St John's Church
the Heart of the Wood

The Parish Church of St. John, Walsall Wood



The Parish Magazine of St John's Church

Autumn Edition 2026

50p!
for printed copy



A Few words from Revd. Lisa Mitchell

At the Heart of the Wood: a season of new beginnings!



As I look back over the past few months at St John's, I feel thankful for all that God is doing among us. There have been new ideas, familiar traditions, generous acts of service and many opportunities to come together. Above all, I have seen the warmth and welcome that make St John's such a special part of Walsall Wood.

Our summer fayre was a wonderful celebration of community, with more stalls than the year before, good food, music and plenty to enjoy. It was lovely to see people supporting local groups and charities, and simply spending time together.

In August, we held a quiet day with the theme Becoming the Church God Calls Us to Be. We made space to pray and reflect on what God might be asking of us, both as individuals and as a church family. That question has stayed with me as we have taken some exciting steps this autumn.

The Bread Pantry now opens every Saturday from 12 noon to 2pm, offering surplus food, bread and bakery items.
There is no referral or need to explain why you have come.
It is a simple way of sharing what we have and making sure people know there is a place for them at St John's.

September also saw the start of our Alpha course, where people could explore life, faith and meaning together. Our new All Age Café Church began too, with a relaxed service around tables, refreshments, conversation, activities and prayer. At its launch, 38 adults and three children joined us. Since then, our Harvest Café Church has brought people together to celebrate and share gifts for the Foodbank.

In October, we launched The Breakfast Club on the first Saturday of each month. Over bacon baps, tea and coffee, men can meet, chat and enjoy one another's company. Everyone is welcome, and it has been lovely to see this new space for friendship take shape.

There is more to look forward to in the coming weeks. On 5 November we will celebrate The Heart of the Wood, a book of local memories. A chance to open our doors, enjoy one another's company and celebrate the life of this community.

As we approach Advent, our attention will turn to the hope and light of Christ. Advent invites us to pause, prepare and make room: in our churches, in our homes and in our hearts. Then, at Christmas, we will celebrate the good news that God came among us in the birth of Jesus.
We are beginning to prepare for the season's services and celebrations, and I hope you will join us. Whether you come regularly, have not visited for a while, or are thinking of coming for the first time, there will be a welcome for you at St John's.
Thank you to everyone who has given their time, shared their gifts, offered encouragement or simply come through the door. Every act of kindness helps make St John's a place of welcome and hope, truly at the heart of the Wood. I am excited to see what God will do among us next. Reverend Lisa.

A New Season at St John's

There's something for everyone.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

There's a place for you here.



SATURDAY BREAD PANTRY

EVERY SATURDAY
12 NOON



ALL AGE CAFÉ

2ND SUNDAY
11AM



SOULSPACE

EVERY WEDNESDAY
4PM



THE BREAKFAST CLUB

1ST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
9AM–11AM

FRIENDSHIP ♡ FAITH ♡ FOOD ♡ COMMUNITY ♡ HOPE

ST JOHN'S CHURCH

AT THE HEART OF THE WOOD

We'd love to see you! ♡

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Dates for the Diary

Saturday 21st November – Christmas Fayre
Saturday 28th November – Walsall Symphony Orchestra

Fortnightly News Sheet - This gives information on what is taking place, as it happens, covering Worship through to Fund Raising. If you would like to receive these they are available in Church and at the Thursday Place of Worship in the Hall, but also via email: valeriebenford2@gmail.com.

Weekly activities

Mondays 9.30am – Babies and Toddler Group in the Hall (term time only)
10am – Morning prayer
5pm – Rainbows in the Hall (term time only)
6pm – Brownies in the Hall (term time only)

Tuesdays 10am – Morning Prayer
6.30pm – Guides in the hall (term time only)
7.30pm – Choir Practice

Wednesdays 10am – Morning Prayer
7.30pm – Evening prayer
7.30pm – Music Group in hall

Thursdays 10am – Morning Prayer
10.30am – Places of Welcome in the hall
5pm – Rainbows in the hall (term time only)

Fridays 9.30am – Weight Watchers in the hall
10am – Morning prayer

Young Church 1st and 3rd Sunday 10am service (term time only)

Bishop Michael's Creation Pilgrimage

Bishop Michael's creation pilgrimage came to St John's Church on Friday 4th September, we were delighted to welcome him to St John's as part of his two-day pilgrimage celebrating the Feast of Creation in Christ. 🙏🌍

The pilgrimage visited churches across our area that have committed to caring for God's creation through Eco Church. We were overjoyed to see people attend to greet Bishop Michael and pray together for God's creation and our fragile world. It was a particularly special opportunity to welcome Bishop Michael as he approaches his retirement.

🌱 Caring for creation - At the Heart of the Wood







Winter Warmer Recipes

Easy cheese, leek and potato puff pie



Ingredients

1kg/2lb 4oz potatoes, peeled, cut into cubes and boiled
1 large leek, very thinly sliced
150g/5½oz mature cheddar, grated
1 tsp dried mixed herbs
150ml/5fl oz full-fat milk, plus 1 tbsp for brushing
100g/3½oz cream cheese
320g/11½oz puff pastry sheet
salt and freshly ground black pepper
freshly cooked frozen peas, to serve

Method

Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6. Stir the potatoes, leek, cheddar and herbs together in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper. In a separate bowl, gradually whisk the milk into the cream cheese. Pour the milk mixture into the potato mixture, stirring together until well mixed. Tip into a roughly 31x23cm/12½x9in roasting tin.

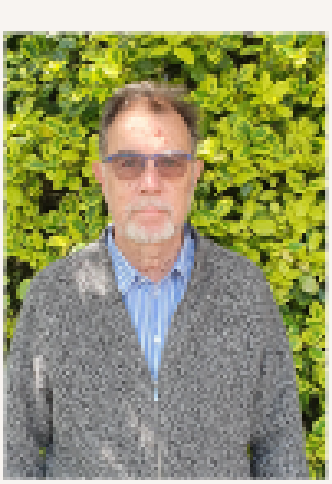
Open out the pastry sheet and lay the pastry on top of the pie filling, tucking the edges into the sides.

Brush the top with milk and make a couple of slits in the pastry so the steam can escape.

Bake for 30 minutes until puffed up and golden brown. Serve with the peas.



Remembering Bob Grainger



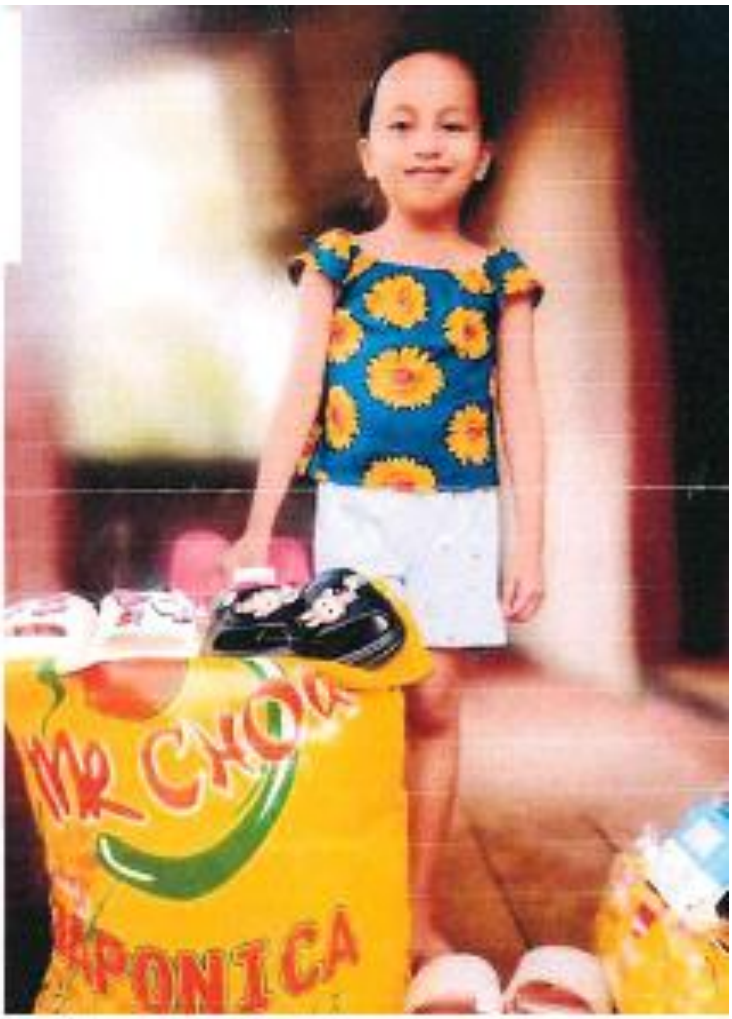
It is with great shock and sadness that we share the news of the unexpected death of Bob Grainger on Thursday 10th September. Bob was a familiar and much-loved member of our church family, regularly worshipping with us at our 10am Sunday service. He contributed so much to the life of St John's, serving as Lay Chair of the PCC and giving generously of his time in so many different ways, including regularly mowing the church lawns and helping with the care of our cemetery. Bob also had a very special connection with St John's Church School where he was a dedicated Governor and a valued member of the Open the Book team. He gave so generously of his time and gifts to the life of our church, school and wider community. His friendship, commitment and quiet, dependable presence amongst us will be very greatly missed.Our love and prayers are especially with Barbara, their two daughters, grandchildren and all Bob's family and friends at this very sad and difficult time.

"Bob was a tremendous advocate and supporter of St John's school and all the children and staff who passed through for over 40 years. His connection with school started with his two daughters, Mel and Kath attending St John's and then his four grandchildren Molly, Charlie, Caitlyn and Ben. Bob's wife Barbara also taught at St John's for many years. Our Key Stage 2 children know Bob through his Open the Book services he and his team have delivered in school over the last few years. These services have wonderfully brought the bible stories to life and have been enjoyed by all. Bob had been a governor for nearly 20 years serving as the link between school and Church; where he was also a committed member serving on the PCC. His friendship, support and quiet leadership will be very sadly missed by many and leaves a large hole in both the Church and School community. I am sure you will join Jane and myself in sending our heartfelt love and prayers to Barbara and his family at this very sad time". Andy

Andy Mills, Headteacher from St John's Primary School

Compassion

In our Spring edition we introduced you to a little girl called Nami who is supported through the work of compassion. Nami's grandmother has kindly sent a photo of Nami along with one of her recent drawings and a thank you letter showing how grateful she is for the continued support.



Small gift thank you letter

Dear St. John's Church Walsall,

Good day to all of you. How are you? We hope you are all in good health and condition right now. We are very grateful for your continued support for Nami and our whole family. Thank you for the gifts you sent for Nami and for all of us. Because of your help, we were able to buy rice and other basic necessities for Nami and her siblings. This is truly a huge help to us, and we will never forget your kindness. We pray that God will always bless you with abundant grace, good health, and lasting happiness. Once again, thank you and God bless you all!

With gratitude,

Aileen - Nami's Grandma





If you would like further information on compassion please visit their website

www.compassionuk.org

The Breakfast Club

Men matter too — and no one should have to walk alone. Join us at St John's Church, Walsall Wood, on the first Saturday of every month, from 9.00am to 11.00am.



Enjoy a bacon bap, tea or coffee, and friendly conversation in a relaxed, welcoming space. Come for ten minutes or stay for the whole morning. Whether you're local, new to the area, or simply looking for good company, you'll be very welcome.

Caring for Our Cemetery

A huge thank you to everyone who gives up their time at our cemetery working parties to help care for St John's Cemetery.

It was wonderful to see so many people working together to keep this special place looking beautiful for all who come to visit and remember their loved ones.

A very special thank you goes to Rick and the fantastic team from Glendale Bloxwich for generously supporting us with their machinery, expertise and hard work.

We are so grateful for your kindness and partnership.

Thank you also to every volunteer who came along—you are amazing.

Days like today remind us what can be achieved when a community comes together with willing hearts and helping hands. Please look out for our next working party date on our Facebook Page.

Many hands, one heart… caring for our cemetery.

With grateful thanks from all at St John's Church, Walsall Wood.





St John's Church
At the Heart of the Wood

SATURDAY BREAD PANTRY

Fresh surplus bread, cakes and bakery items that would otherwise go to waste.



EVERY SATURDAY *from* **12 NOON**

EVERYONE WELCOME
No referral needed.

PLEASE TAKE WHAT YOU NEED
Only take what your household can use.

HELPING REDUCE FOOD WASTE
Good for our community, good for our planet.

TEA & COFFEE AVAILABLE
A warm welcome for all.

DONATIONS WELCOME
Never expected, always appreciated.

"Give us today our daily bread."
Matthew 6:11

PLEASE COME AND HELP YOURSELF
You are always welcome at St John's

Sharon's Licensing at Lichfield Cathedral

Congratulations to Sharon, who was licenced at Lichfield Cathedral on Saturday the 19th September. We give thanks to God for Sharon's calling and ministry, and we are delighted to welcome her as our new Reader at St John's. Please join us in praying for her as this exciting new chapter begins.







PLACE OF WELCOME

Welcome to your local Place of Welcome. It belongs to a growing network of Places of Welcome that are run by local community groups who want to make sure everyone in your area has a place to go for conversation and a cup of tea if and when they need it. Each Place of Welcome is slightly different from each other but each is open to everyone and offers:

- Friendship and hospitality;
- Regular opening at the same time each week;
- Free refreshments;
- Local knowledge about the neighbourhood.

You can be sure when you see our logo that this is a place where you will be listened to and talked to and free hospitality will be on offer.

Here at St John's our Places of Welcome is held in the Church Hall every Thursday at 10.30am. Come and join us for a cuppa, a chat or one of our fortnightly games of bingo! You will always be greeted with a warm welcome.

Charity Concert - Thank you for your support!



The Kings Bromley Singers, aka Village Harmony were definitely on song at St John's on Friday night.
They presented us with a superb concert and even threw in a fun musical quiz pitting the choir against the audience (which the audience won!).
This charity concert was a success by any standard; the cherry on the top being the £466 raised; which will be split evenly between the two nominated charities, St Giles Hospice and Suicide Prevention.

A big thank you to everyone who attended.

At the Heart of the Wood

St John's Church
Walsall Wood

2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
11.00AM

AT THE HEART OF THE WOOD

A CAFÉ-STYLE ALL AGE SERVICE

WORSHIP • COMMUNITY • CONNECTION
THOUGHTFUL • CREATIVE • WELCOMING






Tea and coffee available from 10:45am

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Worship, friendship and a warm welcome

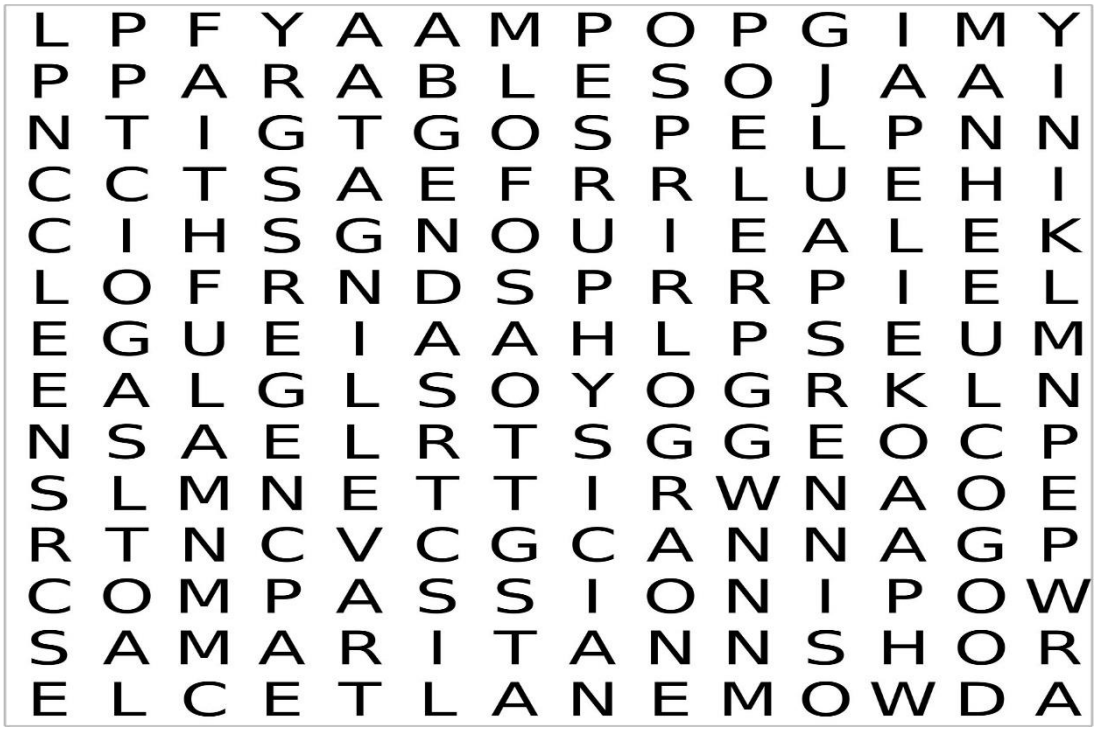
RELAXED CAFÉ STYLE | ALL AGE WORSHIP | INSPIRING TEACHING | TIME TO REFLECT | REAL CONVERSATION

AT THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY | AT THE HEART OF GOD'S LOVE

Come as you are. You are so welcome.

Wordsearch for St Luke

To St Luke, whose feast-day is 18th October, we owe a beautifully written gospel as well as the Book of Acts. He was a Greek physician and faithful travelling companion to St Paul. Under house arrest near the end of his life Paul noted, 'only Luke is with me'. Luke's gospel focuses on the compassion of Christ, and offers us moving parables, such as the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son. Women figure more prominently in Luke's gospel than in any other: look out for the extended story of the Virgin Birth, and stories of Mary, Elizabeth, and the woman who was a sinner. His gospel also features more poor people, more lepers, more 'sinners', who are all shown to be 'inside' the love of Christ. In Acts, Luke skilfully links sacred and profane history, as subsequent archaeology has shown. He tells of how the early Christians moved away from Jerusalem into the pagan world, and especially on to Rome.



Physician	Travelling	Faithful	Acts	Luke
Feast	Paul	Compassion	Parables	Prodigal
Day	Greek	Samaritan	Lepers	Pagan
Written	Son	Women	Sinner	Rome
Gospel	Good	Poor	Jerusalem	Christians
Early				

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For more information contact the church office on 01543 372284 or email Stjohnschurchwalsallwood@btinternet.com










ST JOHN'S CHURCH
CHRISTMAS FAYRE
All our usual stalls
Cakes · refreshments · tombola · toys · books · and more
The Lamp will be joining us
Christmas floral arrangements and cards
from Happy Celebrations
SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2026
1PM
Entrance 50p
Includes a free Grand Prize raffle ticket
St John's Church · High Street, Walsall Wood

St John's Church

High Street, Walsall Wood, WS9 9LP

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Vocalist

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From The Registers

Funerals

Betty Murial Purchas
Robert Arthur Grainger

Burial of Ashes

Keith Sears
Anthony Meacham

May they rest in peace and rise to eternal life in God's presence.

Baptisms

Molly Rose Dennant
Laura-Jane Portsmouth
Robyn Elsie Samantha Newell
Billie Alison Victoria Shinn

Resources Page

PASTORAL CARE AT ST JOHN'S

If you need support, or know someone who does, have a confidential word with Rev. Lisa, Rev John, Angela, Doreen, Suzie, Colin, Jane or Sharon.

St John's
the Heart of the Wood

HOPE CMA DEBT CENTRE - They are there to help with debt, household budgeting and general money advice queries. Contact Jacqueline for friendly confidential help and advice on 079499 37561 or email: Jacqueline@hopedebtcentre.co.uk

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of the month



Next magazine deadline:

If you wish to submit an article for the **Winter Edition** please ensure you do so by end of November and hand it into Katie Dennant, Colin Roberts or Val Benford.

Thank you

Enquiries

The Parish Office

Telephone 01543 372284

Parish Administrator: Katie Dennant

St John's Church
the Heart of the Wood

Opening Hours:

Monday 9.30am – 12.30pm

Wednesday 9.30am – 12.30pm

Friday 9.30am – 12.30pm (Fridays are reserved for administration)

For enquiries regarding Baptism, Marriage, the Churchyard, and the Community Hall; also for service times. Special services, and general enquiries relating to the parish.

Otherwise please ring

The Reverend Lisa Mitchell on 01543 360558

Community Hall

This is available for hire most weekdays, Friday evenings and Saturdays. Contact the Church Office for availability on 01543 372284.

Social Events

Check our web site for details of the above events and any future ones.

Who's Who at St John's

Incumbent / Minister in Charge

Rev Lisa Mitchell

St John's Ministry Team:

Rev John Pretty – Retired Priest

Miss Doreen Sears – Reader

Miss Sharon Hodgetts – Authorised Lay Minister

Churchwardens

Mrs Suzie Thomas suziem_140@outlook.com 07729553674

PCC Secretary Mrs Valerie Benford

valeriebenford2@gmail.com

St John's CE Primary School

Brook Lane, Walsall Wood, WS9 9NA – 01543 452197

Head Teacher Mr Andrew Mills

St John's Church
the Heart of the Wood

Worship

at St John's

Sunday

9.00 a.m. Said Holy Communion

10.00 a.m. Morning Service as below:

1st, 3rd and 4th Sunday: Sung Holy Communion

5th Sunday: Morning Worship

2nd Sunday

9.00 a.m. Said Holy Communion

11.00 a.m. All Age Café Service

6.30 p.m Evensong

Midweek Worship

10.00 a.m. Morning Prayer (Monday to Friday)

The Parish Church of St. John
High Street, Walsall Wood, Walsall, WS9 9LP
Tel: 01543 372284. email:
stjohnswalsallwood@btinternet.com
Minister in Charge: Rev. Lisa Mitchell:
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Charity No. 1138950

Everyone is assured of a very warm welcome