



ST JOHN'S HOLLINGTON
WITH
ST PETER & ST PAUL

FEBRUARY 2026

Hello,

We've now emerged from the gloom of January and even though it's not officially here until next month, I can't help but feel like we have even had the odd glimpses of Spring. The ever so slightly brighter mornings, a small increase in birdsong, and the crocuses peeping through, all in their own little ways give us glimmers of this verdant hope on the horizon. It is these little glimmers of hope, that – as the church prepares to enter the deep season of Lent in preparation for the celebration of Good Friday and Easter – we must hold on to and cherish.

As ever, there's lot's going on in the parish, the usual groups and coffees, bits and bobs, and so on. But there's also lots of new things to look forward to, and if you're the praying type, things that need your prayers. Just a brief one today.

Here's what's coming up in this month's newsletter:

- **Ash Wednesday Service** – at St John's, 12:30pm, 18th February.
- **Lenten Bible Study** – Mondays in Lent, 13:00-14:30.
- **Updates and prayer Points** – appointments, buildings, and baptisms.



ASH WEDNESDAY

18TH FEBRUARY | 12:30PM | ST JOHN'S

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a “deep” season of prayer and fasting in which we slow down in preparation to celebrate the Paschal mystery and the events at the heart of the Christian faith.

The service will include “ashing” (as the name suggests) – a Cross daubed in ash mixed with oil on the forehead of those in attendance. Ash is a sign of desolation and ruin, and has been used since ancient times as a visible symbol of the fragility of life, repentance, lament, and the acknowledgment that all is not right with ourselves and the world.

It is an important part of the Christian calendar, which despite the more solemn tone of the service, is nevertheless a service of hope as we learn to lament the state of the world, we might also learn to hope and trust that God will make everything work together for good.





LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

MONDAY AFTERNOONS IN LENT | 13:00-14:30 | ST JOHNS

Every Monday afternoon in Lent, I will be hosting a Bible study at St John's working through the Gospel of John, aka the "Paschal Gospel." This will be a relatively informal opportunity to engage with this enigmatic Scripture, reading a chapter or two together and discussing along the way over a brew and a biscuit. If you're interested in joining, please let me know by email me at toby@stjohnswithpandp.org



PARISH UPDATES

2026 IS A BIG YEAR!

As you may be aware, we have a couple of significant building projects in the pipeline at both churches. We're confident that work on these will *finally* get under way in 2026, and we had a very positive meeting with the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) at St John's last week to discuss plans there (which includes an internal reordering with the addition of some toilets!) and they will be visiting P&P in March to discuss the extension (and repairs to that leaky roof!). The next stage for St John's involves waiting on the final detailed drawings from the architect, before getting quotes from contractors, after which we can put in a faculty application, which if approved (judging by the DAC's comments it will be) means we can start work shortly after. For P&P there a couple more hoops to jump through, but the process is much the same.

We will also soon be looking to recruit two new roles in the parish: a new parish administrator, and a lay chaplain/youth worker who will work across the school (Ark Alexandra Academy is the largest CofE secondary school in the area and it is in our parish) and the parish. These are two really crucial roles, so do keep your eyes peeled for when these come up and pray for the right people to be appointed.



That's all for now, thanks so much for taking the time to read this newsletter, and for the part you in play - however great or small - in making this parish what it is.

Grace & Peace,

Toby

Rev'd Tobias Lancaster
Priest-in-Charge

St John's Hollington, with St Peter & St Paul, Parkstone Road

www.stjohnswithpandp.org