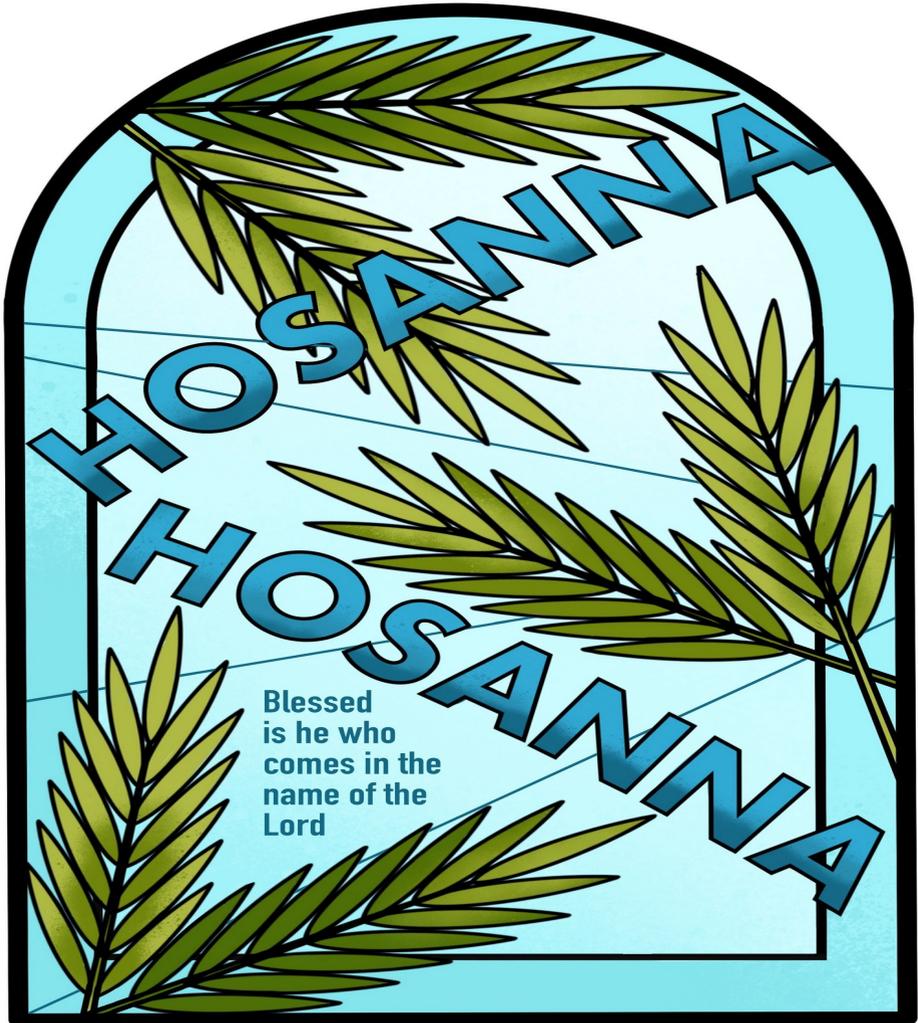


# CHURCH ALIVE

March 2026



**St. John the Baptist**  
**Midsomer Norton**  
Price 50p

# THE PARISH OF MIDSOMER NORTON WITH CLANDOWN

## Vicar

The Revd: Guy Scott  
The Vicarage, 42 Priory Close  
Midsomer Norton, BA3 2HZ

Tel: 412904  
Email: vicarmsnstjohns@gmail.com

## Associate Priest

Revd: Philip Hopper

Tel: 07596 759 584  
Email: frphiliphopper@gmail.com

## Parish Administrator

Liz Casson

Tel: 411216  
Email: msnparishoffice@gmail.com

## Churchwardens

Mrs Pat Clynes  
37 Staddlestones  
Midsomer Norton, BA3 2PP

Tel: 07802 580641  
Email: patclynes@hotmail.co.uk

Mrs Hilary Denning  
87 Nelson Ward Drive  
Radstock, BA3 3FS

Tel: 07828 550006  
Email: hilaryjohn87@gmail.com

## SERVICES

### SUNDAY

10 a.m. Parish Eucharist

### WEEKDAYS

The Eucharist is celebrated on a Tuesday at 12 noon.

**Baptisms, Weddings** etc. by arrangement with the Vicar.

**Communion at home** for those unable to attend church it is easily arranged with the Vicar.

## Safeguarding

***Who should you talk to if you observe or are told about Safeguarding concerns?***

Ann Munton, Parish Safeguarding Officer Tel: 07895038871

Email: midsomernortonsafeguarding@gmail.com

Diocesan safeguarding manager: Ben Goodhind, Tel: 01749 588917

Email: <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/reporting-concerns-or-abuse>



*Church Alive*  
*The Parish Magazine of*  
*Midsomer Norton with Clandown*  
*Volume 810 Number 3*

**SAVE THE DATE**

- Date: Sunday 19th April  
Place: St John's Church  
Time: 11:15  
Purpose: Annual meeting to elect Church Wardens and  
The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

*More details in the April magazine.*

**Palm Sunday 29th March**

On Sunday 29th March there will be a whole Benefice Service here in St John's Church at 10am.

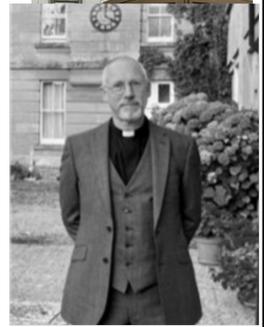
We will be joined by the congregations of East Mendip Trinity, comprising of Coleford, Holcombe and Kilmersdon with Babington.

We look forward to welcoming them to our Church and joining with us for our Palm Sunday Service.

## Reflections from the Ministry Team

Dear Friends,

At the beginning of February we celebrated the *Feast of Candlemas*, when Jesus was presented in the temple, 40 days after his birth. The significance of that date owes as much to the turn of the season as to religious tradition. Midway between the *winter solstice* and *spring equinox*, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February is an important turning point in the year as the day length increases.



The way our worship - our liturgy and lectionary - reflect the reality of the seasons in this part of the world, speaks deeply to me.

Building on the spirituality of pre-Christian times it roots us in time and place, our here and now. It's one of the reasons why the life and witness of St Francis of Assisi has influenced my spirituality... *Mother Earth, Brother Sun, Sister Moon*...we are family with all creation.

This March is filled with our Lenten journey and takes us all the way to Holy Week. Our Easter celebrations are therefore *early*, at the start of April. Unlike Christmas, when the sun is at its lowest in the sky, it is the Moon which governs the date of our Easter celebrations.

On 20th March we arrive at the time when day and night are of equal length, the *spring equinox*, when light and dark in balance. Another important date for our Anglo-Saxon forebears, whose spring goddess *Eostre* welcomed new life and beginnings. Hence Easter!

For us the time of the Spring Equinox, also has huge significance, being nine months before Christmas day!



*Annunciation  
March 25*

The 25<sup>th</sup> March is one of our principal feasts - *The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary*. It is the day when we commemorate Archangel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she would give birth to Christ. It was commonly referred to as *Lady Day*.

Before the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, it marked the beginning of the New Year. *Lady Day* brought the start of a new legal, fiscal and tax year. It was a time when farm contracts began, often farming families would be seen moving around the countryside on *Lady Day*.

Seeing the entwining of faith and environment, helps to root our belief in reality. As we move forward through Lent toward Easter, we would do well to remember our connectedness and hold God's creation in our thoughts and prayers.

Here are some inspirational words from St Francis...

*...May you be praised, my Lord, with all your creatures,  
especially brother sun,  
through whom you lighten the day for us.  
He is beautiful and radiant with great splendour;  
he signifies you, O Most High.  
Be praised, my Lord, for sister moon and the stars:  
clear and precious and lovely, they are formed in heaven...*

***Fr Philip***



## Ladies Group

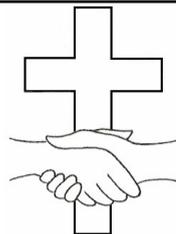
*Report for February 2026*

In a change from our usual practice Ladies Group had an afternoon meeting in February. We decided to treat ourselves to a drink and a cake at Farrington's Farm Shop. The cakes were delicious and we had the opportunity to exchange our news and tell each other about what we had been doing.

The next Ladies Group meeting will be on Thursday 12th March. We are meeting at Linda Broadhurst's house and Linda will be talking to us about her walk along the West Highland Way.

If you would like to find out more about Ladies Group, please speak to Kay Harvey or Ann Munton or pick up a programme from the back of Church.

New members are always most welcome.



## Friendship Group

We would warmly welcome new members to join us. We meet in the Church Hall, the second Tuesday of each month at 14:30 until 16:00.

We would love to see you!

Love and blessings,

Heather: 07882734507.

*From Rev'd Philip Hopper.*

### **Moving on...**

**Dear friends**

In May it will be almost 5 years since I arrived at St. John's to complete my curacy. Things went so well that I stayed on longer to serve as an Associate Priest. I could not have asked for a better training parish - the fit has been perfect. St John's has provided me with time and space to explore my gifts and flourish. It has been a hugely positive time for me.

At the end of May following my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday I shall be taking some time off to consider the shape of my future ministry. Sadly what is already clear is that I shall be moving on from St John's. My last Sunday will be on 24<sup>th</sup> May, the feast of Pentecost.

Please be assured that this has been a difficult decision, long in the making and one influenced by many factors. My time at St John's will always be one of the most fulfilling experiences of my working life, and I will leave with many treasured memories and a deep sense of gratitude. Thank you.

With very best wishes,  
*Philip.*



### **Gardening Group**

The Gardening Group meet for the first time this year on Friday 27th March at 10am until 12noon.

If you would like to help you would be more than welcome even on an adhoc basis.

## Bishop's Letter

### Draw near this Lent

*By Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells*

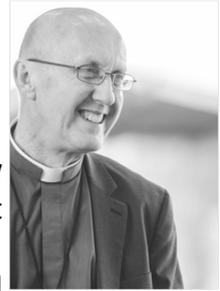
The Church of England's theme for Lent 2026 is 'Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent'. It's a very different way of thinking about the season.

Often, we identify Lent as a time for prayer and fasting when we 'give things up'. More recently many have decided to adopt an opposite approach – of 'taking something up for Lent'.

'Draw near' has a much wider remit. Each week, it invites us to explore a different aspect of Christian discipleship – worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news with others. The 'Draw Near' approach fits well with how Lent began.

During the Church's earliest days, those wishing to become Christians were known as 'catechumens', people who were learning to live as disciples of Jesus. Preparation was intensive. It took place particularly in the 40 days before new Christians were baptised on the Saturday night before Easter Sunday.

Our season of Lent comes from this ancient practice. When the Church began, it didn't have the trappings we're used to seeing around us such as buildings, hymn books, pews, or paid ministers. Church wasn't an institution. It was known as 'the Way'. Christians met in each other's homes and sought to work out how to follow Jesus in their every day lives. This wasn't so much about head knowledge, believing a particular set of doctrines. It was about the habits and practices that Christians constantly cultivated to help them draw nearer to God who is with us, in us, around us and beside us every moment of every day.

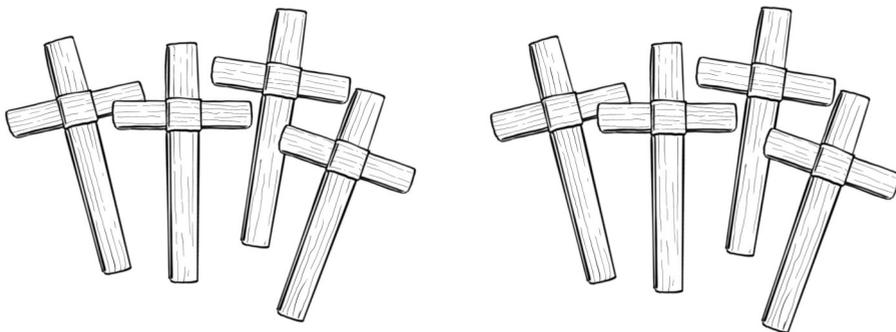


'Draw Near' comes out of this heritage. It's an invitation to make Lent a journey that brings us closer to God.

I invite you to make use of 'Draw Near' this Lent. It includes materials for adults, for families and for children, resources for schools and encouragement for churches.

***More information can be found at [www.cofeio/DrawNear](http://www.cofeio/DrawNear).***

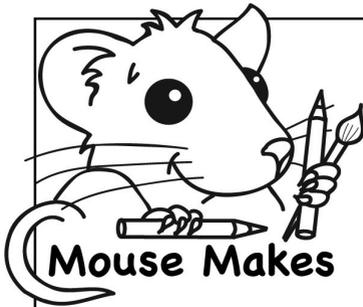
As we approach Lent, let's draw near and join each other on the journey to God that is the way.



### **St John's Lent Charity**

Bath Street Kitchen is our chosen charity for our 2026 Lent collection

Bath Street Kitchen is a volunteer-run community project in Bath (established March 2024) that provides hot, homemade meals, drinks, and essential clothing to homeless and vulnerable individuals every Monday night. Relying on donations and fund-raising, they support 35-50 people per week, offering items like hearty meals, hot chocolate, and warm clothing.



The Bible has many stories of mothers who had great faith in God. With their love, care, encouragement and prayers their children grew up to be great people of God.



Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?

*Exodus 2:1-3 and 6:20*

Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?  
*Genesis 17:19*

**Across**

- 3. **Obed's** mother  
*Matthew 1:5*
- 4. **John's** mother  
*Luke 1:57-60*
- 7. **Reuben's** mother  
*Genesis 29:32*
- 8. **Joseph's** mother  
*Genesis 30:22-24*
- 9. **Jesus' mother**  
*Acts 1:14*

**Down**

- 1. **Boaz's** mother  
*Matthew 1:5*
- 2. **Solomon's** mother  
*1 Kings 1:11*
- 4. **Timothy's** mother  
*2 Timothy 1:5*
- 5. **Ishmael's** mother  
*Genesis 16:15*
- 6. **Jacob and Esau's** mother  
*Genesis 25:21-26*



Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?  
*1 Samuel 1:20*

Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?  
*Genesis 4:1-2*

Answer the questions then put them into the crossword

Mar26 © deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk



## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Our sisters in Nigeria invite us to join them for the World Day of Prayer on Friday 6 March 2026. The service they have prepared reflects on the theme, "I will give you rest."

The World Day of Prayer is an international, women-led, ecumenical movement that shares the hopes, concerns, and prayers of women from around the globe. Each year, women from a different country craft a service, sharing their unique spiritual journey and culture. For 2026, the women of Nigeria have created a service that speaks to our need for peace and solace, drawing on their faith and experiences in a world filled with struggles and anxieties.

This day is a powerful demonstration of global solidarity. It begins in Samoa and moves across the world in a continuous wave of prayer, finishing 38 hours later in American Samoa. It truly is a worldwide day of prayer!

Our local service is on Friday 6th March 2-00 pm at Midsomer Norton Methodist Church.



**Sunday 15th March**

## From the Diocese of Bath & Wells Manna Mailing March 2026

### *Considering our faith in a deeper way*

Lent invites us to create a space and prepare our hearts for Easter. Across the church communities of Bath and Wells, people will be marking Lent in different ways, each is an invitation to journey more intentionally with God.

At St James' Church, Taunton, the journey is a five-week quiet time of reflection. The Lent course, 'Prodigal – finding hope in a story of redemption', offers an introduction to meditative prayer. Using the well-known Gospel story through Henri Nouwen's book 'Return of the Prodigal' and the famous painting by Rembrandt of the same name, the course will encourage people to look afresh at their own lives, recognising that at different times we may find ourselves reflected in each of the characters and will look through the memory of brokenness to the hope of healing

Lyn Jones, who helped set up 'Simply Pray' at St James with Felicity Miles, says this has grown naturally out of the contemplative prayer gatherings which run throughout the year and are open to anyone who would like to join. Lyn says Lent offers an opportunity to consider our faith in a deeper way, "It gives us a time to think about how Christ gave his life unconditionally for all of us. For me, it will prepare me for Holy Week as we think about the sacrifice God made for all of us, whoever we are."

Felicity Miles, one of the contemplative prayer group leaders, says, "We want to offer people the opportunity to explore another way of praying, of slowing down and, in the quiet, hear the still small voice of God. Contemplative prayer is an old tradition we have lost in our busy secular world, and we hope to help others to rediscover it. Last year we followed a 'Pilgrimage' through the Psalms, and the format will be similar with discussion, guided meditation and a time of personal silent reflection.

"We are hoping that this year's theme will also inspire those of any faith or none to come on the journey with us."

## Margaret Noden celebrates her 90th birthday

*From Diane Chiplin*

Many of you will remember George and Margaret Noden, faithful stalwarts of St John's Church for many years.

After a career in journalism Margaret became a librarian in Midsomer Norton when they moved to the town and then a volunteer at the Dorothy House charity shop when she retired.

Margaret was PCC secretary at St John's, while George was on the PCC and a great supporter and fundraiser for St John's and the RNLI.

George and Margaret were renowned for their hospitality and were very welcoming when we moved to the parish in 1994. It was soon after our arrival during a well lubricated dinner party that George talked Christopher into abseiling down the church tower to raise funds for the restoration appeal. They completed the challenge together during the summer fete in 1995 and as they say—the rest is history.

Margaret and George emigrated to Spain in 2007 for sunshine and sailing and we have enjoyed visits over the years and kept in close touch.

We were thrilled to be invited to Margaret's 90th birthday in Spain on the 7th February.

They have enjoyed a very happy retirement here on the Alicante coast and send their love to all in St John's who remember them

Love Diane xx



# From The Registers

## Christian Funeral

*"May they rest in peace"*

28th January     Janey Mary Carver

12th February     Betty Churchill



## Holy Baptism

*"We welcome you into the Lord's Family"*

25th January     Sophia Ivy Nicholls

8th February     Brody George Cocks

# BAPTISMS



## TRIO PARADIS

Jacquelyn Bevan - piano     Ruth O'Shea - violin     Linda Stocks - cello

*Friendship through music*

**FRIDAY 6th FEBRUARY**  
**Roots**  
Afro-American composers...

**FRIDAY 6th MARCH**  
**Daughters of the Muse**  
Music by women composers

**FRIDAY 10th APRIL\***  
**Spring Waters**  
Rivers, streams & the sea

**FRIDAY 1st MAY**  
**Folk Connections**  
Traditional song & dance

**FRIDAY 5th JUNE**  
**Iberia**  
Music of Spain & Portugal

\* avoiding Good Friday

# Monthly Café Concerts

First Friday of  
each month  
at 12.30pm

## ST JOHN'S CHURCH

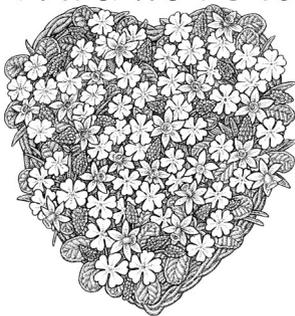
### Midsomer Norton BA3 2HX

Café serving home-made cakes open from 12 noon. Concerts last c45 min.  
Entrance by donation, with a retiring collection

[www.trioparadis.com](http://www.trioparadis.com)     Cafe Concerts CIO Registered Charity no.1213237

Date	Reader/ <i>Intercessions</i>	Sides person
1st March	Margaret Small <i>St John's School</i>	A Broadhurst, L Broadhurst
8th March	Linda Broadhurst <i>Kay Harvey</i>	R Broughton, S Broughton
15th March	Robert Broughton <i>Sally Curtis</i>	A Fitch, L Hurst
22nd March	Hilary Denning <i>Augustine Ogbidike</i>	K Gay, L Powell
29th March	Lesley Garvey <i>Carol Moore</i>	J Shears, E Densley
<p>If you have to swap or cannot do any of the dates, please can you let Pat or Hilary know. Thank you</p>		

THANK YOU



***This month's front cover was taken from the Parish Pump***

**Magazine deadline for copy is the 14th of the month**

To: Mrs Linda Broadhurst, 43 Furlong Close, Midsomer Norton, BA3 2PR  
 Telephone: 07941 204179      Email: stjohsmagazine@aol.com

## Parish Directory

### Telephone

Bible Reading Fellowship		
Choir Leader	Mr Geoff Miles	
Church Cleaning	Mrs Pat Marriott.	01761752546
Church Hall Bookings	Mrs Caroline Thatcher	07591 557578
Coffee Rota	Mrs Margaret Small	411474
Electoral Roll Secretary	Mrs Linda Broadhurst	07941 204179
Flower Rota	Mrs Carol Moore	412226
Gift Aid Secretary	Mrs Kay Harvey	416050
Head Server	Mr Matthew Livsey	07971231363
St John's School	Mrs Danielle West-Gaul	412019
Ladies Group Leader	Mrs Kay Harvey	07792 708647
Magazine Editor	Mrs Linda Broadhurst	07941 204179
Magazine Distribution	Mrs Linda Broadhurst	07941 204179
Organist	Mrs Margaret Whatley	418072
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Mrs Ann Munton	07895 038871
PCC Secretary	Mrs Margaret Marshall	413895
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Kay Harvey	416050
	Mrs Kay Harvey	07792 708647
PCC Vice Chairperson	Mrs Hilary Denning	07828 550006
Tower Secretary	Mrs Margaret Marshall	413895

## Church Organisations

**The Choir** practise on Fridays from 6:30 pm until 7:50 pm.

**The Friendship Group:** meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

**The Ladies Group** meets on the second Thursday of the month

**The Society of Our Lady of Walsingham** meets every 3rd Friday of the month at 11am for Said Mass and the Angelus. The Cell takes an annual Pilgrimage to Walsingham in September. A warm welcome is extended to all who would like to attend the service or join us on Pilgrimage.

Further details can be obtained from a member of the Clergy.

**You can stay in touch with us on our website: [www.stjohnschurchmsn.org.uk](http://www.stjohnschurchmsn.org.uk)  
Twitter: [@StJohnMSN](https://twitter.com/StJohnMSN), on Facebook: [@StJohnMSN](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnMSN)  
and on YouTube: [St John's MSN channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).**



# March 2026

<b>Sunday 1st</b>	<b>2nd Sunday of Lent</b>	<b>Family Service</b>
Tuesday 3rd	10:30 - 11:45	Coffee in Church
Thursday 5th	19:30	Lent Course
Friday 6th	12:30	Trio Paradis Café Concert
<b>Sunday 8th</b>	<b>3rd Sunday of Lent</b>	
Tuesday 10th	10:30 - 11:45	Coffee in Church
	14:30	Friendship Group
Thursday 12th	19:30	Lent Course
	19:30	Ladies Group
Saturday 14th		<b><i>Magazine Copy Date</i></b>
<b>Sunday 15th</b>	<b>Mothering Sunday</b>	
Tuesday 17th	10:30 - 11:45	Coffee in Church
Thursday 19th	19:30	Lent Course
Friday 20th	11:00	St Johns cell of Our Lady Of Walsingham - Eucharist
<b>Sunday 22nd</b>	<b>5th Sunday of Lent</b>	
Tuesday 24th	10:30 - 11:45	Coffee in Church
	19:00	PCC Meeting
Thursday 26th	19:30	Lent Course
Friday 27th	10—12 noon	Gardening Group
<b>Sunday 29th</b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b>	<b>Whole Benefice Service</b>
Tuesday 31st	10am	Chrism Eucharist in Wells Cathedral No Coffee in Church