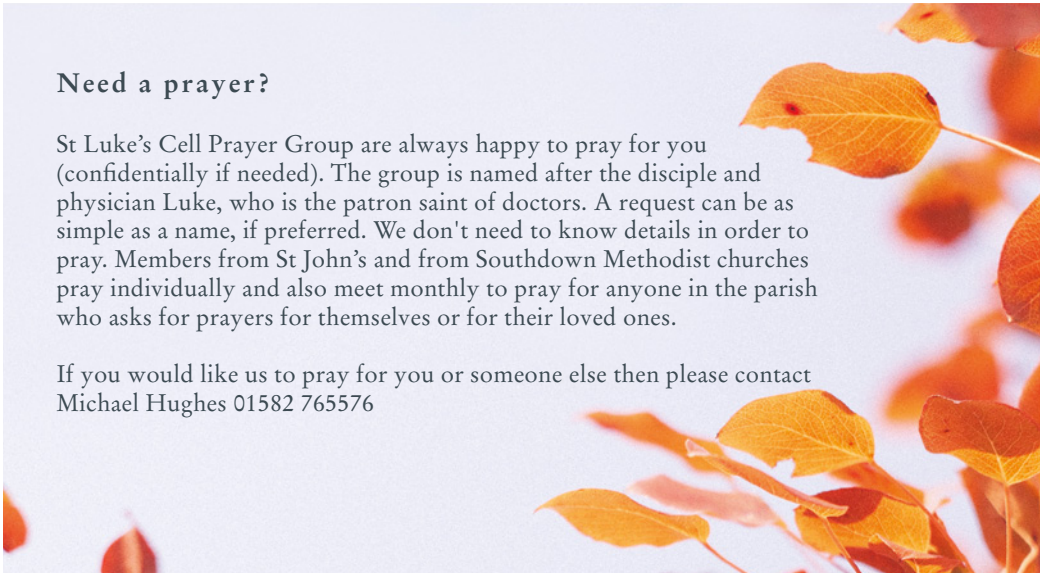
Please go to the CA website www.christianaid.org.uk if you would like to contribute to the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.

*Pat Hudis, Chair of Harpenden
Christian Aid Committee*

Need a prayer?

St Luke's Cell Prayer Group are always happy to pray for you (confidentially if needed). The group is named after the disciple and physician Luke, who is the patron saint of doctors. A request can be as simple as a name, if preferred. We don't need to know details in order to pray. Members from St John's and from Southdown Methodist churches pray individually and also meet monthly to pray for anyone in the parish who asks for prayers for themselves or for their loved ones.

If you would like us to pray for you or someone else then please contact Michael Hughes 01582 765576





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Mothers' Union

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As autumn evenings draw in we look back on a lively summer and forward to a season of inspiring talks and activities. Our meetings are open to visitors. Just turn up one first Thursday at 2.30 in the church Committee Room!

September — Desi Page from Friends of Tose tells us about the work at Tose Respite Care Centre in Zimbabwe where they provide life-saving care and a loving home for children and young people with severe mental and physical disabilities.

October — Linda Randall talks about Talking Books. This RNIB Service is absolutely free and books are also offered in Braille. The service began in 1935 when books were provided to war blinded soldiers. Talking Books are also offered by digital download and up to six books at a time may be borrowed. What a brilliant resource this is!

November — Charmian Highsted shares information about Domestic Abuse. Mothers' Union in the Diocese supports St Albans and Hertsmere Women's Refuge as well as refuges in Luton, Bedford and Royston.

Carol Cooke, Branch Leader. Contact parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk



Coffee and biscuits in the dining room of Gorbambury House for the summer outing. Viscountess Grimston herself showed St John's Mothers' Union around her beautiful home. Members also met in a delicious and fund-raising garden party for the Summer of Hope Appeal. And the Wave of Prayer was held in Saint John's Lady Chapel. Every area in the world where Mothers' Union is active is prayed for somewhere during the year.

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Parish registers

Baptisms

Welcome to the family of God

19th April 2023

Maxwell James Broughton

14th May 2023

Charlotte Jayne Foster

10th June 2023

James Alexander Phillips

Funerals in Church

May they rest in peace

19th May 2023

Betty Elise Mitchinson

22nd May 2023

Edna de la Mare

2nd June 2023

Ian Macdonald

30th June 2023

Andrew Hunt

Weddings at St John's

If you're considering a church wedding and you live in the parish, or have a connection to the area, we invite you to consider St John's church for your marriage ceremony. Contact the church office to arrange a time to discuss your plans. We would love to be a part of your special day.

parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Telephone 01582 712776

To find out about planning a wedding in a Church of England church, visit www.churchofengland.org./life-events/your-church-wedding





Regular Services at St John's

Sundays

- 8.00am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
- 9.30am Parish Eucharist (*also live streamed*) followed by coffee in the hall.
All-Age Eucharist, *normally 1st Sunday of the month*

Wednesday

- 10.30am Holy Eucharist is celebrated in the Lady Chapel

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

- 9.30am Morning prayer is said
- 5.00pm Evening Prayer is said

Tuesday

- 9.00am Morning prayer is said
- 5.00pm Evening Prayer is said

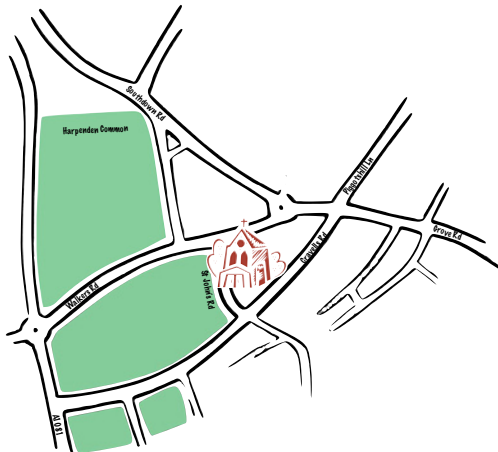
Church is open every day from 10.00am to 5.00pm.

Service times may change so please check the calendar on our website or sign up there to our weekly or monthly newsletter www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Watch our Parish Eucharist and other special services on our YouTube channel - search for "St John's Church, Harpenden" or visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/StJohnsChurchHarpenden>

The Parish Office is open Monday – Thursday 9.30am - 2.30pm



PARISH OFFICE

For enquiries, including marriages, baptisms, funerals and hall bookings, please contact the parish office.

Amanda Knights

Telephone: 01582 712776
parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

If you are in need of help or know anyone in need of support, please contact support@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Parish Directory

VICAR

Revd Tim Vickers

Telephone: 01582 469343
vicar@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

READERS

Lauryn Awbrey

Telephone: 01582 624823
lauryn.awbrey@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

David Nye

Telephone: 01582 762785
dandhnye@btinternet.com

Anne Edwards

Telephone: 01582 767449

WARDENS

Heather Nye

wardens@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Craig Greene

music@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

TREASURER

Jon Pitman

treasurer@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

*Remembrance
Services
inside*

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St John's Church, 5 St John's Road, Harpenden, Herts AL5 1DJ

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