

# NEWSLETTER

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The Parish Church of  
**St Werburgh**  
Spondon



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## This week Sunday February 11th 2024

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<b>Today</b>	<b>9.00am Low Mass</b>
	<b>10.00am Parish Mass. followed by PCC</b>
<b>Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	<b>12 noon. Baptism</b>
<b>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	10.00am West Park Writers 1.30pm Children's Church 6.30pm Choir
<b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ashes to go anytime before 9am by arrangement with Canon J</b></li><li>• <b>10.30am Mass with Imposition of Ashes at St W</b></li><li>• <b>10.30am Mass with Imposition of Ashes at St P</b></li><li>• <b>Ashes to go from 4pm-6pm just call in at Church.</b></li><li>• <b>7pm Parish Mass with Imposition of ashes</b></li></ul>
<b>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>	7.00pm Mass followed by Lectio Divina
<b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	4.30pm Stations of the Cross
<b>Lent 1</b>	<b>9.00pm Low Mass</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<b>10.00pm Parish Mass</b>

### By name we pray for

Stewart Wharton, Iris George, Doris Blurton, Joe, Joan Pugh, Joshua, Margaret, Dulcie Morley, Brian Harbord, Michael Carey, Stephen Bowdler, Marie, Eric and Dorothy Boston, Brian Peake Joshua, Doran, Kath Winter, Sophie, Graham Wardman.

**RIP:** Joyce Herbert, Jean Valerie Hudd, Winfield Ethel Ahne.

## This week's Gospel : (Mark 9.2-9)

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!' Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

## Canon J's Reflection

In much of my work life I don't know what to say at the moment. I feel a bit perplexed, it feels like my words don't matter. It isn't like I don't have stuff to say, my God at times I feel like I'm going to explode, but when I do, I seem to pitch it wrongly, or it makes absolutely no difference, it leaves me feeling absurd, frustrated and disempowered. Its odd because I'm still kind of chatty man around the parish... I think.... but perhaps in places where I'm more exposed in the diocese I can feel that nobody actually is interested. It is extremely isolating, because I end up feeling like a mad person and lets face it nobody likes to be around the nutter! I don't know, perhaps some of you can relate.

And I had the same feelings of anxiety about preaching today's Gospel story, I felt perplexed and confused. I've never actually known what I think about the Transfiguration. Was it some kind of psychedelic experience? I mean what were they smoking? What went on up on that mountaintop, where Elijah and Moses appear and apparently its all flood lit? I find it hard to identify with all that heavenly sparkle, because my own life and faith seem pretty down here in the dirt of daily life.

But I do relate to Peter up on that mountain, because Peter didn't know what to say. He didn't know what to say because, the Gospel tells us, he was terrified. That little sentence, explaining Peter's inability to speak was something of an Epiphany for me, for something in that rang true. As many of you know personally its been a bit of a year for us...

....and today's reading for some weird reason took me back to a moment late in the summer when having been away to Spain as I got of my EasyJet flight I turned on my phone and message after message after message pinged in telling me the roof had fallen in at St Mark's.

Since then we had a serious arson attack at St Osmund's where the ceiling had already collapsed, then the East End of St Mark's collapsed into the community centre, the feedbank was closed, the community groups have been made homeless, Rev Sarah has left leaving me covering St Philip's, lovely Fr Anthony has been so sick, we then had the lead theft at St Osmund's, which has wrecked much of the remaining roof and and and...apparently I'm still supposed to maintain business as usual and get everything solved. So I suddenly realised like Peter, perhaps I cannot get the words out because I'm terrified.

Friends why am I telling you this? Well I think we have all forgotten, all too quickly, that in our recent past we have all been dealing with the extraordinary terror and disempowering effects of the pandemic and the lockdown. There is hardly a single person I know whose priorities, whose life choices and expectations have not been radically altered by those months of terror.

It is gradually becoming clear that the Church of England will never recover to be what it was prior to the pandemic, you can identify clearly at school the kids who went through the social isolation of lockdown as toddlers and yet in our society's amnesia, it can feel like - did that actually happen? Nah! Get over it!

So maybe, just maybe you, like me, are in a phase where you just don't know what to say because our lives have gone through their own kind of transfiguration or radical change that is not over and so it makes sense that we will all have moments where our words fail to describe what our hearts feel. So I reckon that God likely thinks it's okay when we don't know what to say as well. Because when Peter can't find the words on the Mount of Transfiguration, God doesn't say to Peter, here's your Power Point presentation on on how to talk to the other disciples about this crazy thing that you've just witnessed. No, God says, "This is my beloved. Listen to him." When we don't know what to say, God says, "Listen."

I realised I have been struggling so hard to get the words out. I've been so busy lying about being on top of it all that I have simply stopped listening to other people. They haven't isolated me, I've isolated myself. No things aren't OK at the moment, the situation is terrible, and on top of what I may feel I am dealing with, our society seems to be collapsing and children are being murdered in Gaza and refugees are being treated abominably and I don't know about you but life personally feels pretty damn fragile..... So what if it's okay to be quiet, to go through a quiet season? And what if going through this quiet season is just an invitation to listen, to listen to myself, to listen to others who are trying to help, to listen to Jesus?

Because when I'm terrified and preoccupied with my own need to get the words out, I transfer my fears onto others and then it's actually hard if not impossible to listen. Friends, listening is the antidote to our fear of the unknown, the antidote to our fear of not knowing what the future holds. I said to myself 'Julian you don't have to have something to say. Just listen.' But that's easier said than done. Jesus isn't standing in front of us in flesh and blood like he was with the disciples. So how are we supposed to listen to Jesus? Well first of all even if Jesus were standing in front of us, that's no guarantee we'd listen any better than the disciples did, they fail to listen over and over.

Remember when Jesus had just finished celebrating the Last Supper and the disciples are still at the table with him, they immediately start arguing about which one of them is the greatest. He's literally just broken the bread and lifted up the cup and said, "This is my body and this is my blood" for the first time. That's like, the mountain top experience! The ultimate message that we are all one in Jesus .... and they just weren't listening. So if the disciples found it hard to listen then and Jesus didn't give up, how much more mercy will God show me when I find it hard to listen.

And in that moment, I realised that listening is God's gift to us. It's God's gift of filling us up with the grace that we don't have in ourselves. Listening is God's way of telling us that we don't have to do this on our own. That as we face sometimes the terror of being alive, we don't always have to have the words. We can lean on each other. If this extraordinarily weird Gospel story says anything to me, it is that we don't have to understand it all in ourselves.

We can't begin to receive that grace from someone else until we slow down and listen. So this week as we move into Lent I pray that God bless us with enough stillness, that we can listen to our own hearts, listen to others and maybe receive the radiance of grace that we often don't feel able to see in ourselves.

We've still got lots of gaps on the sponsorship for our printing. Please consider putting your name down and we ask for a minimum sponsor of £5



*It's Coffee Time*

and we really need more helpers!!!

West Park



Writers' Group

*Do you have imagination?  
Do you have a pen or pencil?*

*Have you ever wanted to write  
or wondered whether you could?*

Why not come and give it a try? New doors may open  
for you!

We are a friendly informal group who meet every  
Monday morning 10.30am-12.30pm in the Parish Room  
of St Werburgh's Church in Spondon.

We have a different workshop every week (presented by a  
volunteer group member) on a great variety of  
subjects; occasional guest speakers; unthreatening  
competitions judged by professional writers. We may  
do stories, poems, non-fiction - anything that stimulates  
our imagination.

**No previous experience is required**

For more information ring Bron Rees on 01332 666972 or  
leave a message and she will get back to you.



# PROGRAMME

## Lent Group

A journey through Lent on Wednesday evenings 7pm - 8.30pm with Rev Cath.

## Thursday Group

7pm Mass followed by either Lectio Divina or Fatih Through Art on alternate weeks

## THE MISSION

In Passiontide (the week before Holy Week) We'll watch this popular film & explore different questions, bring a bottle & share a social, relaxed evening.

## Stations of the Cross

A quiet mediation on the last journey Jesus made to the cross. Over 40 minutes we pray together for the brokenness of the world.

## Wednesday morning Eucharist 10.30am

Thursday evening and Wednesday morning. Come to be fed, come to engage, come to relax and break bread together.

## Read Mark's Gospel

Daily reading together on the Parish Facebook Page of Mark's Gospel and WhatsApp group to ask questions etc...

## Holy Week Retreat

A personally guided retreat that fits around our daily life. More details on the back of this leaflet.



14th February

ASH WEDNESDAY

- from 7am (*by arrangement*) Ashes to Go on way to work
- 10.30am Mass with imposition of ashes at St Werburgh's
- 11.30am Mass with imposition of ashes at St Philip's
- 5pm -6.30pm Ashes to Go just call in at church
- 7pm Parish Mass with Imposition of Ashes

Then each week:

Mass

Wednesday 9.30am &  
Thursday 7pm

Stations of the Cross

Saturdays 4.30pm

Thursday 15th Feb 7pm

Lectio Divina after Mass

Wednesday 21st Feb 7.30pm

Lent Group

Thursday 22nd Feb 7pm

Faith through Art after Mass

Wednesday 28th Feb 7.30pm

Lent Group

Thursday 29th Feb 7pm

Lectio Divina after Mass

Wednesday 6th March 7.30pm

Lent Group

Thursday 7th Feb 7pm

Faith through Art after Mass

Wednesday 13th March 7.30pm

Lent Group

Thursday 14th March 7pm

Lectio Divina after Mass

Wednesday 20th 7pm

Film Club

Thursday 21st March 7.30pm

Lectio Divina after Mass

Church open all Holy Week

An opportunity open to all, whether working or retired, partnered, single or with a family.....



## HOLY WEEK RETREAT in Daily Life

4pm Palm Sunday -

4pm Holy Saturday

24th - 30th March

here at the Parish Church.

More details on the website  
[www.stwerburgh.com](http://www.stwerburgh.com)

Do you need to refresh your relationship with God?  
You can do it without leaving home.

Accompanied by a retreat guide journey through Holy Week with Jesus alongside fellow pilgrims towards resurrection.

This Holy Week, we invite you to go deeper.  
Come join our Holy Week Retreat

Come and speak to Canon J  
if you'd like to know more...



# Holy Week Retreat

Most people would never think of making a retreat. For starter most people couldn't afford the cost nor the time of going away for a few days, but you don't have to do either.

Here at St Werburgh's each Holy Week the opportunity is provided for you to make a retreat if you want to.

- It costs nothing.
- You don't have to go away and it fits around your life.
- You definitely don't need any experience.
- And you definitely don't need to be holy!
- You just need a curious heart....

People go on retreat for lots of reasons... life change, illness, big decision to make, or just because you like the idea of time to pray... time for you... time for God.

Basically you meet each day with your retreat guide where, when and for however long works for you and they will enable you to do what you want... talk and issue through... try different ways of praying... read the bible, sit in silence... its different for each person and you set the pace.....and that's it!

We gather as a retreat at the start and the finish but apart from that its up to you what services you want to attend... there's morning and evening prayer and Mass every day... but the point is the retreat fits around you.

Want to know more then see Canon J or Mtr Kate.