

Lent 2025 at St John's Harpenden

The season of Lent is an important time for all Christians – a time to deepen our relationship with God through prayer, reflection and study, as we prepare for Holy Week and our annual remembering of the Suffering, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

An offer of Spiritual Support

Alongside this programme of discussion and worship, we want to offer a special opportunity for every adult at St John's to have a 45 minute conversation with a member of the Ministry Team. We really recommend this to you. Many of us are conscious of our physical health. We have a chance for health check-ups at the GP and we can get fitness tests at the gym. We usually come away reassured, with some sensible advice about what we can do to improve our general health and fitness. As people of faith, our spiritual health and well-being is something we also take seriously, but often we don't have the chance to think about our faith and prayer life or talk it through with someone.

We'd like to offer you just such a chance this Lent with a relaxed and confidential one-on-one conversation for every adult who wants it. This is a chance for you to talk about whatever you want to discuss in your faith – in total confidence and as a way of being encouraged listened to and supported in your relationship with God, and without any sense that you're being judged or tested in some way.

Please get in touch with the vicar if you'd like a meeting.

In addition to this opportunity, we are offering a number of ways to deepen our faith.

This year our focus will be on Holy Week, and offering an opportunity to explore its meaning through Lent so we can make the most of it when it comes.

This leaflet gives some suggestions to help you make the most of the coming six weeks. But they are only suggestions and you will know your commitments and spiritual needs. With different times and days on offer, we hope that you will be able to come along to something. Whatever you decide to give up or take up, however you choose to observe the season of Lent, we hope that it will be a time of encouragement and blessing, a time that brings you nearer to God.

Daily thoughts for the Day

Living Hope is our theme for Lent 2025. In Lent we journey with Jesus on the road to the cross on Good Friday – and beyond, to the transformation of Easter Day.

Living Hope offers us the opportunity deepen our hope in God and think about how our churches can be part of what God is doing to bring hope in the world.

Discover more at cofe.io/LivingHope

Useful Podcasts: Parenting for Faith; Pray as you Go.

Useful Apps: Every Day Faith

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party 4th March 2025

Join us at St John's Church Hall from 4.30-5.30pm to 6.30-7.30pm for an epic pancake party, with the help of 14th Brownies and 17th Rainbows (and friends). All welcome but to help us know numbers in advance please purchase a ticket (and choose a sitting), which are available for £6 (adult) or £15 (family) from the Parish Office.

Lent Course: BBC Passion

Our Lent Course will be a shared viewing of the BBC Passion. Spread over four weeks we will be watching sections of this BBC Series, which show the events of Holy Week. There will be opportunities to respond to each movie, to discuss further its meaning and to explore how we re-create this during Holy Week.

The session will take place over 4 weeks, each being the same starting w/c 9th March.

Monday	1pm	@ The Vicarage
Thursday	8pm	@ The Vicarage <i>(or committee Room in the Church Hall if needed)</i>
Friday	10.30am	@ David Nye's house

Please sign up for these sessions either in Church on Sunday or via the Parish Office.

There will be a joint fifth session, which will take the form of Tenebrae Service. A Tenebrae service is a Christian tradition that takes place in the dark and involves the gradual extinguishing of candles. The word tenebrae is Latin for "darkness". The service is a meditation on Christ's suffering and death, and is typically held on Maundy Thursday evening or Good Friday morning or afternoon.

This will take place in church at 7pm on Wednesday 9th April 2025 as part of our preparations for Holy Week.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

If you would like to receive this Sacrament as part of your Lenten discipline, please speak with Revd Tim to arrange a suitable time.

A Final thought

We hope that whatever you have read has inspired you and that you commit to come to one (or more) of these series in Lent. Whatever you decide is fine – it's your choice and you know best your needs and diaries. Of course, what is most important of all is that we are fed spiritually, and that through faith, God is at work in each one of us, making us who we are called to be.

Extra Services through Lent

5 th March, Ash Wednesday	10.30am Eucharist with imposition of Ashes. 8pm Sung Eucharist with imposition of Ashes.
9 th March	5pm Institution and Induction Service for the new Rector of the Parish of Harpenden.
16 th March	Contemplative Celtic Evening Prayer
23 rd March	Healing Eucharist
30 th March	9.30am Mothering Sunday All Age Eucharist 5pm Taize Service for Mothering Sunday

What's on for Families

All Age Eucharist: 9.30am on 2nd & 30th March & 10am on Easter Sunday.

Junior and Mini Church: 9.30am on 9th, 16th, 23rd March, and 13th & 27th April.

Good Friday Messy Church: 10am at St John's Church Hall

Our usual pattern of services in the Parish

Sundays

8am	Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
9.30am	Parish Eucharist at St John's (All Age 1st Sunday)
5pm	Evening Service (varies each week – see above)

Weekdays

Holy Eucharist is celebrated on Wednesdays at 10.30am in the Lady Chapel

Morning Prayer is said Monday to Friday at 9.30am

Why not come to one extra service a week as part of your Lent commitment?

Contact details for St John's Church, Harpenden

Vicar:	Revd Tim Vickers	vicar@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk 01582 469343
Curate	Revd Ritah Namakula	ritahs@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk
Website:	www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk	
Parish Office:	Amanda Knights	parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk 01582 712776

Our Church: St John's Church, St John's Road, Harpenden, AL5 1DJ

Holy Week and Easter 2025

Please make a note of the schedule of services below – the most important in the church year. We do encourage you to immerse yourselves in these powerful services in Holy Week as we enter a kind of ‘real time’, reliving and being drawn into the dramatic events of the final days in Jesus’ life that lead to our salvation.

PALM SUNDAY – 13th April

8am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel

9.30 am PROCESSION OF PALMS – starting outside Southdown Performing Arts Centre

Followed on the arrival at church with

PARISH EUCHARIST (with Junior and Mini Church)
with Reading of the Passion

5pm Music and Reading for Holy Week

MAUNDY THURSDAY – 17th April

7pm Maundy Thursday Meal. An immersive celebration of the Eucharist, over a simple dinner in St John’s Church Hall, followed by a candle-lit procession to the church for the service of the watch. All welcome, but do sign up via the Parish Office.

GOOD FRIDAY – 18th April

10am GOOD FRIDAY MESSY CHURCH at St John’s Church Hall

2pm GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY WITH COMMUNION at St John’s

EASTER SUNDAY – 20th April

6am SUNRISE SERVICE AND BREAKFAST
We gather around a fire in the All Saints’ church garden then move indoors to renew baptismal vows around the font and share the first communion of Easter. Followed by vegetarian breakfast in the church hall. 129 Station Road, AL5 4UU

8am HOLY COMMUNION in the Lady Chapel

10am ALL AGE EUCHARIST at St John’s followed by Easter Egg Hunt