

Welcome!

We are so glad you are here with us today. You are especially welcome if you are new to the Church. If you would like more information about us, please take and complete a slip in the Welcome Area and give it to a Steward or a Minister.

Collect for This Sunday

Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

Today at St. John's

8:00am	Communion	Reading: Matthew 13:44-52
10:00am	Morning Worship	Reading: Matthew 13:44-52 <i>Preacher: Glyn Lucas</i>
6.30pm	Evening Communion	Ruth 2 <i>Preacher: Glyn Lucas</i>

Today at Emmanuel Church, Mayford

9:30am	Morning Worship	Reading: Matthew 13:24-43
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Next Week at St John's

8:00am	Communion	Reading: Matthew 13:53-14:12
10:00am	Communion	Reading: Matthew 13:53-14:12
6:30pm	Evening Worship	Reading: Gospel Shaped Mercy 4

Next Week at Emmanuel

9:30am	Morning Worship	Reading: Matthew 13:44-52
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Office hours: 9am - 1pm,

Mon - Fri

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Gluten free wafers are available for communicants.

Non-alcoholic alternative is available during communion.

*Someone from our Prayer Ministry Team (with **blue lanyards**) will be available after the 10am service to pray with those who would like prayer.*

Events This Week:

Mon 12 th	9:30am	Ladies' Bible group	Church lounge
Tues 13 th	8:00pm	Music group rehearsal	Church
Wed 14 th	10.00am 7:45pm	Men's Bible group Lent Groups 2024	Church Church
Thurs 15 th	10.30am 8.00pm	Grieving Hearts Group Christianity Explored	Church lounge Vicarage

Lent groups start this week Pick up a leaflet in the welcome area to sign up or online on the website. www.stjohnswoking.uk – church life - lent groups

Dates for the Diary:

CAMEO: March 14th at 2:30pm

Ladies' Curry Night on March 15th at 7pm

APCM: March 17th followed by a bring and share lunch.

Only those on the Electoral Roll can stand for election on the PCC or vote at the APCM. Check the Roll in the welcome area. Application forms are also available there and on the website.

Guildford Living Out Day: Saturday, March 16th 9:30am-13:00pm. What does the Bible say about sexuality? Is it good news for all of us? How can we support those who experience same-sex attraction to stay faithful to Jesus and flourish? Join us as we explore these questions and more, offering a positive biblical vision and practical steps forward for Christians seeking to show Christ-like love to everybody.

Book tickets: livingout.org/events

Easter Choir - Singers wanted!

We're getting the choir back together to sing on Good Friday afternoon at the reflective service and again on Easter Sunday morning.

There will be one rehearsal on Sunday 24th March at 2.30pm and short run through/rehearsal just before each service.

Please can you email Robin (robin@stjohnswoking.uk) to confirm you can join.

Engage Woking are on a mission to take the Christian message into schools and colleges in the Woking area, and we're currently looking for new trustees to help lead the direction and purpose of the charity. We are specifically looking for people with experience in HR or teaching, but if you've got a passion to see Faith, Hope and Love shared with the educational community in our area, we'd love to talk to you. For a no-obligation chat please reach out to Simon Pearce, trustee (07743 234091) Si.j.Pearce@hotmail.com or Shelley Blunden, the Director of Schools' Work (office@EngageWoking.org)

SGP Prayers: Christ Church: Give thanks for lots of new faces and for people returning from the post pandemic absence. Give thanks for the many people who have signed up to serve in their new roles. Give thanks on good numbers on the new Romans course and Discipleship Explored. Pray that evangelism is at the forefront at all services.

If there is someone who would be willing to offer hospital lifts to a friend of Esther Christ-Light, please get in touch with her.

Welcoming one another

11th February

"If you aren't there 10 minutes early, you're late." That's the advice one of my church youth leaders had been given by her grandma as a girl. I remember her passing it on as I waited for other members of our youth group (11-14's) by our favourite bench in the church yard, before the 9:30am service. It sounds a bit harsh, but she said it with smile, and always sat with us (right at the front? How did she persuade us to do that?) through the service, helping us to join in.

Some years later I remember the vicar of my church in Cambridge, without a hint of irony in his voice, welcoming us all to the 11:03am service. He had a point – we students weren't particularly punctual, and were invariably as late as the latest person we walked with from our accommodation.

There's something valuable about getting to church on time – or even early! We wouldn't be late for an appointment with the king. But the King of kings has an appointment with his people every Sunday! Arriving in a breathless rush – as I have so often – without time to prepare my heart for the occasion, has never helped me to make the most of public worship.

BUT... Before you think this is a rant, extolling the virtues of punctuality (you'd rightly call me a hypocrite!) and berating those who have tried their best to get three squabbling children in to the car, and fought against the tiredness of another busy week or the aches and pains of their own body, and were determined that this week they'd be seated 5 minutes earlier than usual, yet somehow found themselves coming in at the same time as always... Before you think that's what I'm doing, let me share a quote someone shared with me last month.

An alcoholic friend of Christian writer Philip Yancey once said to him: *"When I'm late to church, people turn around and stare at me with frowns of disapproval. I get the clear message that I'm not as responsible as they are. When I'm late to AA, the meeting comes to a halt and everyone jumps up to hug and welcome me. They realise that my lateness may be a sign that I almost didn't make it. When I show up, it proves that my desperate need for them won out over my desperate need for alcohol."*

Isn't that beautiful? Wouldn't it be wonderful if that were our first thought as we see our brothers and sisters on a Sunday morning, whatever time they arrive? I've tried saying that to myself Sunday by Sunday in recent weeks. "Thank you God, that X is here! And how wonderful that Y has joined us again!" And to pray – along with others at around half-past 9 – "Lord, please put in the hearts of all your people a desire to worship you which is stronger and deeper than their love of anything else."

With thankfulness for the privilege of worshipping together with you, Peter

Sermon Notes:

Our Parish Safeguarding Officer, Mary Kirkman, is available for advice or to talk through concerns relating to safeguarding.

Tel 07763 456015 or email: safeguarding@stjohnswoking.uk

Recordings of our livestreamed services are available on our website.