

St Mary's News

April 2024



Includes

A Healthy Life-giving Flow

PCC

Eco Tips

... and more

A Healthy Life-giving Flow

The announcement that I have been appointed Vicar of St Leonard's Marston Green and Area Dean of Yardley and Solihull was not only met with surprise but the inevitable mixture of being pleased and excited for me and sadness of my leaving later in the year. It is a strange time for Cath and me both in looking forward and looking back.

It has been a wonderful and eventful eleven years in Watford, and it has been a privilege to serve as Vicar of Watford. I can look back at



some of the great events and achievements during this time, perhaps most noticeably the reordering of the church in 2018-2019. I believe the number of ordinands is a healthy indicator of God at work in our midst. To have seven people go forward for ordination is some achievement. It is also wonderful to see many others take on roles and responsibilities within the church and many others flourish in their work or in education and learning.

I am also mindful of those who have moved away from Watford during my time, whether that is work related or through retirement. The wider St. Mary's family is quite remarkable for keeping in touch as former members move to different parts of the world. It is always good to hear news and to see people flourishing in new stages of life. I trust Cath and I will be no exception.

I am pleased to have offered pilgrimages to the Holy Land in 2015, 2018 and most latterly in 2022. Whether it is the hustle and bustle of the Old City of Jerusalem, or the tranquillity of the Sea of Galilee or the starkness of the desert and the Dead Sea, the Holy Land remains a fascinating place of pilgrimage as we follow in the footsteps of

Jesus. My hope and prayer is that the present troubles will come to an end soon, and a greater sense of peace and justice will be enjoyed by all people who call Israel and Palestine their home.

Israel remains a place of stark contrast. Tel Aviv and Western Jerusalem are modern secular cities whereas other parts of the country, and especially the Old City of Jerusalem, are steeped in Biblical history and are often sacred to the three main religions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

One significant contrast in Israel is that of the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Both are fed by the river Jordan, whose source is found in the foothills of Mount Hermon and finishes at the Dead Sea. Galilee is teeming with life and for centuries it has provided fresh water and plenty of delicious fish. In contrast the Dead Sea is very salty and there is precious little in the way of life. The reason why both expanses of water behave differently is because in the case of the Sea of Galilee the River Jordan flows in and flows out whereas in the Dead Sea there is no out flow. The water therefore simply evaporates and over the years salt deposits have accumulated and the remaining water too salty to sustain life.



In many ways churches and indeed other institutions can learn an invaluable lesson. Just as the life-giving waters of the River Jordan need to both flow in and flow out and not be kept for itself in order to produce life so it is people and other resources. There is

something rather affirming when there is a steady flow of people through a church. It is not healthy to try and keep people in one place and retain them solely for your own use. Rather it is far better to allow people to leave and to flourish and become a blessing to others. In the same way others will join us and become a blessing. All of which avoids stagnation and instead produces new life and regeneration.

When a family or individual moves away it can be challenging especially when they have been heavily committed to the life of the church. I know on more than one occasion I have been left wondering who would fill the gap and take on that significant role in the church. Yet here we are still surviving and in many ways flourishing. I see the congregation I will leave behind younger and more diverse than the one I inherited. I have seen many leave for pastures new and become a blessing in another part of God's Church. I have seen others come into our church family and have become a blessing to us. It is part of this healthy life-giving flow, and that inevitably has to include your vicar.



The Revd Tony Rindl

*The Concerts take a break
during April and
resume on 2nd May.*



Parochial Church Council

The following report summarises some of the matters considered at the Council's meeting of 25th March.

Finance: The financial situation has stabilised for the current year and is showing a small surplus. This is due to (i) the sale of the Brightwell Road property earlier than anticipated which should result in additional income from earlier investment of the capital (ii) the receipt of a legacy and (iii) the transfer of some funds from the Pre-School to the General Fund. There is no room for complacency, however. While the investment of the capital from Brightwell Road will continue to produce significant income in future years, it will not be sufficient to balance the books. The recent appeal to the congregation resulted in three people giving a total of £100 a month in additional income which, while very welcome, was a relatively small response from the whole congregation. The Council has reduced expenditure to a minimum and the only way forward now is to increase income. Regular additional giving from the congregation will therefore be essential if we wish to expand our ministry in Watford.

Church Lands Trust: The Council expressed its grateful thanks to the Church Lands Trust for the receipt of the final payment of the grant towards the repair of the Church Centre roof.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting: This will now take place on 19th May.

Minibus: The Council approved Terms of Use for passengers to ensure they are aware of the extent of the level of service that can be provided.

Mission Action Plan (MAP): Following the announcement of Tony's appointment as Vicar of St. Leonard's Marston Green and in consultation with the Archdeacon, the Council has agreed to put on hold the more strategic elements of the MAP pending the arrival of a new vicar to St Mary's. Other stand-alone elements will continue to be taken forward outside the MAP process. The work on the Vision Statement and Values will be incorporated into the Parish Profile. This is the document which the Council will draw up, in consultation with the congregation, setting out to the prospective candidates the context in which they will minister, the job to be done, and the type of person we are looking for.

Lay Leader of Worship Course: Nine members of the congregation have applied to do the Lay Leader of Worship course run by the Diocese.

Lent Evening Services: These experimental services had been well attended and much appreciated by the congregation. However, the Council recognised that weekly evening services could not be sustained for the time being, given the forthcoming vacancy, although the monthly Encounter service might be retained.

Tony's Departure: Although Tony has not yet heard officially when he will take up his new appointment, he anticipated that his last Sunday is likely to be either 9th or 16th June.

Once approved, full Minutes are normally available on the St Mary's website: <https://www.stmaryswatford.org/pcc>

If you wish to send correspondence to the PCC please send it to the PCC Secretary, Marcus Jones (email: ttekcos@aol.com).

Marcus Jones
PCC Secretary

A snapshot of St Mark's Church, Watford *brought to you by Churches Together in Watford*

We are set back off Leggatts Way behind leafy trees with allotments at the back surrounded by houses and housing estates. It was built in 1931 to serve the new estate (Harebreaks). It is a small building which was extended at a later date to include a hall which can be opened into the main church when capacity demands.

We are a small, dedicated congregation bringing the Good News of God through activities for all the family in the local communities and further afield. Our Sunday services start at 9:30am - not everyone's cup of tea on a Sunday morning!

Each year a Christmas Bazaar is held in November to raise funds for the church. This is organised and run by the members of Girl Guiding. It is well attended and enjoyed by everyone. Since 2012 our outreach project *Lift Off!* for families and children continues to provide opportunities for meeting up, learning about God, and having fun. Our building is also used by various community groups for their activities.

Recently we have welcomed a new priest-in-charge, Vicki, after seventeen months in vacancy and together seeking God's direction we will continue with our mission statement on our weekly sheet: to have 'God's love at the heart of all our activities and communities'.



ECO Tips – April

Fit more active travel into your day and daily routine. Re-evaluate your journeys: explore walking or cycling options or modify your route to include some form of active travel, ie, disembark a stop early and complete the remaining part of your journey on foot, indulge in a leisurely stroll, or opt for a bike ride along a cyclist-friendly route. Consider connecting with your local Ramblers or cycling group for shared experiences. Use the extra steps or the changed travel arrangements as a prompt to pray for God's creation, nature's preservation and the reduction in fossil fuel usage.



And - Let it grow this #NoMowMay

It's just under a month until Plantlife's #NoMowMay and *A Rocha UK* would love as many UK churches and households as possible to ... give lawnmowers a month off! You might be surprised by what germinates in your lawn or church grounds by letting things grow. Clover seeds may already be present (they used to be in packets of lawn seed) and other seeds get blown in or dropped by birds. Over the month (or two if you #LetItBloomJune), plants that have been lying dormant have a chance to grow, bloom and make some pollinators happy!

For more practical eco-tips, sign up to <https://arocha.org.uk/wild-christian/>



Watford International Piano Competition 2024

Listen to some of the most exciting young talent of the future



The final will be held on
Saturday 4th May 2024 12 - 5 pm
St Mary's Church, Church St,
Watford WD18 0EG

Audience: £15, Free for under 25s

Jury: Deniz Arman Gelenbe &
Lara Melda

Contestants - Entries must be received by Friday 22 March 2024

Email - melis@watfordfestival.co.uk

Website - <http://www.watfordfestival.co.uk/cduke/>


The Watford Festival
OF MUSIC SPEECH AND DRAMA

Services

The Church is usually open each week
Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 3.00pm
and on Saturday between 9.30am and 2.00pm

Sunday

10.30am Morning Service in church and via Zoom
every Sunday
5.30pm Encounter Service
last Sunday of the month
(preceded at 5.00pm with refreshments)

Wednesday

12.30pm Holy Communion in church

(for Zoom links please contact the Church Office)

Thought for the Week

on our website - based on a bible verse or passage,
it is a short reflection by one of the leadership team
for you to think about during the week.
It can be downloaded and listened to whenever and wherever.

Please keep up to date with what is on offer
via our Facebook page, Instagram
or the website www.stmaryswatford.org

Who's Who at St Mary's

Vicar

The Revd Tony Rindl
01923 225189 / 07792 505480
tony.rindl@gmail.com

Churchwardens

Peter Dean
07876 154387
peter.dean@stmaryswatford.org
Eileen Roby
07479 846544
eileen.robby@stmaryswatford.org

Facilities Manager

stmarysfacilitiesmanager@gmail.com

Church Office

office@stmaryswatford.org
St Mary's Church, Church Street,
Watford WD18 0EG
01923 225189

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Lesley Gray
stmaryssafeguarding10@gmail.com

www.stmaryswatford.org



FAIRTRADE
WATFORD &
THREE RIVERS

Quiz Master
Graham Hall

?

Tables
of 6

Tickets
£5
per person

QUIZ NIGHT

Date Saturday 20th April 2024

Time Doors open 7.15pm
Quiz starts 7.30pm

Place St Luke's Church,
Langley Way,
Watford WD17 3EG

Fairtrade Prizes for winners

Register with Fran Davies at
0frandavies@gmail.com / [07909 904872](tel:07909904872)

Snacks & nibbles will be supplied.!