

Remembrance
Services
inside

st JOHN⁺s

Living God's Love

Parish Magazine

AUTUMN 2025

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

whistling, swirling
spread wings flex, tail flares -
the kite's serenity

Haiku by David Brown. 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

AUTUMN 2025

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EDITOR

Susan Kerr

magazine@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

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Vicar's Welcome

Hello and welcome to our lively Parish Magazine for Autumn with what is going on (and what has been happening) at your local parish church. Inside you'll find details of some of our regular services such as Harvest Festival and All Souls' service. There's also a date for 'Popcorn in the Pews' a new event for October half term, and details of when Andy Ford, Headteacher of St George's, Harpenden is visiting St John's (helpful for those Year 4 and above hoping to go to St George's). Importantly, you'll find an invitation to our Giving Sunday, where we will talk about how you can help support us financially. I hope you enjoy reading and look forward to welcoming you to St John's soon.



© Sally Masson Photography

*With blessings,
Tim*

*Revd Tim Vickers
Vicar of St John's Harpenden*

www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

An Afternoon of Stage and Screen

Sunday 28th September 3.00pm

Harpenden Concert Band

Featuring music including Star Wars, Jurassic Park, There's No Business Like Show Business, Super Mario Bros, and much more!

Conducted by St John's Director of Music Matt Harrison to open St John's 2025-26 concert series.

Admission free, with proceeds from a collection shared between a charity nominated by the band and provision for music at the church.

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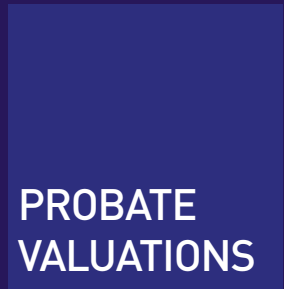
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Junior Choir Grows

St John's newly formed Junior Choir has gone from strength to strength since its formation at the end of 2024. The choir rehearses for 30 minutes, twice a month on Sundays immediately after the morning Eucharist, and joins the Church Choir on the first Sunday of each month and other special occasions, including weddings, and the Service of Lessons and Carols at Christmas. Members are aged from 7 to 12; they receive free musical training, as well as pocket money for their commitment!



"I have grown in confidence in performing to a crowd. Singing in a choir is so much fun!"

'The benefits of singing are well documented, in terms of physical and mental health, cognitive development, social connection and creativity. We would love to welcome new children to the choir in September. There are no auditions; all we ask is that children come along regularly and sing with great enthusiasm,' says Music Director Matt Harris.

Do contact Matt if your child would be interested in joining the choir, or if you have any queries music@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk He would love to hear from you!

"It is really fun singing with people and learning new songs. When we sing with the choir we can hear the harmonies which I like."

"I love having the opportunity to sing in church because it is a really great space and everyone can hear you show off your talent."

Popcorn in the Pews

Big screen projector, bar, popcorn, great company — all inside the church.

Thursday 30th October 2025

4:00pm – Family Screening

Bring the whole family for a fun-filled movie afternoon in the church!

7:30pm – Grown-Up Screening

The bar will be open for a proper midweek night out — movie on the big screen, drink in hand, relax!

Tickets and movie titles will be announced soon. See pew sheets or follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates.





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Meet the New Warden

I have to confess that I'm never really sure what to say when people ask me to "say a bit about myself". I suppose it depends on the context – but, even so... Do I start off by saying how long my wife, Mary Jean, and I have lived in Harpenden (about 30 years – so not quite long enough to count as a native) or how long we've been coming to St John's or what I did before I retired (IT consultant in the voluntary sector). I help out at the Harpenden Trust; I'm a producer and presenter at Mix 92.6 (our local community radio) and I have two children, two grandchildren and a cavapoo, Millie.

St John's has had a long line of very capable and committed churchwardens. Those are some big shoes to fill but I already know that I have bucket-loads of support; I will be relying mostly on Mary Jean – who, as many will know, was churchwarden from 2012 to 2018; and I've already had so many offers of help from members of the congregation. I am hugely optimistic about St John's and how we can continue to build up our ministry... and I have some ideas...

Iain Pritchard

wardens@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk



Iain Pritchard, St John's newly elected Churchwarden. The role is vital to the smooth existence of a church, both practically (bricks and mortar, drains and heating etc) and spiritually (support for the parish priest, a bridge between the congregation and the clergy). Churchwardens act as a link to the wider community and are key to ensuring the church is welcoming and thriving.

All Souls' Service

Remembering departed loved ones

Saturday 1st November 2025 3.00pm

Everyone is welcome.

The service is followed by refreshments.

Names to be remembered can be added on the day, but ideally please email the Parish Office in advance.

parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

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St John's Harvest Wordsearch

Find the twelve harvest themed words in the wordsearch.
Many of them appear in this magazine.

They may be spelled backward, forward, horizontally,
vertically or diagonally!

CHURCH HYMNS GIVING PRAYER
HARVEST FOODBANK GOD CREATION
TINS OFFERTORY THANKS BROWNIES

R	B	P	R	A	Y	E	R	N	S	D	H	I	S
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Harvest Festival

Sunday 5th October 2025 9.30am
All Age Eucharist



God of grace and mercy, whose Son, Jesus Christ, demonstrated his love through acts of compassion and offers freedom from the things that hold us back: we pray your blessing.

May we, your Church, overflow with compassion and generosity as we support efforts to help children to free themselves from poverty through education.

And may your good news of hope and salvation touch ever more people.

- From the Bishop's 2025 Harvest Appeal Prayer

As St John's fills with bounty, Rainbows and Brownies lead prayers in a special service of thanksgiving, including a collection for the Bishops' Harvest Appeal and donations for St Albans and District Foodbanks.

For the foodbank, please bring tinned and packaged food. A shopping list of current needs, from long life milk to small boxes of tea and much more, is at <https://stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/> There's also a list of local foodbanks and how to get vouchers to access them; or phone 01727 811 118

Rewrite Their Future: improve access to education

This year's Bishop's Harvest partners with Mission Direct whose work in Uganda and Zambia focusses on building schools in some of the world's most under-resourced communities. After one year, their schools will serve over 2,945 children. At a time when 250 million children globally are not in school, this is one small but vital way we can help change that reality.

**DIOCESE OF
ST ALBANS**
Living God's Love



The Bishop of St Albans'
Harvest Appeal 2025

Rewrite Esther's Future

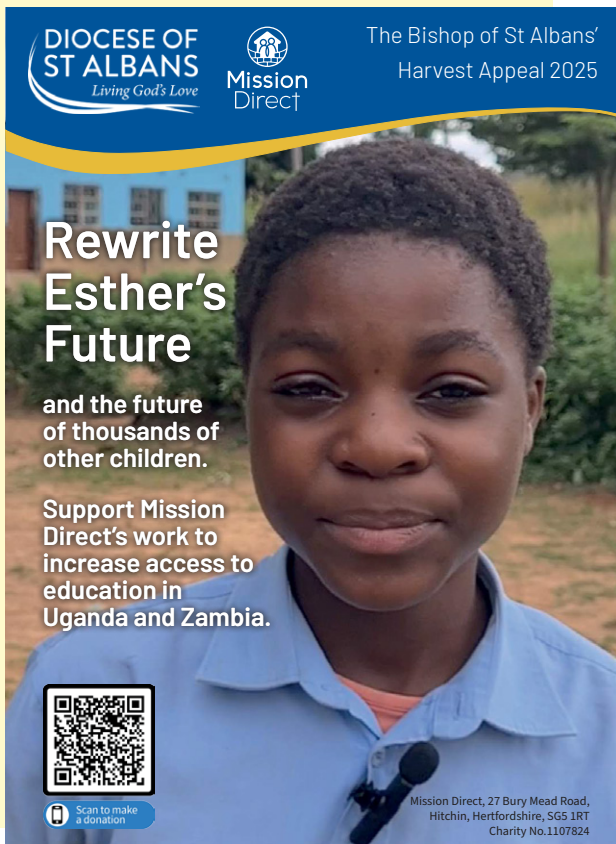
and the future
of thousands of
other children.

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DID YOU KNOW?

The St Albans Mayoralty was established over four centuries ago. This year when Councillor Teresa Heritage, one of the elected District Councillors for Harpenden South Ward, was elected St Albans and District Mayor she selected St John's Revd Tim Vickers as her curate. Resplendent in her formal Chain of Office, red gown and tricorne hat, the Mayor now has a purely civic role. Her duties include supporting and raising funds for specific charities. Teresa has chosen Community First Responders and Pancreatic Cancer UK. Come time for religious aspects like the annual Mayor's Civic service at St Albans Cathedral and the Beating of the Bounds ceremony, Revd Tim undertakes the religious roles for the mayor.



Celebration of Giving

St John's is at the heart of the Southdown community and as you may have read in the Summer magazine, it is totally self-financing.

On Sunday 12th October at 9.30am we hold a special service to celebrate all that has been given to the church both through regular giving by members of our congregation and by occasional giving at services to celebrate special occasions like Easter, Christmas and Baptisms.

We welcome everyone from the local community to join us on Giving Sunday – come and hear how as a church we balance our finances as well as what plans we have for the future to further our outreach in the local community.

Without the generosity of those in our community we wouldn't be around as your local church.

Thank you, and hope to see you on 12th October.

Revd Tim

Giving at St John's

Did you know that...

It costs us £4,000 a week to run St John's, so we can be a place of welcome for all every day of the week.

St John's 2025 Giving Campaign
1st to 15th June 2025

st JOHN'S
CHURCH

Stamps, blister packs and more

Local recycle update

- St John's continues to recycle used postage stamps, candles and greetings cards (not Christmas cards). There are collection boxes in the porch.
- Boots in Harpenden are now accepting empty pill blister packs. This is linked to their recycling app, so that you can get Advantage points. The app also accepts some hard to recycle branded beauty products.
- The Green House in St Albans (46 London Road, AL1 1NG) also take empty blister packs, printer ink cartridges and dental care items. The Green House is a community eco-hub for St Albans, Harpenden and surrounding villages, and well worth investigating: <https://thegreenhousestalbans.org/>



Please note that any unwanted pills should be taken to your chemist for disposal, and not put in the recycling bins.

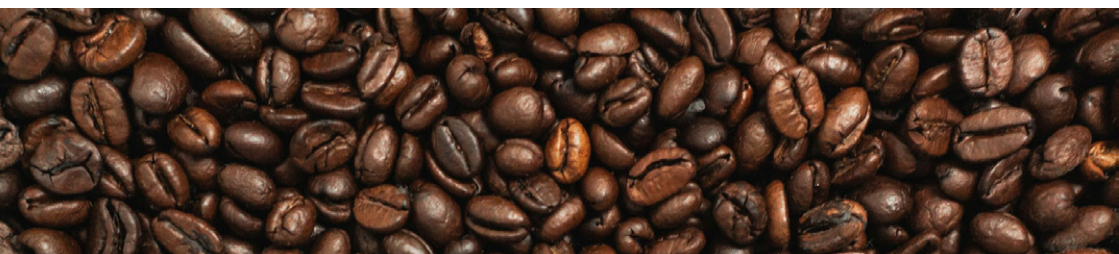
Fairtrade Fortnight

September 22nd – October 5th

St John's is a Fairtrade Church, using Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar, and encouraging people to buy Fairtrade in their weekly shop.

Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers around the world. By requiring companies to pay sustainable prices (never lower than the market price), Fairtrade addresses the injustices of conventional trade, which traditionally discriminates against the producers from low-income countries. On food stuffs and craft goods, the **Fairtrade symbol** means the product meets international Fairtrade standards. See <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>

Margaret Charlston, St John's Eco Church group.



Mothers' Union

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of St. Albans

All are warmly welcomed to Mothers' Union informative, interesting talks. Refreshments follow. Do join us as a guest, first Thursday of the month in the church Committee room, 2.30pm.

October 2nd Liz Sergeant talks about 'Art and the Artist'. Her varied slides and lively style of teaching bring light and colour into the darkening days of autumn.

November 7th Mary Sumner, the founder of Mothers' Union, was born in 1828 in Lancashire. She called women of all social classes to support one another and to see motherhood as a profession as important as those of men. Today membership numbers 4 million (women and men) across 83 countries. The Ven Andrew Ballard will talk to the Branch about her life and legacy.



*Mary Sumner, 1828-1921,
Mother's Union Founder*

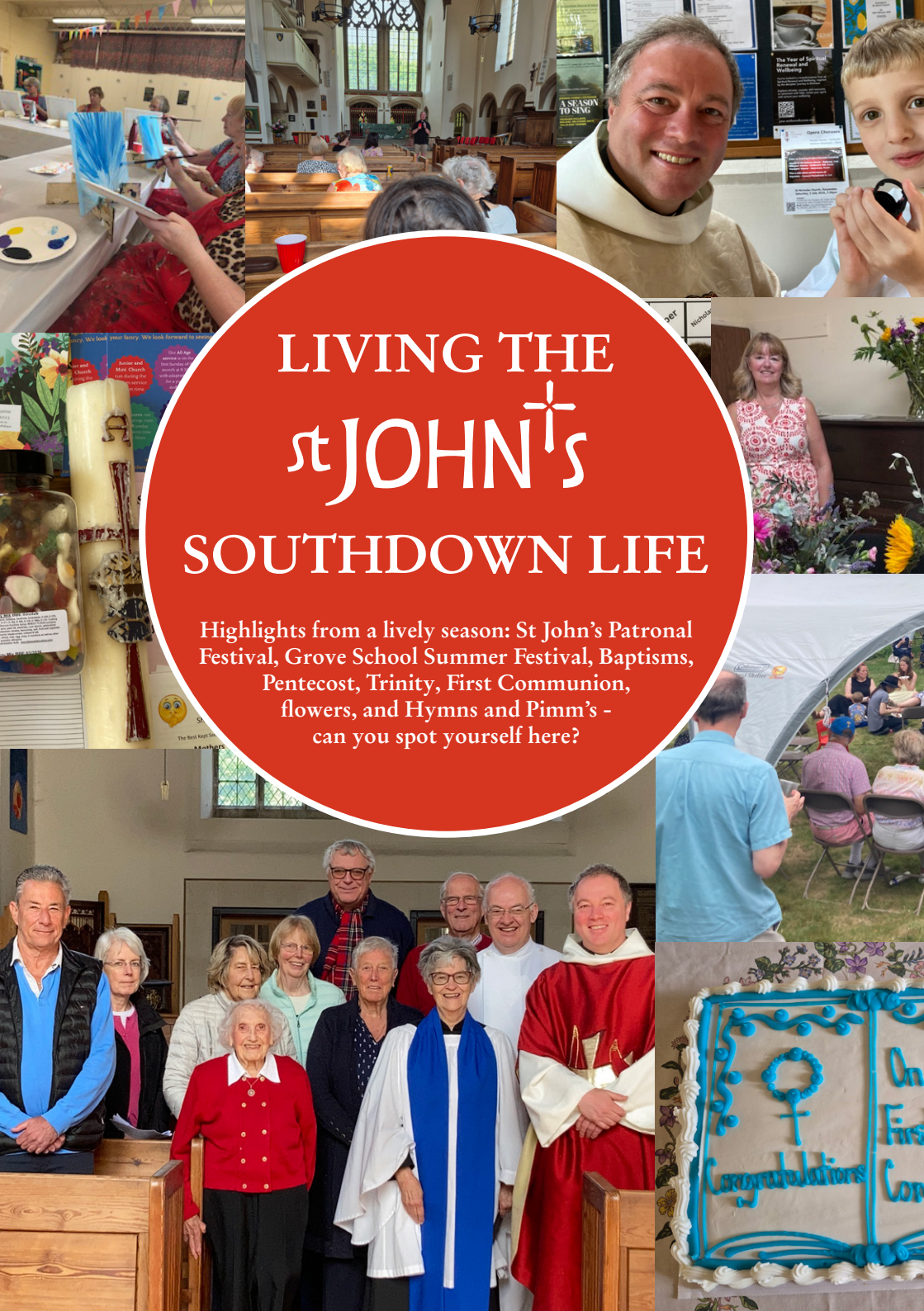
Carol Cooke, Branch Leader. Contact parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

St John's Brush Party

What's a Brush Party? It's a fun step-by-step approach to your own creativity. Last summer's Brush Party led people to discover their artistic ability – and raised £150 for St John's. Artist Jo walks the group through the painting process, everyone creating the same picture. She provides everything needed, including painting equipment, paint, brushes, canvases and even aprons. Prosecco, coffee, tea and cakes are part of the mix.

'It is great seeing how different everyone's interpretations are,' says Amanda Knights, Parish Administrator, who organises the events. 'Here's your chance: a new Brush Party is coming soon! Keep an eye out for details.'





LIVING THE st JOHN'S SOUTHDOWN LIFE

Highlights from a lively season: St John's Patronal Festival, Grove School Summer Festival, Baptisms, Pentecost, Trinity, First Communion, flowers, and Hymns and Pimm's - can you spot yourself here?



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CHRISTIAN AID WEEK May 2025 results



Many thanks to all those who delivered envelopes and donated for the Christian Aid Week house-to-house collection back in May. We collected a £746.98 plus £170.25 in Gift Aid from St John's. The total for the whole of Harpenden was £4,670 (including £724 in Gift Aid). This support makes a real difference to indigenous communities in Guatemala, providing specialist training in climate resilient farming methods to build resilience to extreme weather and take back control of their harvests. If you missed it, it's not too late to donate at: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Thank you.

*Margaret Charlston,
St John's Christian Aid Week co-ordinator*

Brownies Birthday



This year sees the 50th birthday of the 19th Harpenden Brownies, celebrated in June with a picnic on the common for all current girls, their parents, and leaders past and present. Revd Tim and the Mayor of St Albans, Teresa Heritage, were special guests. Everyone received a badge designed by one of the girls to commemorate the happy event.



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Southdown Performing Arts Centre (SPACe)



September 15th SPACe Drama Club starts

A fun-filled opportunity to develop skills including physical theatre, devising, and immersive theatre with a qualified course leader. There will be two groups, 4.00 – 5.00pm for children aged 7 – 11, and 5.15 – 6.15pm for children aged 11 – 14.

At the end of each ten-week term there will be a presentation of the skills learnt for parents and friends. The cost is £100 per term. Some assisted places are available, email us for more information*.

November 25th High Street Players Autumn production

For details visit www.hsplayers.org.uk

November 28th Southdown Christmas Lights Switch on

SPACe will be open so do come in for a mince pie and hear about our plans for the development of the building.

Our aim at SPACe is to be a Christian performing arts centre offering an affordable and inclusive community space with events which explore life and faith.

*Email: office@southdownspace.org www.southdownspace.org

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 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
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Little Acorns

Little Acorns is a friendly toddler group for babies, pre-school children and their carers.



Little Acorns

We meet in St. John's Hall on Tuesdays, 10.00 – 11.30am.

No need to book. Come along for a warm welcome, a cup of coffee, home-made cakes and chat. All are welcome. The children enjoy a healthy snack, activities, a story and singing.

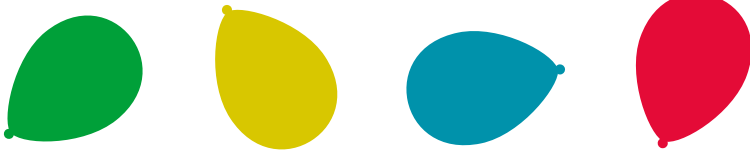
Autumn term starts 9th September – ends 16th December

Half term break 28th October – 4th November

No booking necessary. A voluntary donation is all that is asked.

For more information, please contact parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Telephone 01582 712776



Toddler Service

You and your toddler are invited to St John's inclusive, relaxed toddler service Thursdays at 10.15 in term time. We start in church with a beverage and cake, then tell a Bible story with an interactive craft. You don't need to be baptised or a member of St John's to come. It's a welcoming space, do join us! To find out more, why not email the Vicar at vicar@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Thursdays, 10.15am

Autumn term:

11th September – 18th December

Half-term holiday:

30th October



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Speaking of Education

Sunday 14th September 2025 9.30am

Education Sunday

Blessing our junior church leaders
and all teachers and those in education

Is your child in year 4 and interested in applying for St George's? On Sunday 14th September we look forward to welcoming Andy Ford, Headteacher at St George's, who will be our guest preacher. It's a great opportunity to find out more about the Christian ethos of St George's, and start your St George's journey.



*Andy Ford, Headteacher
St George's School*

Blessings on beginnings...

Sunday 7th September 2025 9.30am

Back to school, back to work, off to university.
Returning to normal, or a new adventure?
Bring your school bags, back packs, briefcases,
laptops for a blessing at the altar on the first
Sunday in September.



Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 9th November 2025 9.30am
Parish Eucharist





St John's Junior and Mini Church

St John's expanded provision for children is tailored around school term dates. Junior and Mini Church meet at 9.25am in the church hall and rejoin their families half-way through the service so we share in Communion together.

Junior Church - For primary school ages, reception and up. Children learn about God in a fun and inclusive way, exploring arts and crafts and playing games for greater understanding.

Mini Church - For preschool children under 5 years old with their adult. A chance to explore, play and hear the story that Junior Church is learning.

All Age Eucharist - At 9.30am we are all in church together, in a Communion service with the sermon and hymns geared for younger members.

Autumn Term Dates (allowing for half term)

7th September All Age Eucharist, and Blessing of School Bags

14th September Junior and Mini Church

21st September Junior and Mini Church

28th September Junior and Mini Church

5th October All Age Eucharist and Harvest

12th October Junior and Mini Church

19th October Junior and Mini Church

2nd November All Age Eucharist and All Saints

9th November Junior and Mini Church

16th November Junior and Mini Church

23rd November Junior and Mini Church

30th November Junior and Mini Church

There is generally no special children's provision on Sundays either side of half-term and Sundays in school holidays (except for special reasons like Palm Sunday and Easter).

For more information contact
parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk
Telephone 01582 712776

Local Treasures: Florist Stephanie Randall

Stephanie Randall was born in a small cottage in Luton Road, Harpenden. She went to Batford Infants, The Grove and then Roundwood Senior School. She trained to be a florist at Oaklands College in St Albans later in life when her three daughters were at school. Stephanie worked in a few florists before opening her first shop in Station Road in 2004, and then moved to Leyton Green in 2012.

An independent shop, not part of a national chain, Stephanie finds its success still overwhelming after almost 21 years. Stephanie credits this to her wonderful customers, her amazing staff and especially Elaine, her most loyal and talented florist.

Called 'Stephanie Randall, The Flower Studio' her shop's style is a nudge to the Dickensian period (think sparkling chandeliers, hustle and bustle, and lots of bows). You enter to a tapestry of flowers and a pure decadence of colour and scent. Stephanie offers bouquets arranged in water or handtied for a vase and ready to go. Personal preference orders are welcome, too, and there are fascinating potted plants, including orchids and succulents, along with extras like textured and glass vases and scented candles. Stephanie invites you to stroll in to indulge your senses, but of course she's ever ready to arrange and deliver flowers for all occasions.



Stephanie arranges flowers with style



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Parish registers

Baptisms

Welcome to the family of God

11th April 2025

Albert John Spencer

8th June 2025

Theodoro Joaquim Busqueti Lloyd

29th June 2025

Arthur Macdonald

Marriages

Joined by God

11th April 2025

Frances Elizabeth Dyson and

Joseph William Spencer

Funerals in Church

May they rest in peace

24th April 2025

Betty Hollows

28th April 2025

Doris Porteous

15th May 2025

Annie Glyn-Davies

16th May 2025

Angela Thonger

6th June 2025

Brian Ellis

12th June 2025

Dick Richardson

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



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 first Sundays of the month*
5.00pm Evening service, *see website for details*

Wednesdays

- 10.30am Holy Eucharist is celebrated in the Lady Chapel

Monday - Friday inclusive

- 9.30am Morning 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 10.00am - 2.00pm



PARISH OFFICE

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

OPEN

MONDAY - THURSDAY

10.00am - 2.00pm

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

CURATE

Revd Ritah Namakula

ritah@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

WARDEN

Iain Pritchard

wardens@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Matt Harrison

music@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

TREASURER

Alison Bygrave

treasurer@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTION

Sarah Mckie

delivery@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.

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.

To protect privacy, personal email addresses do not appear in the web edition, unless requested.

*Remembrance
Services
inside*



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

www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

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

Parish Office 01582 712776



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