

29th January | Notices

SJ-St James', SJCC-St James' Church Centre,
SMSJ-St Mary & St John's at Gorse Ride Junior School,
SMSJPC-SMSJ Parish Centre, SE-St Eligius Church
AGCC - Arborfield Green Community Centre

Sunday 29th	The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)
8.00am	Holy Communion BCP (SJ)
9.30am	Café Church (SJCC)
9.30am	Holy Communion (SMSJ)
11.00am	Parish Communion (SJ)
11.00am	Holy Communion (SE)
5.00pm	Confirmation Preparation Class (SJCC)
Monday 30th	
9.30am	Fledgelings baby & toddler group (SJCC)
Tuesday 31st	
7.30pm	Parish Prayer Meeting (SJCC)
Wednesday 1st February	
9.15am	Toddler Praise (SE)
Saturday 4th	
10.00am	Green Team Working Party (SJCC)
Sunday 5th	3 Before Lent
8.00am	Holy Communion CW (SJ)
9.30am	Family Communion (SJ)
9.30am	Holy Communion (SMSJ)
11.00am	Parish Communion (SJ)
11.00am	Holy Communion (SE)
5.00pm	Confirmation Preparation Class (SJCC)
6.00pm	Evensong (SJ)

Thank you to everyone who was involved and who came and supported the fundraising Quiz and Supper evening at St James' on Saturday evening. We had a full hall with over 60 folks "pitting their wits" and we are delighted to say that £1,165.60 was raised during the evening.

Tonia's Phased Return to Work Tonia's phased return to work is going well but these things obviously take time and can't be rushed. She is feeling much better than in the Autumn but it's still important that she watch her energy-levels carefully. She will be steadily increasing her hours over the next month and starting to be more visible and active on a Sunday morning as well. Thank you for your support, prayers and understanding. It's important that we manage her workload during this process so do, of course, talk to her, encourage her, be nice to her, contact her - but anything big or long-term should continue to go to Julian or Leonard. Thanks.

A Life Worth Living & Emotionally Healthy Spirituality - No meetings this week (31st Jan & 2nd Feb) due to the Parish Prayer Meeting on Tuesday 31st January which we hope many of you will attend.

A Life Worth Living - Tuesdays (except 31 Jan) 7:30pm @ 43 McCarthy Way 'In the future, scientists may be able to prolong life, but would it be a life worth living?' - Nigel Hawkes, Journalist, writing in *The Times*. This is an opportunity to journey together over light refreshments, as we explore St Paul's letter to the Philippians. Please let us know to expect you - office@stjames.finchampstead.co.uk

CHURCH FETE IN MEMORIAL PARK 1ST JULY

Our largest fundraising event and everyone can help in some way. Lots to do nearer the time but right now we need a team to get the organisation off the ground. Like to be involved? Have ideas to share? Speak to Nicky (nicky@alder.ndo.co.uk) or Carolyn (carolynfox@aol.com) or contact the church office.

Parish Prayer Meeting - Tuesday 31st Jan 7.30pm in SJCC

Do you pray? Do you believe prayer works? Will you come and pray with us for our mission and ministry in this parish? We are holding 3 strategic prayer meetings a year to come together to listen and to discern God's heart for our parish. No need to pray out loud, just come. Together we will "draw near to God and He will draw near to us." *James 4:8* We seek His guidance for 2023, for "unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain." *Psalms 127:1*

The Fascinating History of Reading Abbey - Friday 10th

February at 7pm at Finchampstead Memorial Hall The Finchampstead Society is pleased to welcome all to this interesting presentation by Graham Horn. Tea/coffee available. For more details, please contact 0118 9734123.

Come and See - starting Tuesday 28th February, 7:30pm

SJCC Come and See is our diocese-wide big, warm open invitation to everyone, for everyone for an adventure in faith and trust. We will be exploring the Beatitudes, a core message from Jesus' 'sermon on the mount'. It's completely free and all are welcome. Light refreshments will be provided. Bring a friend. Please contact the church office to let us know you are coming - office@stjames.finchampstead.co.uk or 0118 973 0133. Bishop Steven's daily emails for *Come and See: The Beatitudes* are also available online, and in a booklet at a subsidised price of £2 incl P&P until the end of April.

Striders Running Group - Couch to 5k every Wednesday at 7pm

We meet at St Eligius Church, Tope Road, RG2 9NB. Everyone welcome, whether you are just starting out in running or looking to run with others. Free of charge!

Green Team Info: Recycle soft plastic (crisp packets, sweet wrappers, plastic film, plastic bags, food pouches) @ the Coop, Waitrose Wokingham or Tesco. **Sign up to join the Working Party on 4 Feb in the Lost Liddell Gardens and book your bacon buttie lunch that follows - just leave a message in the Church office or sign the sheet by the coffee bar at SJCC.**

Save the Date

10 Feb 6:30pm-8pm Youth Group (SE)

4 March 9am - 10am Ladies Breakfast

***NEW DATE* 5 Mar** Family bingo with afternoon tea (SJCC)

11 Mar Churchyard Spring Tea (SJCC)

***NEW DATE* 18 Mar** 10am Green Team Working Party (SJ)

26 Mar Confirmation Service @ St Paul's, Wokingham

20 May Quiz Aid for Christian Aid (SJCC)

1 July Church Fete on Memorial Park

Parish Intercessions List - Please pray for: Joyce Beckett, Sophie Hall, Ann Pask, Colin Ramsay McClaren, Linda Whiteside, Gerry and Steve Prosser, David Powell, Bob Helliwell, Mo Nottage, Daniel, Helen & Chris Goble, John Coombs, Tina Worrell, Alison Woodrow, Ginger Timms, Regina and Bella, Hannah and Tom Edwards, Jamie-Marie Hemming, Ashley Bootham

And those who mourn the loss of loved ones: Rob, Jean Dunckley, Michael Murray, Pamela Redford, Dr Ian Hossack

Readings and Prayers for

29 January 2023:

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE (CANDLEMAS)

Malachi 3:1-5

Malachi gives a vivid picture of the Messiah. Jesus fulfils the prophecy but in a different way from the expected one.

¹ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵ Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

Psalm 24

Hebrews 2:14-18

This passage stresses the importance of Jesus being fully human.

¹⁴ Since the children share flesh and blood, Christ himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. ¹⁶ For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.

¹⁸ Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Luke 2:22-40

For Luke the Presentation gives a further opportunity for Jesus to be identified publicly as

the one who will fulfil the Old Testament prophecies.

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), ²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'

³³ And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

Collect

Lord Jesus Christ, light of the nations and glory of Israel: make your home among us, and present us pure and holy to your heavenly Father, your God, and our God.

Post Communion

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna, who lived to welcome the Messiah: may we, who have received these gifts beyond words, prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes to bring us to eternal life; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.