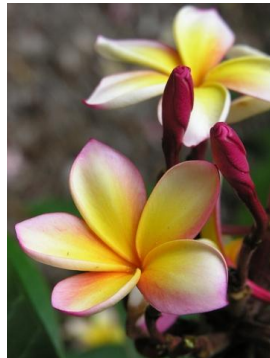


ST JOHN the Evangelist e-news, Candlemas – February 2020
Being, Believing, Belonging



Dear Friends

**An invitation: Please come and join our 10am Parish Communion for Candlemas
This Sunday 2nd February at St John's**

I am writing to you on the eve of Candlemas, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, which concludes the Season of Epiphany. **We will celebrate Candlemas this Sunday 2nd February** at our 10am Parish Communion and 6pm Sacred Space, a special Taizé Service. Please do come along, and rejoice in the light of Christ, at this mid-point in winter – also the liturgical symbolic mid-point between Christmas and Easter. In the weeks before Lent, which starts with Ash Wednesday on 26th February, we begin to turn our sights from the Crib to the Cross.

This year, as part of our celebration of Candlemas, we will be launching our Parish Theme for 2020, **'Being, Believing, Belonging'**. The purpose is to consolidate our parish life, after a year in 2019 of change and development, with the new St John's Centre. We will do this by deepening our Christian faith, as confident disciples of Jesus Christ; by deepening our fellowship and belonging together in Christian community; and by allowing ourselves to 'be' as well as 'do'. In a frenetic world, Churches need to be still centres of prayer, relationship and faith exploration, from which the light of Christ shines out and draws others in. Watch this space for theme-related activities, including: Quiet Days, Lent Courses, Sermon Series, Hospitality events, etc.

During February we will be announcing our specific plans for **Lent** Groups this year, which are likely to include material on Christian community (related to Being, Believing, Belonging), inter-generational Lent activities, and opportunities for prayer. Our Ash Wednesday Communion services, on 26th February, will include the imposition of ashes, and at 7.30pm Homerton College's Choir will lead the music. Also during Lent we will be starting a **Youth Confirmation Course**, with a view to joining a Confirmation service at Ely Cathedral at Pentecost. Please speak to Chris if interested.

I am delighted that the second **Community Lunch** on 29th January was a great success, with lots of people from St John's and our wider parish attending, delicious food, and a warm atmosphere. You can read about it, alongside other Community Cafés, in the new Queen Edith's magazine. During 2020 we will be developing activities through the St John's Centre further, including hosting a weekend of artwork as part of the Cambridge Open Studios.

Following the success of St John's participation in the Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, during December- January, with our local Anglican partners we are launching – during February – **the Kids Matter parenting project**. Initially this will be run at St James' Wulstan Way. Please let James know if people are interested in enquiring about the course, either as volunteers or participants.

On Saturday 8th February 3-5pm St John's will be offering its **Messy Science** event, as detailed in Parish Voice and elsewhere. Join us for fun experiments and craft, and a chance to reflect on our wonderful world. Available for the whole family... please do come along!

It is with real sadness that we announced, recently, the death of **Betty Thurley**, from our congregation. Betty had been a dedicated member of St John's for many years. Betty's funeral takes place at St John's on Wednesday 5th February at 2.00pm. We also have the Baptism of Leonardo Christopher, from Toddle Along, on 9th February at 12.30pm.

Other events upcoming including the Fair Trade Fortnight **Big Brew Coffee Morning** at St John's on 19th February from 10.45am-12pm. There will also be a display about coffee and an opportunity to buy a wide variety of goods from our stall and to stock up with Easter eggs, cards and gifts.

The **Cambridge Bible Society Action Group** also invites you to their Spring Supper 'Reconciliation: Turning Enemies into Friends'. Guest Speaker: Basil Scott, Friday 14th February 2020 at 6.45pm, at the Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan Way. Contact Pat Heap for more details Patheap1@gmail.com

At this time we pray particularly for all those affected by the situation of the coronavirus in **China** and beyond, including our many Chinese visitors and friends in St John's Parish.

In this week when Britain leaves the European Union, we also pray for unity, reconciliation, for our Parliament, and all affected by decisions being taken: -

Eternal God, Light of the nations,
in Christ you make all things new:
guide our nation in the coming days through the inspiration of your Spirit,
that understanding may put an end to discord and all bitterness.
Give us grace to rebuild bonds of trust
that together we may work for the dignity and flourishing of all;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

As always, please let James, Chris or the Ministry Team know if you have concerns that need prayer, or if you would like one of the Team to visit, or to contribute ideas, or for further information. In the midst of winter, and mindful of all who are struggling, for whatever reason, may you know the light, warmth and hope of Jesus Christ.

With prayers & good wishes

James, Chris

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