

Please pray for our church family	
Mon	Libby Gash & family
Tue	Janet Gash
Wed	Barbara Gates
Thurs	Luke & Sophie Gibbs & family
Fri	Eileen Gibson
Sat	Simon & Yu Ling Goh & family
Sun	Lynda Gough & Colin

**Please Pray**

For Raymond and Alison as they move to Hereford next week and begin this next chapter of their lives together.

For Sharon, Ali and Simon as they organise the day-to-day running of St John's during the vacancy.

For our PCC, that they will be guided by the Holy Spirit as they make important decisions on our behalf.

For each of us, that we will discover new ways to apply our gifts and talents in our church.



# Sunday March 19 Lent 4



**APCM and PCC vacancies**

This year our APCM will be on Monday 15th May at 7.30pm. As well as reviewing the year just gone, this meeting is when our elected representatives (our PCC) are chosen for the year (or years) ahead. This time we will have five PCC vacancies to fill—three for a 3 year term and two for a 1 year term. There are also three Deanery Synod vacancies for a 3 year term.

Could this be something you are prayerfully being called to do? If you would like more information about being a PCC member please contact the Parish Office or chat to a member of the current PCC (their names and photos are on the wall by the Parish Office).

## Mothering Sunday

Services for Next Sunday			
March 26th	9am	Morning Prayer	Tony Njoroge
Lent 5	11am	Morning Praise	

Time	Service	Sermon	Readings
9.00 am	Holy Communion	Michael Johnson	1 Samuel 1: 20-28 John 19: 25-27
11.00 am	All Age Service	Simon Robertson	Colossians 3: 12-17

## The End Of An Era ... And The Beginning Of A New One

Raymond and Alison's departure after 30+ years at St John's will leave a big hole in our church life. We will probably all be feeling mixed emotions: sadness, loss, thankfulness for all they did, apprehension, etc. Over time this may turn to anticipation or even excitement about what God has planned for us in the post-Raymond era.

St John's will continue to meet as God's people in Haydon Wick, but it will be a new normal. Other people will be trying to cover all the things Raymond and Alison did, but this will give many of us an extra workload, so some things may take longer than usual or not happen at all. Please be patient and bear with one another in love over the coming weeks.

Officially, it is our churchwardens, Sharon Mortimer and Ali Wiltshire who have responsibility for the running of the church when there is no vicar. Simon Robertson will be taking the main responsibility for organising the Sunday services. If you would normally have spoken to Raymond about something, please talk to one of them instead.

This could also be a golden opportunity for you to try out something new in St John's. Please think and pray about whether there is any new way in which you would like to contribute to the life of the church and if anything comes to mind, please talk to Sharon, Ali or Simon. Any offers could lighten the burden on everyone else.

"When each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love" Ephesians 4:16 (GNB)



## Meeting for prayer next week

The second of our monthly prayer meetings for March will be held next week on Wednesday 22nd March, at 7.30pm in the Quiet Room. We look to God to guide us in this time of transition for St John's and we pray for our world as leaders try to tackle difficult topics of climate, conflict and finance.



*Raymond writes:*

## A Swirl of Emotions

Alison and I, and our children, were deeply touched by the outpouring of love and generosity from church members last Sunday.

We will remember our Farewell Lunch for many years.

Our thanks must go to Mary and her team, for organising and preparing the catering, and also to all those church members, including teenagers, who got stuck into the washing-up at the end of a long afternoon.

We have already received many beautiful gifts and cards, both from the musicians, individuals and the wider church. Theatre tokens and a passport to private fishing areas will give us great experiences to look forward to. Yesterday, Ali brought round a hugely generous cheque from the church. That will go towards a holiday and we will drink your health somewhere in the sun.

In addition to all the gifts, we were bowled over by the prolonged applause both at 9am and 11am.



The cakes were a joy, and we want to thank Jo for her imagination and creativity as she told the story of one vicar's footsteps from the parish to the riverbank. This is not the first cake Jo has made for us.

Mary then added a second cake and a free hat! Roll on the summer!

Sadly, my timing has not been good. The closed season on the River Wye started on Wednesday and the river will not reopen for fishing until June 16<sup>th</sup>. (Fortunately, lakes remain open all year round.)

People keep asking me how we feel, and we can only say that feelings are very mixed. There are so many things to look forward to and yet so many sad goodbyes to say, almost all of them on one day. We are not sure that parting is really "sweet sorrow." Our final look around the church next week will be poignant and full of memories.

Our new address will be 112 Hampton Dene Road, Hereford, HR1 1UJ. We would love to see those who have not commented on Raymond's growing bald patch there.

Bishop Lee will also retire next month and Alison and I will be back for his farewell at Pattern Church on Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup>.

