St John's with Emmanuel Woking

Weekly News
22nd November 2026
1st Sunday before Advent

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 (right), and also in the Welcome Area.

Collect

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Parish Services Today

8am	St John's	Communion (BCP)	1 Timothy 6:3-10 *Preacher: Matt Vaughan*
10am	St John's	Morning Worship	
4pm	Emmanuel	Afternoon Worship	
6.30pm	St John's	Evening Worship	Christmas anomalies and questions

Parish Services Next Week (Nov 29th)

8am	St John's	Communion (BCP)	1 Timothy 6:11-21
10am	St John's	Morning Worship	
4pm	Emmanuel	Afternoon Worship	
6.30pm	St. John's	Evening Worship	

A hearing loop is available in the church.
Gluten-free wafers and non-alcoholic grape juice are available for communicants. Just indicate to the servers if you would like either of these alternatives.

Recordings of our livestreamed services are available on our website
www.stjohnswoking.uk

Events This Week:			
Mon 23rd	9:30am	Ladies' Bible Group	Lounge
Tues 24th	6:00pm 7:15pm	Dangerous Kids Club (7-10s) Youth groups (11-18s)	Youth Centre Youth Centre
Wed 25th	10:00am 7:45pm	Men's Bible Group Homegroup in church	Lounge Lounge
Thurs 26th	9:30am	First-steps toddler group	Youth Centre
Fri 27th	9:30am 7:45pm	Ladies' Bible group Women's Christmas event	Youth Centre Church

Women's Christmas event: **Friday, November 27th at 7:45pm £10 a ticket.**
Join us for an evening tasting and rating a selection of Christmas desserts from local supermarkets.
With festive drinks, music, mini quiz and a short Christmas message – why not bring a friend or two?!
Sign up in the welcome area or contact Anne on 07790684815 to book your place.
(**Deadline - Monday 23rd November**)

Christingle - helpers needed: We need people to assist with the Christingle on 12th December. Setup from 3:15. (event time 4pm-5pm)
Please let Robin know if you can help robin@stjohnswoking.uk

Christmas Choir is back! We are looking for people of all ages and abilities to join the Christmas Choir for the carol service on 20th December at St John's and Emmanuel. **Everyone is welcome, no experience necessary!**
Rehearsals will be a mixture of Thursdays and Sundays as below. If you cannot make them all that is not a problem but ideally, we ask that you make at least 3. Please e-mail Robin to let him know you are interested.

As part of the process to appoint the next Bishop of Guildford, representatives of the Crown Nominations Commission are holding an online consultation at **7pm - 8pm on 25th November** to gather views from across the Diocese.
A link will be available nearer the time for anyone wishing to contribute.

INEQE Safeguarding Group have been asked to carry out Safeguarding Audits of the Church of England to make sure dioceses, cathedrals and palaces are doing all they can to create environments where everyone feels safe, valued and respected.
Church of England – Guildford - Ineqe Safeguarding Group

The Christian Institute: 'In the Image of God' at Guildford on Thursday, November 26th at 7:45pm at GU1 4HL.

Project Spire (or, is the C of E giving away all the money I put in the plate?)

One of the recent news stories around the Church of England concerns 'Project Spire' – a Welby-era investigation into the Church of England's historic links to slavery. After examining historical accounts the Church it found itself guilty on multiple counts – of having profited from investment in the slave trade, having had senior leaders who were slave owners, and so on.

We should be clear that the bible teaches the dignity of all people of every race and ethnicity, by virtue of their creation in God's image, which makes racism and all forms of slavery abhorrent. That is why Anglicans such as William Wilberforce worked tirelessly for abolition! Reports that 96 clergy were among the slave-owners compensated by the government in 1833 for their abolition losses are sickening. But that doesn't answer the question, "what should we do about it now?"

Reports about the Church of England are sometimes confusing. The headline here is that the Church of England has committed to diverting £100 million into a compensation fund. So, are the Church of England planning to spend the money you give to St John's and Emmanuel in this way? No. The money allocated for such reparations comes from the Church Commissioners, the body which manages the C of E's endowment (all £11.1billion of it) which provides financial support for clergy pensions, bishops, cathedrals, and mission projects in deprived areas.

Is that the right course of action? All kinds of questions are raised.

What is the historical basis? The official report asserts that Queen Anne's Bounty (a fore-runner of the Church Commissioners' fund) made the equivalent (in today's money) of millions of pounds through investments in the South Sea Company, which generated profits from the slave trade. However, some well-regarded historians contend that this is inaccurate, and that the funds were actually invested in a kind of government bond, which made none of its profits from slavery. There are ethical questions – to what extent are people today responsible for sins of past generations? Are apologies made for people long ago even meaningful?

There's a legal question. Can funds invested for use in the Church actually be diverted in this way? Charity Law suggests not. And there's a sincerity question. Is the C of E's response genuine or performative?

This whole subject will generate many more headlines. If you're inclined to burrow into it further there's a long BBC article here, and a series of articles on the Psephizo blog challenging the official line. I for one won't tell you what to think on this one – I'll just challenge you to think carefully and to ground your conclusions on biblical principles and presuppositions.

Yours in Christ,

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

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