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PARISH
CHURCH
St. John



50p

October 2023

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Everyone

welcome to church

at St. John's

october

1—SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY after TRINITY

Harvest Festival

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church *(and live-streamed on Facebook/through church website)*

11.30 a.m. Baptism Service, in Church

3—Tuesday

9.45 a.m. MU Service, in the Old Church

5—Thursday

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

7—Saturday

10.00 a.m.. Baptism Preparation, in Church

10.00 a.m. Gardening Morning in Garden of Remembrance (to 12.00)

8—EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY after TRINITY

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church *(and live-streamed)*

11.15 a.m. Family Service, in Church

11—Wednesday

5.00 p.m. Life Group meets, in the Old Church

12—Thursday

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

14—Saturday

7.00 for 7.30 p.m. The Royal Marsden 'Big Quiz', at St. John's

15—NINETEENTH SUNDAY after TRINITY

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

9.30 a.m. Worship Together, in Church

17—Tuesday

9.45 for 10.00 a.m. Pram Service for Babies & Toddlers, in Church

18—Wednesday

5.00 p.m. Life Group meets, in the Old Church

8.00 p.m. PCC meets, in the Church

19—Thursday

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

22—TWENTIETH SUNDAY after TRINITY

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion with Archdeacon Greg Prior, in Church
(and live-streamed on Facebook/ through church website)

11.15 a.m. Family Service, in Church

25—Wednesday

2.00 p.m. Pray, Knit & Chat, in the Old Church

5.00 p.m. Life Group meets, in the Old Church

26—Thursday

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

29—SUNDAY next before ADVENT

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church, Rev. Jeremy Groombridge
(and live-streamed on Facebook/ through church website)

3.00 p.m. Service of Remembering, in Church

November

2 —Thursday

11.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

4—Saturday

10.00 a.m.. Gardening Morning in Garden of Remembrance (to 12.00)

7.30 p.m. Downland Chorale Concert, at St. John's

5—FOURTH SUNDAY before ADVENT

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion, in Church

9.30 a.m. Parish Communion, in Church *(and live-streamed
on Facebook/through church website)*

**WHEREVER YOU ARE
YOU CAN STILL JOIN
US ONLINE FOR SOME SERVICES:**

Can't get to Church? You can still follow the Parish Communion services, etc. online live as they're streamed from the Church on Facebook via our website at www.stjohns.coulsdon.net (or watch later) .



CHURCHWARDEN GILL WRITES ...



Dear Friends,

Having been asked to write this article for the October magazine, I was not quite sure where to begin?

However, I recalled a message from Christine in her sermon last week which talked about "SEASONS OF MIST AND MELLOW FRUITFULNESS" so decided to investigate this poem by Keats called "To Autumn". No matter how far we are from our school days, Autumn retains the air of fresh beginnings. Most of us are even further from our agricultural roots, making the weather a superficial consideration. We look for jackets and mourn the earlier sunsets warning us that shorter days are looming, even though I am writing this on the hottest day of the year.

Fresh beginnings are happening at St John's with the retirement of Paul and Niccy. We will be welcoming Archdeacon Greg, Archdeacon Moira and Bishop Rosemarie to preach at various services over the next few months.

So much to plan for with Harvest Festival then All Saints, followed by Bonfire night, Remembrance Sunday and then the Christmas Fair, Christmas Tree Festival, Advent and Christmas Day. Is 2024 really only 14 weeks away?



So much to celebrate.

Sue, Christine, Wendy, Jo, Tech team and everyone who will endeavor to keep everything running as smoothly as possible. Our gardening team, singers, cleaners, volunteers who welcome visitors during the week, house-group leaders, Parish Communion children's group leaders, after service coffee makers, bell ringers and of course our congregation, especially the PCC and those working on the Parish Profile.

There is a reading in Ecclesiastes 3 verses 1-9

A Time for Everything.

- V1 There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven,
- V2 a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,
- V3 a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build,
- V4 a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,
- V5 a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace
and a time to refrain,
- V6 a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to
throw away,

V7 a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,
V8 a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

We have some challenges ahead but by working together and with God's love we will flourish and survive.

Best wishes

Gill



There seems to have been a lot of coming and going in September perhaps with many taking advantage of having a break now the school holidays are over, so we have not seen so many at some of our services and meetings. But now things are revving up with many services and events crammed into St. John's calendar to the end of the year, we hope you'll be coming along and joining in with as much as you can. You will always be very welcome but if you want to find out more about anything first then just contact the Parish Office [01737 552461 or at stjohns@coulsdon.net].

THE MONTHLY GARDENING GROUP ...

... will be meeting in the churchyard on **Saturday 7th October** from 10.00-12.00. This small group does a wonderful job in keeping the Garden of Remembrance area so neat and tidy. See John, Julie, Jill, Jon and Tony (*below left*) all 'gardening' in September. With chocolate biscuits on offer, and plenty of good chat we decided a little gardening should happen!! Jon, John, Tony and Jill worked wonders with the mowers and strimmers, whilst Sylvia, Graham, Sheila, Gill and Julie cleared weeds and brambles galore. This warm weather after earlier rain has wreaked havoc hence the need for extra mowing. Thank you to everyone who helps on these monthly gardening mornings plus helping out at other times. If you could spare some time to help them, they would be delighted to see you on **7th October**. If you'd like to know more call Gill on 01737 553956 or just come along



Open Meeting

FoRB
FORUM

UK Freedom of
Religion or Belief Forum

CSW everyone
free to believe



Deanery Synod
10th October 7.30pm

AN 'OPEN MEETING' means **'EVERYONE'S INVITED'** to hear Mervyn Thomas CMG speak at a special Croydon South Deanery Synod event at St Mary's Church, Purley Oaks CR2 0NY on **Tuesday, 10th October**, 7.30pm for 8pm. Mervyn is an international, inspirational, and humble man, who speaks out for those with no voice, those who are persecuted. He has spoken at the UN, European Parliament, Capitol Hill - Washington

DC, to our own Parliament and at St. John's. Do come to hear of the positive good work going on, things that don't get mentioned in the media.

LIFE GROUP & HOUSE-GROUPS

There are three small church groups that meet during the week—Life Group which meets from 5.00-7.00 p.m. in the Old Church on most Wednesday evenings, a Tuesday and a Thursday evening house-group both meeting fortnightly at 8.00 p.m. in various members' homes. Topics vary but are based on Bible stories and passages and their relevance in our lives today. It's easy to feel a little lost in a congregation, whether you're new to the church or have been coming for a while, or are even unsure about coming to church. These groups are a super way of getting to know a few people better, finding out more about the Christian faith and growing into the church community.

Here is a peep into a recent Life Group meeting:

"Life Group gathered on the church path recently at our new time of Wednesdays 5 to 7pm to enjoy the last of the summer sunshine, and to worship and pray together. We spent time in fellowship, sharing our week and beginning our book on the Beatitudes, looking at 'Blessed be the poor in spirit'. We picnicked together as we always do now, sharing food and drink just as the early believers did. We called on the Holy Spirit to be there with us, and listened to what God might be telling or showing us. As we continued with our discussion we thought about those in our Old Coulsdon community who might not yet know God. We sat outside in God's creation and let the birdsong and gentle breeze in the trees wash over us. We finished by listening to worship music including



Rend Collectives 'Build your Kingdom here' and Chris Tomlin's 'At the Table' and then prayed for our world, our community and each other.

Although not all of us could gather this week, it felt a very blessed session. You would be very welcome to join us on Wednesdays 5pm to 7pm at the church and this month we're meeting on **11th & 18th October..**

Wendy J, Charlotte, Lynne and Leigh"

For information about the groups that meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays, please contact the Parish Office on 01737 552461 or at stjohns@coulsdon.net

PRAM SERVICE FOR BABIES, TODDLERS & PRESCHOOLERS



On the third Tuesday in the month at 9.45 for 10.00 a.m. start in the church —**Tuesday 17 October** this month—we have Pram Service—a sort of 'Tots' Praise! All parents and grandparents with babies or toddlers will find a warm welcome at this very relaxed little service. Come for songs, an interactive story, activity, prayers, musical instruments and birthday celebrations—and lots of fun—with refreshments afterwards while we play and chat. Lively toddlers, restless babies, tired mums and grannies all very welcome.

Last month we heard the story of 'The Good Shepherd', and learnt how much God loves us all, rounded up a flock of sheep in the church only to find one was missing. So off we set again and having found it, then we had to search for a 'missing' child! As you can imagine there was a lot of laughter and excitement. Why don't you and your little one(s) come and give us a try.—we'd love to see you



World Day of Prayer Coffee Morning. Wednesday 18th October

10.30am to 12 noon

Old Coulsdon Congregational Church Heath Room.
There will be a very warm welcome awaiting everyone, as well as coffee or tea and home-made cakes.



Letter from Kington

Dear Friends

It's ten days since we moved from Old Coulsdon and already it seems like a lifetime ago. Now, at last, we are beginning to enjoy our new life here after months of decluttering and downsizing, and decom-



missioning of fridges, freezers, a dishwasher and a tumble dryer. After a while it became quite therapeutic to get rid of stuff, and now we are in our new house we're continuing to do so. The three charity shops in Kington will be well stocked from us alone!

Now we feel we have arrived and have settled. We've been made so welcome by people here in the community and in the church. We have lovely next-door neighbours who have been so helpful during the time we've been coming and going this last year. They even invited us to their Golden Wedding anniversary lunch last weekend. We've been invited for meals by people at church, and were welcomed with some little gifts of home-produced food, and some bottles of wine.

When we tell people that we've moved from south London they tell us how different we'll find it here. It's true: for one thing yellow or double yellow lines don't deter people from parking where they like as the sight of a traffic warden is a very rare occurrence. There is a word of mouth network for finding tradesmen to do a good job.



As many of you know, our house is next door to a pub – a no-nonsense down to earth local where the regulars come in after work for a few pints. I've been introduced as the retired vicar already, and was even asked if I could take a wedding in the pub. The town, though small, is well supplied with pubs – five that I have seen, plus Indian, Chinese and Thai restaurants and fish and chips – almost as good as Danny's. Much to our delight there is the rarest of shops – an independent butcher whose motto is 'Feast your eyes on our pies'. And indeed they are a feast. We enjoyed the fullest pie I've had for a long time – beef and Stilton. Not only a butcher, but a greengrocer as well who also sells fish on Thursdays and spicy game sausages. We bought all our new carpets from the local carpet shop who had supplied the previous owner of

the house 20 years ago. Word is getting round that the house looks very different now – that's small-town life for you.

Like St John's the church here – St Mary's – is in a vacancy and an advert will be going out next month for a new vicar. There are four small village churches that the vicar also looks after, two of which are actually across the border in Wales. There is a small core of people who are really hoping and praying for the church to move forward in mission, and for a new vicar who will equip the enthusiastic teams of lay people. Perhaps as you pray for St John's you could also pray for the Kington parishes as well. In a couple of weeks I am taking a few people from the parish to a Day of Renewal led by Mark Melluish, who used to work for New Wine but is now the Mission Enabler for the Diocese of Hereford. You have to travel much bigger distances to find these sort of events, but it's a lovely drive across the hills and valleys of north Herefordshire and south Shropshire.

We're not short of culture here. Two string quartet concerts in as many weeks and

Mid Wales Opera next month. There's even an old cinema that has been rebuilt and refurbished with 1930s glitz and glamour that the owners are hoping to reopen to the public.



Our house, though much smaller than the rectory, is quirky. We reckon it's about 200 years old. There is a cellar which maintains an excellent temperature for wine, and it provided a welcome cooling off area during last week's heatwave. Our new piano just fits in the front room, but with a thick chimney wall between us and the neighbours they say they can't hear it – even when Ollie and I were playing some loud duets. I've created a small study area

on the landing using my parents' old bureau as a desk, and with enough books to help if I'm asked to preach. Nicy has her own study in the second floor back bedroom with a lovely view of the pub garden and the hills in the distance. I have my 'man cave' in the form of an old shed 14 by 9 foot, covered with at least six inches of ivy. At least the ivy kept it cool recently. Down at the bottom of the garden is a terrace that we have plans for turning into an Italian style 'terrazzo'. Maybe some statues and a fountain!! At least we'll be able to barbecue down there overlooking the police station car park.

Just before we moved, our daughter Amy, husband Ollie and baby Clara moved to Cardiff where Amy is now acting principal oboe with the Welsh National Opera orchestra. Being much closer than London we'll be able to see them regularly and have already got a rota for babysitting – hardly a chore though. By God's grace all our moves fell into place, and as Amy and Ollie moved from north London so our son Tim and his girlfriend Abby were able to rent Amy's and Ollie's flat.

So begins this new chapter of our lives. We are so grateful for the 20 years we had in Coulsdon – for your friendship, for your generosity, for seeing God at work in people's lives, and for our own family growing up. Now we are looking forward to what God has in store for us here.

With our love

PAUL & NICY



While the Rector's away the foxes will play !



Spotted by Gill as they had fun in the Rectory garden recently

MOTHERS' UNION - Transformation - Now! **OCTOBER focus: Faith in Action**

Mothers' Union is a Christian organisation that has been supporting families worldwide for over 140 years. Started by our founder Mary Sumner in 1876 in her local parish, we have grown into an international charity with over 4 million members in 84 countries. We demonstrate our faith in action. This happens as we work towards stopping poverty, stopping inequality, and stopping injustice. Our members work at grassroots level around the world. They bring hope and practical support to millions of people every year through parenting, literacy and community development programmes.



Our prayer is that we can:

- ◆ *Transform ourselves, personally and spiritually, to live out our faith*
- ◆ *Transform the churches and communities we work with, and of which we are a part, to reflect Christ's kingdom*
- ◆ *Transform Mothers' Union to be relevant for 21st century life.*

" For with God nothing shall be impossible" - Luke 1:37

BRANCH MEETING DATES:

Tues. 3 October : 9.45am **Service of Prayer and Reflection**, in the Old Church followed by refreshments

Wed. 25 October: 2.00pm **Pray, Knit & Chat** in Church - do join us! Every body welcome whether you knit or not! We offer tea, coffee, delicious cakes and good company..

REFLECTION:



When Jesus was on earth he spent his time not only with religious leaders in the synagogue, but also outside, modelling the kingdom of God as he ministered to people's needs.

So it should be with us. Our faith and fellowship with each other are the springboards for acts of service in the world. But as we do so, let us be motivated by our love for God and compassion for others, rather than any attempt to win his approval. God's love is unconditional; it cannot be earned. And that is a wonderful reason to put our faith in action!

FAITH IN ACTION -

Financial independence in Tanzania

"I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths." (Proverbs 4:11)

Monica, mother of three, lives in rural Tanzania - where access to financial stability is scarce. Despite this, she has built her own food shop and been able to expand the range of produce she sells through the savings she has accumulated. Through her business, she can provide a much needed second income to her family, relieving financial pressure and sources of conflict from her marriage. All this was made possible by MU Vicoba (village community bank) - a part of Mothers' Union's Savings and Credit programme.

"Since being a member I am more financially independent," Monica explains. "I can do anything like paying my children's school fees or paying for medication when they are sick. I don't have to rely on my husband anymore."

Monica makes regular payments into the Vicoba social fund, which can be used by group members in case of emergencies. Social funds in MU Vicoba provide peace of mind for women like Monica, as she is one of 20 million citizens of



Tanzania that cannot afford medical insurance. By working and saving together, the group can be there for each other in times of need. *Pray for those working together to become financially independent in their families and communities.*

MONTHLY PRAYER:

Christ our Lord, you showed the world your love through actions of mercy as well as words of life. As we seek to follow your perfect example may we reflect your love in the world through our lives of faithful action. Amen



'Butterfly Service'

Sunday 8th October – 3.00 pm - St Barnabas Worship Centre
Woodcroft Entrance, Croydon University Hospital, London Road CR7 7YE

A special service for parents to remember their children who have sadly passed away, with music, prayers, lighting of candles and a roll call of names of each child. Organised by the Chaplaincy Team at Croydon University Hospital, for any families who have lost a baby, child or had a miscarriage. All are welcome with family and friends.

DEANERY VISITATION BY BISHOP ROSEMARIE



Bishop Rosemarie visited a school assembly at Coulsdon CofE School and explained about her role as Bishop and the meaning of the Crozier (staff/crook) for caring for sheep, and the Mitre (Pentecost flame/ birthday of the church). It was a busy full schedule taking in St Anthony's, St Andrew's, and the School.

A SERVICE for REMEMBERING THOSE WHO HAVE DIED Sunday 29th October at 3pm at St John's Church



A special service held annually, when we particularly remember those who have died in the last two years but anyone who has lost a loved one is welcome to come and have their loved one's name read out. If you would like someone remembered, please contact the Parish Office by email stjohns@coulsdon.net or on 01737 552461. The names will be read out in a setting of praise and thanksgiving, and you will be given an opportunity to light a candle. For those unable to attend, the service will be live-streamed.

CALLING ALL SINGERS for our CHRISTMAS CHOIR!

We are in need of choir members to lead the Carols and Lessons service on the evening of Sunday 17th December.

We will rehearse on the four Friday evenings prior to the service and it is vital that you are able to attend at least three of these evenings.

It is not essential that you can read music, but an ability to follow written music is certainly helpful. I will aim to provide you with as many rehearsal resources as possible to aid with learning the pieces. The choir will lead the congregational hymns and there will be four or five additional choir pieces. The Friday rehearsal schedule is as follows: 24th November, 1st December, 8th December, 15th December. All rehearsals will take place at church 7:30pm-9pm. There will be an additional rehearsal on the afternoon of the service at 4pm. Please let me know if you would like to join us!

Karen Jackson dingdingdong13@hotmail.com 07968023938



ST. JOHN'S CHRISTMAS FAIR

Summer barely gone ...

... but we need to be looking ahead!

Time is marching on and we're hoping to have another bumper Christmas Fair this year – on **Saturday,**

18th November - bearing in mind the need to raise a large

amount for Church Funds. Please pop the date in your diary or on your calendar now and keep the day free. Much help will be needed so please see from the lists further on if there is something you could do either in advance, on the day or helping with clearing up afterwards (*always the job that gets left to a few tired people!*). Please keep an eye open for specific pleas for help nearer the time and give a hand if you possibly can. Many say it's really good fun taking part. So why not contact the Parish Office (01737 552461 or stjohns@coulsdon.net) and see what you could do.

We really do need everybody's help!

Thank You

Dear St John's Church Family,

We wanted to write a short message from the Roberts 'children' to say an enormous thank you to you all for nurturing and supporting us over the past 20 years! We arrived in Old Coulsdon about to become teenagers which is a tricky age, but immediately were embraced into the church family and made friends of all ages. Particular thanks early on to some incredible babysitters (Daphne and Wendy taught us many cool card games) and to the bell-ringing team who took Tim under their wing. We enjoyed being part of youth activities and later, being mentored and encouraged by Tim Hill.

It's not always easy being 'the vicar's children' but we have experienced so much love, generosity, practical help and Christian wisdom from so many of you. You were really kind to our grandad when he lived here, and Amy & Ollie have been so blessed with the church wedding and help with Clara.

We hope and pray that many more people are blessed to know you and share their life with you.

Thank you!

Amy and Tim

P.S. Ollie and I are well settled in Cardiff now, Clara's started at nursery, and Tim is living in our flat in London, so all change for the entire family! Amy



Church Congregations as Leaders of Public Attitudes in the Ecological Crisis

Based on an article in Root & Branch, the journal of A Rocha UK

Christian attitudes to God's creation have changed many times over the years, from the belief that humans have been given domination over God's creation to exploit and plunder at will, to the radically changed view that sees the environment as God's creation over which mankind has stewardship, to nurture and sustain it for the benefit of all.

However, there are still powerful forces at work to delay change. Getting the world off its reliance on fossil fuels is blocked by powerful financial pressure groups resisting change.



Other factors working against change are public attitude and parliamentary apathy – the reluctance to put aside money to develop alternative sources of power, or to back views which might be unpopular at the ballot box.

However, for many churches, care for the environment is seen as an essential element in mission – in 1990 the worldwide Anglican Church recognized care for creation as the fifth Mark of Mission and other denominations have embedded concern for the environment in their modern doctrine. Sadly, comprehensive action was not swift to follow these declarations. Caring for the environment points to the beauty of God's creation and to a loving creator God. It addresses the injustice of the way in which the richer nations, exploiting natural resources, have caused infinite damage to poorer nations that do not have the resources to counter these forces.

The biggest impediment to progress is not technology or even money – it is public attitudes, values and political leadership, or lack of it. However our churches have an array of God-given assets to help address this, building on our biblical mandate to care for all of God's creation.

There are around 50,000 local congregations in the UK – worshipping communities in nearly every village, town and city neighbourhood. The majority have expressed the will to cut carbon emissions. If only a quarter of the UK's three to four million churchgoers adopted low carbon lifestyles and committed to speaking up for change – in their workplace or by raising issues with their MPs for example – it would accelerate change in business and politics at the national level. Local churches showing by their changed lifestyle and willingness to speak up will be the most powerful demonstration of what whole sectors of society could do. They – We could deliver change and hope beyond our earthly expectations.



Loving Our Neighbour Means Caring
For God's Creation

Eco Group

DID YOU KNOW ...

.. that we have a lovely children's group in the old part of the church on Sundays during the 9.30 Parish Communion services. A team of marvellously 'arty-crafty' folk leads it! So bring your children along for some fun while you enjoy the service in peace. They start the service with you and re-join you as we go up for a blessing or to receive the bread and wine. A lovely opportunity to help your children grow in faith.



Raising funds
for the
Royal Marsden
Cancer Charity



The ROYAL
MARSDEN
Cancer Charity

The Big Quiz

with 2 Quizmasters

Rev Malcolm Newman & David Frost

Saturday 14th October

at St John's Church, Old Coulsdon
7.00 for 7.30pm start with Supper

Tickets = £15.00 per head
(to include supper)

Invite your friends to make up a team/table
(max 8 people) or come as family/couples/
individuals

Booking forms available from:

Peter Burton ~ 07989 557888
peterburtonuk202@gmail.com

Wendy Burton ~ 01737 551413
wendy.burton@coulsdon.net

LOVE QUIZZES but not able to get to this one?

Contact Peter to find out more about you and your family joining in on line.
Perhaps invite the neighbours round? We regret no supper though!



WE HAD AN AMAZING CHRISTMAS FAIR LAST YEAR

Can you help St. John's to do it again?

There has been a wonderful atmosphere since the Fair has been held in the church giving us the opportunity to work well together, rather than spread out over the three halls as we used to, and enabling the church to offer a warm welcome to the local community.

COULD YOU LEND A HAND THIS YEAR?

BEFORE THE DAY ...

We need over 5,000 leaflets delivered to all the homes in the parish.

Fresh air, exercise and the knowledge that you're doing a vital task is on offer to anyone able to take a marked bundle to deliver to the homes in your road, or part of a road, or one near you. This is our main publicity which we hope encourages people to come along. The bundles—large (for a good walk!) and small - will be in the church ready to go at the end of this month.

How about having a decluttering session and taking the opportunity to recycle those gifts you've never used (*and deep down know you never will*) that are cluttering up your cupboards, drawers and shelves and could be really useful helping to raise funds for the church. Here is a reminder of some items we'd love to receive—but just not yet—we'll let you know when ...

- * **books (especially paperback novels & not magazines) * toys * jewellery**
- * **stationery items * unwanted gifts * bottles - from shampoo to wine * soft toys * items for tombolas and raffles * toiletries**
- * **home-made craft items * home-made jams & pickles * home-made cakes for the Cake Stall (on the day) * a really super prize for the Grand Raffle etc., etc., etc., etc.**

Do you enjoy baking? Could you help to stock the Cake Stall (which soon ran out last year)? Large cakes or small cakes—homemade cakes are always very popular. If you make and freeze in advance—add a note when you bring them

ON THE DAY ...

Could you spare an hour to help on a stall, help to set up the church (inc. the day/evening before), and especially help to clear up afterwards? There's a big list in the church just waiting for offers of help. Please have a look at it when you're there to see if there's a gap you could fill. Or call the Parish Office [01737 552461 or stjohns@coulsdon.net] and say ... **'I'd love to help ... what can I do?'**

KEEPING UP WITH TONY

I was reminded this morning that we were passing in to meteorological Autumn when taking our daughter to the station, and finding the car covered in a heavy dew. Ah well - despite the doomsayers, for us the summer has been good. Enid and I have celebrated another anniversary and were able to worship on the day at HTB – no not the one in London, but Holy Trinity Bembridge on the Isle of Wight.

A lovely service in a very full church. Not as old as St John's, having first been built in 1827 when a local landowner handed over the land on which a Chapel of Ease could be built and a burial ground established. Unfortunately problems encountered with the building and materials used, necessitated it being demolished, and another built in its place using Purbeck stone quarried in Swanage. This new structure was consecrated in 1846 since when there have been one or two minor additions.

There are some rather lovely stained glass windows, and carved reredos of gilded oak above the altar. However, a small omission discovered in 1884, was that the church had never actually been licensed for Marriage Services. The effect of this being that all marriages that had taken place were illegal, and all the children of those marriages were illegitimate. This included the children of the then vicar, the Rev le Mesurier. Happily an Act of Parliament was passed rectifying the omission which legitimised the marriages and the issue of those marriages. (* with thanks to [church_guide.pdf \(bembridgeholytrinity.org.uk\)](http://church_guide.pdf(bembridgeholytrinity.org.uk)) for this information).



The September meeting of the Garden of Remembrance working party went well as usual, although the young man who has helped out a couple of times wasn't there as his family were caught up in the air traffic control shambles, and was stuck in Ireland. Nonetheless lots of work got done; with especial thanks to John, Sheila, Jon & Jill, Sylvia and Graham, Julie, and churchwarden Gill. The length of the grass slowed us down, so a couple more hours were put in during the following week.

In addition to the grass cutting we were able to confirm our Eco-church credentials, when I found a beautiful Slow Worm under the blue tarpaulin, and moments later Jon spotted a lovely frog just before it disappeared into the mower blades. Fortunately he escaped unharmed and will live to hop another day! Whilst in the Garden of Remembrance I must say a special thank you to Julie who has been back to continue her brick path weeding project.

Rev Sue's meeting on 5th September to pray for the church, the team, and the new incumbent when identified and appointed, was well attended and we should offer her our thanks for the initiative which is due to be repeated shortly. She mentioned that it was likely that God had already chosen Paul's successor, and that it was now up to us to write a Parish Profile and job advertisement that encourages that chosen person to make an application.

It has been a busy week for Enid and I as we have just returned from cottage and cat sitting for our daughter down in Wiltshire. Apart from giving some of my power tools a good workout (!) we managed some trips out including Bath, Bradford-on-Avon, and the Victorian marvel shown here



This is the Caen Hill flight of locks – set in beautiful countryside near Devizes, and with a delightful café, it was a day well spent and only a few short miles from the cottage. I mentioned Jo's cats – Mel, Daisy, and Tallie – dear little things who

spend most of the day doing this:-



but at night turn in to hunter killers, bringing us 'presents' of the local wildlife. I don't think they can believe their luck in being moved from the urban surroundings of Chelmsford, to the beautiful open spaces of Market Lavington and Salisbury Plain.

So another month bites the dust, Rev Sue has gone on holiday, and we look forward to next Sunday when our services will be presided over by Archdeacon Greg Prior. We pray for him, our PCC, churchwardens and singers, and for Sue to have a lovely relaxing break, recharging her batteries for all that lies ahead.

Tony



Spirituality Day 'REST' - Southwark Cathedral
Saturday 14 October 10am-1.15pm
Tickets £5



<https://Rest-Southwark-2023.eventbrite.co.uk>



**St John's Church
Old Coulsdon**



**Christmas Tree
Festival**

**Saturday 2nd DECEMBER to
Sunday 10th DECEMBER**

Open Daily with Free Entry

Saturday 2nd December 10am - 5pm

Sunday 3rd December 2pm - 5pm

Monday 4th - Friday 8th

10am - 12pm & 2pm - 5pm

(excluding Tuesday & Thursday morning as church services on)

Saturday 9th 10am - 5pm

Saturday 9th Quiz Night 7pm

Sunday 10th December 2pm onwards

**for Christingle craft followed by the Christingle
church service starting at 4pm**



WOULD YOU LIKE TO DISPLAY A TREE?

We are delighted to be having another Christmas Tree Festival—definitely by popular demand. As you can see the festival will be open at various times throughout the week with lots of fun festivities taking place including Craft Stall, Festive Teas, Children's Activities and a Quiz Night.

If you are interested in displaying a tree then all you need to do is reserve your tree space and on set up day bring along an artificial/real tree, battery lighting and your choice of decorations – this could be linked with your business or group, you can be as creative, colourful and as original as you like. (*Please note that **ONLY battery lighting** can be used*).

To book your tree space or for any further information please contact Janice Hollobone on j.hollobone@hotmail.com or contact the Parish Office on 01737 552461 (10.00 to 12.00 during the week).



PORRIDGE POT GARDEN PARTY SUCCESS

Thank you to all who supported, in any way, our garden party at the end of August. It was a great success. Over 100 people passed through and the garden was full of wonderful chat, friendship and food. People from all walks of our lives joined together and caught up with 'friends' that they may not have seen since our last event. It is an opportunity not just to fundraise but to provide a social for the community. The party would not be possible without our wonderful team of helpers whom we cannot thank enough.

The result was a grand total of £1,150 which we were delighted with. This money helps to provide the children in The Alpha Ministry School just outside Kasese, Uganda, with a daily bowl of 'porridge'. ALFONSE the head of the school really appreciates the support we have.



Our next event is our

**Christmas Charity Open House on
Friday 24th November 11-5pm.**

Please put the date in your diary. All welcome.

Many thanks and blessings. **Sandra and Trevor Meadowcroft.**

AN INVITATION from PURLEY FOOD HUB

All volunteers, friends and supporters are warmly invited to attend the Food Hub's Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 10th October at 7.00pm at Purley United Reformed Church, Brighton Road (next to Purley Hospital). It's the opportunity to hear of the latest developments and plans for the future and to learn how all your food gifts have been helping families going through difficult times. Refreshments available from 6.30 p.m.

SUSTAINABLE COULSDON ECO FAIR

Sunday 8th October ~ 10am-2pm ~
St. John's Parish Hall

The aim of the event is to raise awareness of changes people can make at a local level to live more sustainably; to support the local community and businesses and to ensure the protection of our environment and its ecosystem. An important addition to our stalls is a Bring and Swap stall by the children of The Coulsdon C of E Primary School. To get the full benefit of the Fair, people can bring their toiletries and cleaning bottles to be refilled, unwanted tech to be recycled, seeds to swap, children's toys/games/books to swap and of course their own mug for a free cup of tea/coffee. People can get tips on changes they can make, share ideas or just come for a nousey!

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WARDENS	Gill Thaxter Ralph Goodwin	01737 553596 020 8409 1662
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PARISH OFFICE: Monday-Friday 9.30 a.m. - 12 noon
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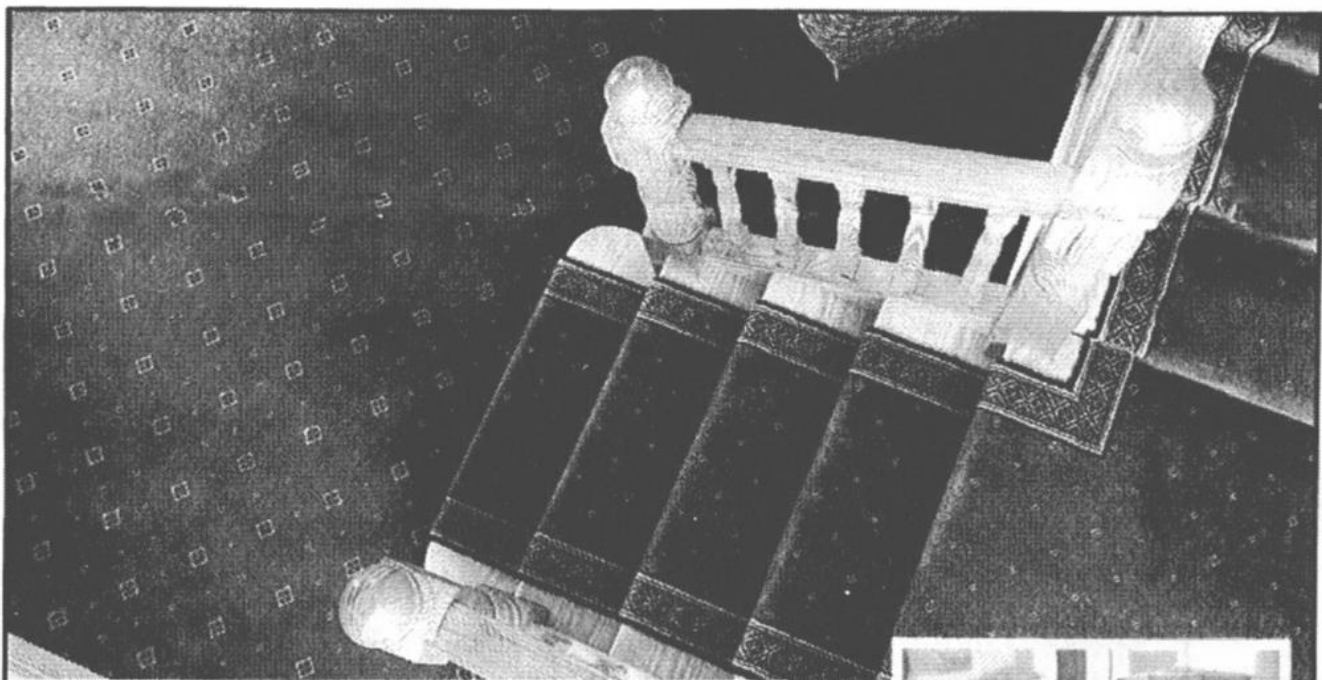
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