

**Welcome!**

We are so glad you are here with us today. We welcome those who 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, or scan the QR code, also in the Welcome Area.

**Collect for This Sunday**

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

**Today at St. John's**

8.00am	Communion	Reading: Matthew 18:15-35 <i>Preacher: Peter Chamberlin</i>
10:00am	Morning Worship	Reading: Matthew 18:15-35 <i>Preacher: Peter Chamberlin</i>
6:30pm	Communion	Is Jesus fully Man? <i>Preacher: Glyn Lucas</i>

**Today at Emmanuel**

**(Emmanuel service times will change to 4pm from April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025)**

9:30am	Morning Worship	Reading: Matthew 18:1-14 <i>Preacher: Warwick Croucher</i>
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**Events This Week:**

Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>	9:30am	Ladies' Bible group	Church lounge
Tues 11 <sup>th</sup>	6:00pm	Dangerous Kids Club (7-10s)	Youth Centre
	7:15pm	Youth groups (11-18s)	Youth Centre
	8:00pm	Music group rehearsal	Church
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Men's Bible group	Church lounge
	7:45pm	<b>Lent Course</b>	Church
Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup>	9:30am	First-steps toddler group	Youth Centre
Fri 14 <sup>th</sup>	9:30am	Ladies' Bible group	Narthex
	2:30pm	CAMEO	Narthex
	7:00pm	Men's Games Evening	Youth Centre
Sunday, 16 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Communion: Matthew 19:1-12	St John's
	9.30am	<b>No Service at Emmanuel</b>	
	10.00am	Morning Worship: Matthew 19:1-12	St John's
	6.30pm	Evening Worship: Is the Spirit really a person?	St John's

It is not too late to join one of our **Lent Courses, sign-up or just turn up!**

**Garden Tools:** If you have tools that you no longer use, the volunteers who help maintain the church grounds would really appreciate them. Please speak to Ken.

**CAMEO:** Please join us on Friday **14<sup>th</sup> March** in the Church Narthex between 2.30 and 4.30 pm. Tea and cakes followed by a speaker from Surrey Climate Commission who will give details on up-to-date Home Energy Efficiency.

**Men's Games evening – Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March:** Would you like an opportunity to get to know other men at church? Would you like an easy invitation for a friend or neighbour to meet a few other Christian men? Do you know any of the 1/3 of men in the UK who report regularly feeling lonely?

The men's games evening is a free, 'youth group' style drop-in for men. Who knows how the Lord may use the friendships that develop? Contact Peter with any questions. Arrive 15 mins early to help us set-up.

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)** this year will be held immediately after the 10am service at St John's on **16<sup>th</sup> March**. This year there are 8 vacancies on PCC. If you are thinking of standing, please look at the information on the church website to find out more. You can download a nomination form from the website, or they are also available in the Welcome area. The website also has the PCC's Annual Report and the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024.

After the APCM, there will be a **Bring & Share lunch**, to which all are welcome. Bring your own drinks and cups. You can also text or phone Gill on 07748 310171 before **Friday 14th March**. Please sign up on the sheets in the welcome area.

**Ladies Curry Night, Thursday 27th March, 7:30pm:** Join us for an evening of food and fellowship. The event is aimed at building relationships amongst women, so we are not having a long talk. Guests are very welcome. Cost £15. Food and soft drinks provided, please bring your own alcohol. Sign up on the sheet in the welcome area or by emailing [chamberlin.joanna@gmail.com](mailto:chamberlin.joanna@gmail.com) by **Sunday 23rd March**.

**Easter Weekend Choir 2025 - Singers needed!** We will be forming a choir to sing on Good Friday afternoon (2pm) and Easter Sunday morning (10am) and welcome all ages and abilities. There is no requirement to read music or to have sung in the choir before. Please contact [robin@stjohnswoking.uk](mailto:robin@stjohnswoking.uk) to register your interest or find out more.

**Rehearsals: Thursday 3rd April - 8pm and Sunday 13th April - 3pm**

**SGP Prayers: Binscombe Church:** Give thanks for our 60th Anniversary on March 6<sup>th</sup>, since starting out as a small church plant. Give thanks for progress on building our new church centre, and pray for planning as we seek to make the most of our opening in October. Prayer for wisdom and gospel focus as we seek to develop our leadership and programme with growing opportunities.

**Are you new to St. John's church? We would love to get your name and contact number. This QR code will take you to a secure online form.**



Several times this week someone has observed "isn't it wonderful to see the sunshine again?" "It feels like Spring has finally sprung". The coming up of shoots of new life happens every year – the rhythm of the year and the changing seasons are a part of God's design: "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease" (Gen 8:22).

The change from winter to spring is easy to accept. But there are other changes which we find harder to live with.

On the grand scale, many people in the UK have been disturbed by the effects of a change of political leadership in the US. Its impact has been felt around the world. Prior assumptions have gone out of the window. Political commentators are speaking in fearful tones.

Far smaller changes than that, but to things we are personally invested in, can be extremely emotionally costly too. Changes at church are an obvious example.<sup>1</sup> Members of Emmanuel are approaching the change to the time of their service from morning to afternoon, which impacts on established patterns and habits. We recognise that comes at a cost, whilst also bringing fresh opportunity.

With those situations and many others in mind, I've been pondering this week how we should think about change and stability.

Stability, of course, is more comfortable. But we mustn't forget that the gospel calls us to change – the change of conversion if we are not yet Christian, and the change of sanctification (becoming more like Jesus) when we already are. Change like this is painful, because cherished sins are hard to leave behind, but necessary and ultimately worthwhile for the Christian.

Similarly, the church should not be static. One of the Protestant reformers' slogans was 'semper reformanda' – 'always reforming'. The church should be in a constant state of change – not change for change's sake, but being increasingly conformed to the revealed will of God.

But there are also changes that are unavoidable or thrust on us (growing older, new management or redundancies at work), or which we have chosen but struggle to embrace (a new phone, a new house...). Many things are beyond our control. Amid those changes God is our rock – steady and unchanging – the security we need amid the changes of this life. This week, as I've grappled with change affecting my own family, that is what I have clung to, and sung quietly to myself in the words of a fabulous old hymn, Samuel Rodigast's "Whate'er my God ordains is right", trusting my situation to the Lord's sovereignty.

Whatever change may occur for you this week – keep trusting Him who "does not change like shifting shadows".

Peter

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<sup>1</sup> You know the old joke – "how many Anglicans does it take to change a lightbulb?" "Change? What's change?"

## Sermon Notes

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

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](mailto:safeguarding@stjohnswoking.uk)

*Recordings of our livestreamed services are available on our website.*

### **St. John the Baptist Church**

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