

THE SOLEMN SEASON OF LENT

began last Wednesday, as our church and services bear witness.

The liturgical colour is penitential purple;

no flowers decorate the church;

Gloria is replaced by Kyrie eleison;

the A-Word is completely banned in liturgy and hymn;

in place of Anglican Chant we sing the ancient and austere Plainchant.

YOUR Opportunity for Christian Service?

Helping with our Butterflies Children on Sundays Group

Is God calling you to lead our young people in worship and discipleship? Unlike many churches our size our excellent children's work is primarily supported by members of our congregation. At this time we are looking for leaders for our butterflies group (early school years). If you discern that you may be being called into this ministry please speak to Martina our Children on Sunday coordinator or Fr Jonathan who can provide you with a job description and answer any questions – you'll find his email and phone numbers on the back of the newsletter.

DALGARNO TRUST FOODBANK.

Thanks to all who support this vital service, seeing increased use every week. Please continue to support this work with regular donations – check the 'shopping lists' in church for what is needed. We deliver from the church to the foodbank every Thursday.



SUNDAY ON MONDAY – THE LORD'S PRAYER

During the six weeks of Lent, starting tomorrow, February 19, our weekly service of Sunday on Monday will be focusing on the Lord's Prayer. Within the short service of holy communion, Fr Stephen and Fr Jonathan will be looking at each of the petitions of the prayer that Christians have used since the time of Jesus. They will be showing how the prayer is a gateway to the Christian Gospel as a whole and a guide to a better understanding of our faith. All welcome 1.05 - 1.40. Followed by sandwiches, tea and coffee. For further details please speak to Fr Stephen on (020) 7937 4106.



2.00pm this Wednesday – 21 February

EUCARIST OF HEALING

with Laying-on of Hands and Anointing

Have you a friend or neighbour who might value this ministry - why not bring them? If not, still come along to support the sick with your prayers and/or provide sandwiches, scones or cake for the tea that follows the service. We are grateful for all offers of help.

ASHBOURNE COLLEGE holds its next students' recital at St Mary Abbots at lunchtime on this Thursday 22nd February at 1.00. Admission is free, and they hope that many members of our congregation will come to support the young musicians. For further details see the posters in church.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC STUDENT RECITAL

The Spring season of 1.05pm Friday Lunchtime is now well under way. There's a flier with details of all the Recitals between now and Easter – take one for you and lots for your musical friends. You can eat your lunchtime sandwich, and there's tea & coffee.

NEXT SUNDAY FEB 25 NEW MUSICAL PROVISION

Next Sunday we hold the next of our experimental once-a-month provision: the professional quartet, whose splendid singing graces 11.15 matins weddings & funerals, but never our main Sunday service, will join forces with the voluntary choir to offer special music in 9.30 SUNG EUCHARIST.

If you enjoy singing, this would be an excellent time to explore joining our voluntary choir. There is a potential range of involvements: the regular weekly 9.30 Sung Eucharist, the monthly 9.30 Sung Eucharists where the professional quartet joins and we offer more challenging music, and the roughly monthly Choral Evensong. And twice a year the really major sings: Bach's St John Passion and Handel's Messiah. Last month no fewer than three new singers joined – perhaps it's YOUR turn? For details, contact our Director of Music uglowmark@yahoo.co.uk

At next Sunday's 11.15 MATINS will have instead of the usual 4-part choir a single professional cantor to lead the music and explore the under-valued repertoire of solo religious music.



Dr JOAN MARTIN MBE

It was our joy to welcome a far larger congregation than we dared hope for, it being half term week, at Joan's Funeral last Thursday. We ran out of Orders of Service! - but will be pleased to print a copy for anyone who wants one. Bishop Michael Colclough preached a wonderful sermon – he is going to send us the text and we will upload it to our website. We plan to commemorate her particular friendship with our school and many generations of pupils at a School Eucharist later this term.

Rest eternal grant to her O Lord : and let light perpetual shine upon her

FRIDAY MORNING PLAYGROUP Children from birth to 4yrs (with a parent or two) warmly welcomed at our playgroup, in St Mary Abbots Centre, Vicarage Gate W8 4HN. Details from laurasyvester@mac.com

Starting this Thursday: St Mary Abbots offers a unique Lent Course

CONVERSATIONS IN LENT

As he approaches the end of his full-time parochial ministry your Vicar is, with customary self-indulgence, organising a series of conversations in church with some of the marvelous people he has come to know over the last 40 years, people prominent in public life. They will talk about their work, their values and convictions. It's deliberately not ostensibly a religious exercise – many of our guests would hesitate to wear that label – but I am convinced that their stories and work will intersect with our faith and give us much to think about in our own story, and how we live out our lives.

Each session will be held in church, starting with a light supper at 7.30

February 22 - LORD YOUNG OF GRAFFHAM

Former Government Minister, Secretary of State for Employment, etc etc.

March 1 – SIR PETER BAZALGETTE

Executive Chairman of ITV and former Chair of the Arts Council

March 8 – SIR ANDREAS WHITTAM-SMITH

Founding editor of The Independent, First Church Commissioner etc etc

March 15 – GAVIN HENDERSON CBE

Director, Brighton Festival, TrinityLaban Conservatoire, Royal Central School

March 22 – REAR ADMIRAL NICK WILKINSON

Formerly DA-Notice Secretary, Author of 'Secrecy and the Media'

Join us for this remarkable line-up. Book via Jonathan's email

jm@smaw8.org or fill in the form on the flier.

Suggested donation (if you can afford it) £25 for the course; £5 session.

We are going to support as our Lent Charity

DIOCESE OF LONDON HOMELESSNESS APPEAL

Launching the Appeal, the Acting Bishop of London explained:

Our Capital is faced with an immense challenge of homelessness. 8,000 people sleep rough in Greater London every year, double the recorded figure in 2010. Freezing conditions can prove fatal for anyone sleeping rough, and winter night shelters play a hugely important role in providing homeless people with a haven that is safe, warm and off the streets. Such is the scale of the challenge, that the Diocese of London Homelessness Appeal will support and raise awareness of the vital work done by winter night shelters, many hosted by our churches often working in partnership with other organisations.

The challenge may be Diocesan wide but it is very much a local issue so we are in partnership with charities from across the Diocese (including Glass Door in Kensington) to carry on **Tackling Homelessness Together**.

Although many of these organisations will offer additional services to guests such as advocacy, advice and practical support, it is the safety and security of the night shelter along with the love of Christ, support and acceptance shown by an army of volunteers that is so often the catalyst to help those experiencing homelessness to move on and reintegrate into society. It is also telling that some of those who have experienced homelessness and benefited from the support, return and volunteer to give 'something back' as a way of expressing their thanks for the help they received.

Over the coming weeks we will be inviting our congregation adults and children to support this vital work.

On Ash Wednesday we repeated our new ministry of ASHING ON THE STREET

At three key periods throughout the day small teams of us went **outside the church**, by the War Memorial, offering a prayer card and to sign the foreheads of all who wanted with the sign of the cross in holy ash. The response was really moving – a good proportion of the passers-by, both young and old, locals and visitors (even a few cyclists waiting at the traffic light, an armed policeman, and one person who old his chauffeur to stop so that he could get out and be ashed) were pleased to be ashed.

Our thanks to those of you who shared this ministry with us.

The Rt Revd SARAH MULLALLY DBE

will be our 133rd Bishop of London. She will be installed in St Paul's Cathedral on May 12th – watch out for details & keep her in your prayers

PREPARING FOR CONFIRMATION

Our confirmation groups have now each held their initial meeting – the junior group meeting on Wednesday afternoons and the Adult Group meeting on Tuesday evenings.

NB We have some candidates, both junior and adult, who are unable to come at these times and we are making special arrangements to prepare them – so unavailability is no excuse not to join in!

We take the process of preparation seriously, offering a four-month course of weekly sessions exploring Christian faith and practice, extending through the crucial church seasons of Lent, Eastertide, Ascension and Pentecost, with the Confirmation itself on May 24th. We prepare children from school Year 5, about 9+ in age, and we'll have groups of children, teenagers and adults.

Remember, no-one's too old: there are many adults who haven't been confirmed or who, even if they receive the Sacrament, have not shared in this vital process. The weekly study and discussion groups explore the major themes of Christian belief and practice.

It's **ABSOLUTELY not too late to join in!**
email jm@smaw8.org or see clergy for details