

# Lent, Holy Week and Easter 2026



The Church of The Holy Innocents  
Paddenswick Road, W6 0UB

# Lent 2026

In last year's booklet we were awaiting the arrival of a COVID-19 Pandemic Memorial, being the third commission from our resident artist, John Afflick. His 'Flight in to Egypt' Panel was installed and celebrated at a special service on 5 November 2025, thanks to the late Howard Bennett (1924–2020), who was our Churchwarden in the early 1980s when Father Murray was priest-in-charge and the future of the church was precarious, before it was secured and the building re-ordered and refurbished.

John's first commission for us completed in 2007 is the altar panel, The Holy Innocents, partly funded by the legacy from the late Irene Hayes (1911–2005) our long time Hon. Treasurer. The second commission installed in 2018 comprises the seven Paschal Panels based on our usual scripture readings at the Great Easter Vigil, thanks to a legacy from the late Margaret Horrocks (1920–2014), aunt of our former churchwarden, Pattie Horrocks.

All three commissions serve to enrich our reflections and study, particularly during Lent, and they now complete the circle around the altar, which begins at the stained-glass window designed by Henry Holiday in the Baptistry depicting 'Suffer little children to come unto me' (1890).

## Lent Services, Programme & Resources

This booklet contains information about our own Lent Services, Programme and Resources together with suggested reading material and links to other publicly available resources.

Once again, we find ourselves taking cautious steps forward in turbulent times. Just as we try to do each Lent.

It may be an inward journey into the soul that we take, but it can still be as challenging and rewarding as the most adventurous holiday, if we can make a commitment to a real journey taken over the entire 6 weeks of Lent.

## Lent Services in Church

## Ash Wednesday, 18th February

8.00 am      Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes  
7.30 pm      Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

**Wednesday, 25th February**

11.00 am Parish Eucharist

Wednesday, 4th March

11.00am Parish Eucharist

Wednesday, 11th March

11.00 am Parish Eucharist

## Sunday, 15th March (Mothering Sunday)

10.10 am Parish Eucharist

Wednesday, 18th March

11.00 am Parish Eucharist

## Thursday, 19th March (Feast of Saint Joseph)

7.30pm Parish Eucharist

## Sunday, 22nd March (Passion Sunday)

10.10 am Parish Eucharist

followed by Annual Parochial Church Meeting

## Wednesday, 25th March (The Annunciation of our Lord to the

11.00 am Parish Eucharist

Blessed Virgin Mary)

## Sunday 29th March (Palm Sunday)

### No 8.30am Holy Communion

10.00 am The Liturgy of the Palms & Procession from St John the  
10.10 am Parish Eucharist Evangelist, Glenthorne Road

## By appointment: Sacrament of Reconciliation

# Lent Programme

## Mid-week Eucharist in Lent

Wednesdays at 11am

On 25th February, 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th March

## The Body of Christ in a Broken World

Wednesdays 25th February, 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th March & on Thursday 19th March

6 sessions all after the above Eucharists

Reflections on what have we gained – what have we lost – as we enter a new world order.

*Led by Father David and Jane Jales*

## Stations of the Cross

Fridays at 12pm

On 20th & 27th February, 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th March

The same Stations each of the 6 weeks, but with different reflections and prayers on Jesus' final journey to his death on the cross.

*Led by Anthony Biggs and Jane Jales*

## Lent is...

Lent is a season of repentance (turning again) and rededication of our lives to God in preparation for the coming Passion season and the renewal of Easter. It is a time for us to understand our inability to escape sin on our own and our reliance on the Holy Spirit to move us toward the life Jesus has called us to. This is expressed through a season of prayer and fasting, preparing ourselves for Holy Week.

The word Lent is derived from the Old English word for spring, referring to the lengthening of days. Originally it was known as the 'Lenten fast' but over the centuries contracted to simply 'Lent.' Only English uses a word with this root. The French 'Carême' and Spanish 'Cuaresma' are derived from the Latin *quadragesima* "fortieth day before Easter", while the German *Fastenzeit* describes the characteristic activity of the season.

To this day, Lent remains a preparation for Easter by fasting, almsgiving, repentance and rededication of our lives to God, study, reflection and prayer.

## Ash Wednesday - 18th February

Marking the beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday establishes the tone of repentance and rededication for the season. The ashes used in the liturgy, made from last year's Palm Sunday crosses, are a visible sign of mourning our sins, of repentance and a reminder of our own mortality.

*“Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.” Ecclesiastes 3:20*

*“Therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” Job 42: 6*

This is a moment of reminder that the world does not revolve around us. The day is often marked with fasting.

## Mothering Sunday - 15th March

This fourth Sunday of Lent is also known as Laetare Sunday, from the opening words of the Latin introit for this day, *Laetare Ierusalem – Rejoice, O Jerusalem*. In the English church this became a traditional day for domestic servants to return to their home towns, to visit their ‘mother churches’ and also for parishioners to visit the cathedral or ‘mother church’ of the diocese.

By extension it is a time for all Christians to celebrate the Church as our mother. As the secular ‘Mothers’ Day’ grew in popularity during the 20th century, in the UK the traditional ‘Mothering Sunday’ observance widened its focus to include celebration of our human mothers.

## Joseph of Nazareth - 19th March

## The Annunciation - 25th March

These celebrations of Joseph and Mary are not out of place during the sacrificial season of Lent. Both Mary and Joseph displayed a sacrificial turning away from their former lives and entrusted themselves to God's plan for them. Mary responded in trust and obedience to the message of God announced by Gabriel. Joseph too obeyed the angel's instruction, defying social convention to remain at Mary's side when God's promise became a visible reality.

## Passion Sunday – 22nd March

Passiontide - the last two weeks of Lent – is when we recall how Jesus ‘set his face to go to Jerusalem’ (Luke 9.51) and the inevitability of his death.

Historically the fifth Sunday of Lent was known as Passion Sunday, marked by the reading of the Passion narrative from the Gospel of the year. From this Sunday onward it is customary for the statues, icons and objects of devotion in church to be veiled.

## Palm Sunday - 29th March

Today marks the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem on a donkey in a procession that meets Zechariah’s prophecy of the coming Messiah, but is also encapsulated by the familiar hymn “Ride on, ride on in majesty! In lowly pomp, ride on to die.” Lowly, if not laughable, pomp indeed.

The crowds might be shouting out ‘Hosanna’ – ‘save us now’ – but this liberator is no mighty warrior when making an almost comical entry on a peaceful beast of burden. This is surely a parody of a triumphal entry, but it then stands in stark contrast to the tragedy of the passion Gospel, with its emphasis on suffering and abandonment, through the parallel accounts of Jesus’ trial and death from a wide cast of characters.

All these accounts come together at the Cross, and it becomes apparent there are not many stories with different endings but only one story. It started at Creation (as did our Lent journey) and it will only come to an end when Jesus returns to judge our story, and all the other stories in the world that there have ever been and are yet to be.

## Holy Week

### Monday and Tuesday in Holy Week-30th & 31st March

We now begin our pilgrimage to the foot of the cross.

On both days our Gospel readings are from John, the anointing at Bethany and Jesus’ foretelling of his death, as the tension builds towards its climax.

# The Triduum

The Triduum is the three-day period beginning in gathering gloom at sundown on the evening of Wednesday in Holy Week and ending at sundown on Holy Saturday.

## Wednesday in Holy Week, Tenebrae - 1st April

Tenebrae means darkness or shadows, and our Wednesday evening Service of Tenebrae (in anticipation) of Maundy Thursday is derived from the monastic offices of Mattins and Lauds. We reflect on Jesus' Passion as the chants are sung, candles and the lights in the church are extinguished one by one until the church is left in silent darkness.

For many, this Tenebrae Service is one of the most moving and meaningful worship services of the year, despite its sombre tone, darkness and music all reflecting Christ's suffering, yet in anticipation of the resurrection.

Last year's Tenebrae Service was the first at which our recently acquired Hearse from Antwerp, Belgium circa 1500 was on full display for its intended purpose, thanks to another legacy. This one given by the late Marion Iles-Hunt, also another one-time H1 churchwarden. Marion was a teacher and Deputy Head at St Stephen's Church of England primary school, and involved in an Early Childhood Charity in the London Borough of Ealing.

Our Hearse is in the shape of a plough and the word derives from the French word 'herse' for harrow, which in mediaeval times was placed over the coffin and its spike were used to hold the burning candles over the deceased.

This year the Consort of English voices will sing Responsoria Tenebrae by the Polish composer Paweł Łukaszewski in our Tenebrae Service for Maundy Thursday, which is sung on the evening of Wednesday in Holy Week.

## Holy Thursday - 2nd April

Also known in the English church as Maundy Thursday, from 'mandatum', commandment, recalling the 'new commandment' Jesus gave his disciples as he prepared to be betrayed: 'love one another, as I have loved you."

On Maundy Thursday we recall the events of the Last Supper and the institution of the celebration of Holy Communion. According to John's Gospel, the evening began by washing the disciples' feet, an act of the humblest service.

The synoptic Gospels describe a Passover meal, at which Jesus broke the bread, gave it to his disciples and said 'take, eat, this is my body'. After supper he took the third cup of wine, the cup of redemption, and said 'drink this, all of you, this is my blood'.

Jesus said 'I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes'; and after this Eucharist we do not consecrate bread and wine again until the celebration of the Kingdom at Easter. The remaining bread is set aside in the garden of repose, the altar is stripped bare, and we symbolically watch and wait with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

## Good Friday - 3rd April

The solemn liturgy of Good Friday recalls the trial, suffering and crucifixion of Jesus as we journey with Jesus along the *via Dolorosa*, the Way of Sorrows. As Archbishop Stephen Cottrell puts it, on Good Friday we seek not so much to understand the Cross as to stand under the Cross.

Reflective silence forms a vital part of the liturgy of Good Friday. The passion narrative from St John's Gospel is read or sung. A crucifix is brought into church with the words 'behold the wood of the cross on which was hung the Saviour of the world.' The congregation may perform an act of veneration, such as kissing the wood of the cross.

Communion is received in one kind only, from the reserved sacrament consecrated on Holy Thursday.

## Holy Saturday - 4th April

Holy Saturday is a day of profound emptiness.

It is not, though, a day to rush through in our haste to get to Easter. The joy of Easter is incomplete if it does not stand in contrast with the pain of Good Friday and the desolation of Holy Saturday. To remember this time when Jesus

lay dead in the tomb is to remember that there is no part of our human existence that Jesus has not shared. Most of us have experienced loss in our own lives, and Holy Saturday is a reminder that Jesus, in the most profound way, is with us in that loss.

## The Great Vigil of Easter

In the deepest darkness, outside the church a new light is kindled and the fire is blessed. The Paschal Candle is studded with the nails of the crucifixion, before being lit from the new fire and then carried into the dark church.

In the candlelight the *Exsultet*, the ancient hymn of praise, is sung. A series of readings follows, recalling the faithfulness of God from the creation, through the Exodus, into the now-fulfilled promises through the prophets.

The priest proclaims the resurrection of Christ and a joyful cacophony breaks out. The church is flooded with light and we see it decorated in all its Easter glory as the *Gloria in Excelsis* is sung.

The Liturgy of the Word follows, and then the Liturgy of Baptism, traditionally for the welcome of new believers into the church, and now also for the renewal of baptismal vows by the whole congregation.

We celebrate the Eucharist together, rejoicing in the assurance that, as Christ has shared in our death, so we will share in his resurrection.

## Easter Day - 5th April

After the excitement of the Vigil, Easter morning marks the beginning of our fifty days of Easter joy. Alleluia, having been excised from our liturgy during Lent, becomes the joyful refrain of this season.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!  
He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!

# Lent in Action

## Almsgiving

The traditional Lenten practice of giving can be expressed through a response to appeals made by international, national and local charities. This year we are supporting the Bishop of Norwich's Lent Appeal, which is raising money for the people of Papua New Guinea, and more specifically to enable the children from clergy families to complete their education at the Martyrs Memorial School, an Anglican school near Popondetta.

Lent is also an appropriate time to reflect on the level of our giving to support the mission of our own parish church and in particular the repositioning of our Clarkes Charity with its focus on children and education.

2026 is a year of special anniversaries for us (see the forthcoming special services and events below) and this focus on fundraising for children's education globally and locally reflects both our heritage and mission. It started in 1876 with a temporary church building in Dalling Road, where an early assistant curate was the Revd M. J. Stone-Wigg, who would go on to be the first Anglican bishop of Papua New Guinea.

## Study 40 days, 6 Weeks, 14 Stations

Study is the discipline of building life-giving habits for our minds. In focusing on study in Lent we are actively choosing to avoid distractions and to search for truth and meaning in our chosen discipline.

In addition to the Reading List below, we are providing suggestions for, and links to, a variety of Lent resources.

## Reading suggestions

Selina Stone - *Tarry Awhile: Wisdom from Black Spirituality for People of Faith (The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2024)*

John Burnside - *The Empire of Forgetting: Poems*

Karen Solie - *Wellwater: Poems*

Patricia Lockwood - *No One is Talking About This (Fiction)*

Victoria Amelina - *Looking at Women, Looking at War*

Sunil Amrith - *The Burning Earth: An Environmental History of the Last 500 Years*

Brandan Robertson - *Queer and Christian: Reclaiming Our Bible, Our Faith and Our Place at the Table*

Asante Todd - *The Golden Band: African Spirituals and the Hermeneutics of the World*

Melanie L. Harris - *Preaching Black Earth*

Anthony G. Reddie - *Living Black Theology: Decolonizing Knowledge*

Greg Peters - *Anglican Spirituality: An Introduction*

Francis Collins - *The Road to Wisdom: On Truth, Science, Faith and Trust*

Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt - *The Love that Is God: An Introduction to Christian Faith*

Alexander Douglas - *Against Identity: The Wisdom of Escaping Self*

Nijay Gupt - *The Affections of Christ Jesus: Love at the Heart of Paul's Theology*

Stephen O. Presley - *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Early Church: Recovering an Ancient Vision*

## Year A: The Gospel of Matthew

R. T. France - *The Gospel of Matthew*

N.T. Wright - *Matthew for Everyone*

Warren Carter - *Matthew: An Introduction (2 Volumes)*

Ulrich Luz - *Matthew (3 Volumes)*

Ben Witherington III - *Matthew*

Craig S. Keener - *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*

## Other suggestions

### The Bible Society - Journey through the Psalms this Lent

- *With free daily emails featuring Bible readings, reflections and thought-provoking prompts, explore how these ancient songs speak to topics of creation, grief, justice, forgiveness and worship – and how they point us to Jesus. Includes access to Reflections from Bible Society writers, Holy Week devotionals and exclusive access to their audio podcast, so you can listen on the go.*

### Church of England - Drawing Near, Life-giving habits for Lent

- *This year's resources have the theme of a 'rhythm of life' – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God's saving love at Easter. Weekly Reflections centred on a summary of the Christian Way from Common Worship, which identifies six activities essential to our calling as disciples - worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news with others.*
- *There is also a parallel 40-day challenge for families and children exploring the life-giving habit of generosity in partnership with 40 acts.*

### Christian Aid - Acting on poverty, living in solidarity

- *Help forge a world where everyone can live a full life, free of poverty by using 6 weeks of resources exploring what it means to act on poverty.*
- *Find and nurture your prophetic voice, how we can join God's work of healing divisions, how we can be generous in challenging times, where you think Jesus would place himself in your community, how do we develop practices of hope, and create your own Act on Poverty plan.*

### Diocese of London – Treasures of Darkness,

- *Discipleship in times of mystery and unknowing is a 5-week course exploring the journey of discipleship amid uncertainty, mystery, and unknowing, seeking the treasures hidden in darkness and mystery, nurturing a faith that trusts beyond sight and clarity. Drawing on lived experience and the wisdom of disability and suffering theologies, you can reflect on what it means to follow Christ – not in spite of life's struggles, but as we encounter God's grace and guidance within them.*

# Holy Week and Easter Services

## March & April

### **Palm Sunday, 29th March**

*No 8.30am Holy Communion*

10.00 am The Liturgy of the Palms & Procession from St John the Evangelist, Glenthorne Road  
10.10 am Parish Eucharist

### **Monday and Tuesday in Holy Week, 30th & 31st March**

7.30 pm Holy Eucharist with Homily

### **Wednesday in Holy Week, 1st April**

7.30 pm Tenebrae of Maundy Thursday

### **Maundy Thursday, 2nd April**

*(10.30am Chrism Mass & renewal of ordination vows at St Paul's Cathedral)*

7.30 pm Institution of Holy Eucharist with the washing of feet; stripping of the Altar; followed by prayer at the Altar of Repose.

### **Good Friday, 3rd April**

11.00 am Stations of the Cross

12 Noon Liturgy of the Day with Reading of the Passion

### **Holy Saturday, 4th April**

10.00 am Morning Prayer

10.30 am Cleaning and Decoration of the Church

7.30 pm The Great Vigil of Easter

### **Easter Day, 5th April**

*No 8.30 am Holy Communion*

10.10 am Holy Eucharist of the Resurrection

### **Saturday, 25th April, Mark the Evangelist**

7.30pm Parish Eucharist

# May & June

# Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> May, Philip & James, Apostles

7.30pm      Parish Eucharist

## Thursday, 14th May, Ascension Day

7.30pm      Parish Eucharist

# Whit Sunday, 24th May, Day of Pentecost

## 10.10 am Parish Eucharist

## Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> May, Trinity Sunday

10.10 am Parish Eucharist

# Thursday, 11th June, Barnabas the Apostle

7.30pm      Parish Eucharist

## Wednesday, 24th June, Birth of John the Baptist

7.30pm      Parish Eucharist

# Monday, 29th June, Peter & Paul, Apostles

## 7.30pm Parish Eucharist

## More Special Services & Events

November 2025 marked the 150th anniversary of the Church of England and Diocese of London's plan for the new parish of The Holy Innocents, Hammersmith. The conveyance of land at Paddenswick Green by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners occurred then and by 1876 the Dalling Road Mission church (a temporary structure) was being built and an assistant curate had been appointed to plant and pastor a new community of faith. An early

assistant curate and patron, the Revd M. J. Stone-Wigg, would go on to be the first Anglican bishop of Papua New Guinea!

Please take note of these dates in 2026 as we renew our current Mission and reflect on the many gifts and legacies of our fascinating heritage.

**Monday, April 27, 2026 at 7:30 pm** - A special service to mark the 125th anniversary of the completion and dedication our current parish church building

**Friday, May 8, 2026** - A visit to Norwich Cathedral and the Cell of Julian of Norwich on her Festival day, further to our support of the Bishop of Norwich's Lent appeal for Papua New Guinea and heritage connection there through its first Anglican Bishop, the Revd M. J. Stone-Wigg

**Sunday, July 12, 2026** - A Special Celebration of our Mission: Past, Present and Future at the Parish Eucharist

**Monday, July 20, 2026 at 7:30 pm** - A special Concert to mark our Foundation Stone Day

**Sunday, November 1, 2026** - Our Founders' Day, as we celebrate the ministry of the Revd H. C. Eden and all our Local Saints and Patrons

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